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President: Doris Cortese  
1st VP: Rosemary Lewis  
2nd VP: Carmen Salomé  
Treasurer: Barbara Koeplinger  
Asst. Treas: Sharon Gibson  
Recording Sec: Marj Tyrer  
Corresponding Sec: Clara Callahan

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Americanism: Margaret Windhausen  
Achievement Awards: Carol Beaumont  
Book Chat/MELP: Cheryl Harris  
Bylaws: Kerri Tonkin  
Campaigns/Elections: Kerri Tonkin  
Caring for America: Renie Frank, Anita Diamond  
Community Engagement: Jeanie Dozier  
Fundraising: Rosemary Lewis  
Hospitality: Maria Kernan  
Legislation: Donna Clarke  
Membership: Sharon Gibson  
Newsletter: Mary Snyder  
Parliamentarian: Kerri Tonkin  
Programs: Carmen Salomé  
Publicity: Gail Langner  
Reservations: Mary Ann Hansen  
Web Site: Missi Lastra

# THE MAHOUT

## The Keeper and Driver of the Elephant

JULY 2015

*Strong Women  
for a Strong America*



**KEEP THEM  
IN YOUR HEARTS**

*Our new Caring for America  
project..keep them  
in your hearts.*

Lifeline Family Center  
offers a positive alternative  
to abortion, giving both mother  
and baby hope for the future.

*A Place Where Shattered Dreams  
Can Be Changed  
to a Promising Future.*



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"If you don't read the newspaper  
you are uninformed,  
if you do read the newspaper  
you are misinformed."  
Mark Twain*

## LRWF MONTHLY MEETING

Meet with us on Monday, July 13th, at our new meeting place...the beautiful Pincher's Restaurant – The Marina at Edison Ford 2360 W 1st St., Fort Myers. The keynote speaker this month is Florida House Representative Ray Rodrigues, District 76. He will give updates on the Special Legislative Session. Don't miss this opportunity to hear first-hand how our legislators represented our area during this intensely focused session.

The lunch menu will be a turkey club wrap, served with a house salad, and chocolate mousse with seasonal berries for dessert.

- \$22 inclusive
- 11:15 PM Social Time /Lunch and Program following
- Reservation Deadline 7/9/15

*Make reservations with Mary Ann Hansen by calling 239-432-9389 or emailing [RMH738@aol.com](mailto:RMH738@aol.com)*

*Or make your reservation by going to the LRWF website at <http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com/events/reservations/>*

*You may also pay online with credit card by going to <http://leerepublicanwomen.com/event/lrwf-july-luncheon-meeting/>*

*Remember, a reservation made  
is a reservation paid!*

## Next Month's Speaker:

*Drew Steele*

*Speaking on....The State of the  
Media Today!*



*Ray Rodrigues  
Florida House Representative*

## RAY RODRIGUES

Ray Rodrigues, a resident of Estero, FL, married Ruth Lindsey of Plant City, FL and has one child, Rhett. Ray received his B.A. at Berry College, Rome, Georgia in 1992; was a Winshape Scholarship recipient, Forensics Scholarship recipient and was a part of the Student Government.

Born in April of 1970 in Pensacola, FL., Ray's maternal great cousin was Webb Jernigan of the Florida House of Representatives in 1937,1945, 1951, 1953 and 1956.

He will be speaking to us on July 13th about the Special Legislative Session that just concluded.

His legislative and other public service includes the following:

- Elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2012, reelected subsequently
- Stoneybrook Community Development District, Supervisor, 2006-2008, 2009-2012
- Lee County Charter Review, committee member, 2007-2008
- Lee County Housing Authority, board member, 2005-2008

His affiliations are:

- Lee County Republican Executive Committee, Vice Chair, 2010-2012, member, 1995-1997, 2003-present
- Special Equestrians, Vice Chair, 2009, Board of Directors, 2005-2010, Board of Advisors, 2010-present
- Freedom and Virtue Institute, Treasurer, 2011, board member, 2009-2012

**NEWSLETTER OF LEE REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED**

*Associated with the Florida Federation of Republican Women and the National Federation of Republican Women.*

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



*Doris Cortese*  
LRWF President

It's July and we are SO excited! We have a new, beautiful venue for our meetings effective July 13th. We will be meeting in the Marina Ballroom on the first floor of Pincher's at Edison Marina. We can take pride when inviting guests as the atmosphere is spectacular and the meals (non-fried) promise to be memorable.

Our website is up and running! When you have a moment please go to [www.leerepublicanwomen.com](http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com) and see all the changes. Remember you can make your meeting reservation and even pay by credit/debit card right from the site, making arriving more efficient for the check-in table and quicker for you. Thanks so much to Missi Lastra, Mary Snyder and John Sklavounos of Symban Services for spending countless hours bringing us technology into the 21st century.

With Independence Day approaching, let us remember that freedom most certainly is not free. Thousands of men and women have fought, and many perished, to secure our freedom. To assure that our freedoms remain, speak out to our elected officials so they are aware of how you feel about the government's attempts to strip our rights. Whether it's the issue of gun control, federal takeover of our schools, health insurance that conflicts with religious beliefs, or any freedom that you are passionate about, reach out to those we elected. They want to hear from us and understand our views.

**WE MUST STAND UP FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE!!**  
***May God bless you and God bless America!***

Respectfully, Doris Cortese, LRWF President

## MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Jeanne Dozier currently holds a position on the Lee County School Board, District 2. Jeanne was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky and moved around because her father was in the military. He retired at Maxwell Air Force Base, and she lived there until she went to school, married, raised her children and moved to Ft. Myers in 1989. She is married to Joe Dozier and has two children and one grandson. Her daughter teaches at South Fort Myers High School and her son is in private business.

Her past and present experience are as follows: 1998 – 2000 Law Education and American History Instructor Riverdale High School, 1996 - 1998 Assistant Principal of Curriculum Suncoast Middle School, 1995 Assistant Principal Michigan Elementary School, 1989 - 1995 Mariner High School Teacher and Assistant Principal of Student Affairs and 1977 - 1989 High School and Junior High Teacher Montgomery, Alabama.

Jeanne has a Bachelor of Education, from Troy State University in Alabama, and a Master's Degree in Administration 1994, from Nova Southeastern University. She has been awarded the 1994 Lee County Bar Association Teacher of the Year, the 1992 - 1993 Outstanding Teacher of the Year, Cape Coral Chamber of Commerce, 1988 Alabama Teacher of the Year - DAR, and the 1988 National Teacher of the Year - DAR.

She is a past member of the Junior League of Fort Myers, served as Community Research Chairman, Junior League, researched and developed the Lee County Teen Court in conjunction with the Lee County Justice System, Committee Member Junior League of Fort Myers, Taste of the Town, member of IMPACT Board of Directors, American Association of University Women – Lee County Branch, Lee Republican Women's Club, Florida Learning First Alliance, Fort Myers Republican Women's Club Federated, Cape Coral Republican Women's Club Federated, League of Women Voters, Southwest Symphony Society, Leadership Lee County Alumni, Class of 2002, Edison/Ford Winter Estates Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, Membership Committee, Program & Education Committee, and Special Events Committee, member of Town & Gown, Florida Gulf Coast University, Terry Park Centennial Celebration Committee, PACE Advisory Board Alternate, Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair Advisory Board, Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council, Uncommon Friends Governing Board, is on the Value Adjustment Board.

She currently and previously sat on the following committees: Construction Advisory Committee, Florida School Boards Association Board of Directors', Florida School Boards Association Past Presidents' Council, School Board Legislation - Liaison – Federal (alternate), Student Board Advisory Committee, Past-President, Florida School Boards Association, Past-President, Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards, School Board Finance Advisory Committee, School Board Construction Advisory Committee, School Board Continuous Systemic Improvement Advisory Committee, Lee County Public Schools Foundation, Smart Growth Advisory Committee, Horizon Council, United Way, Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Southern Accreditation Committee (SAC) Board. Florida School Boards Association Past Presidents' Council, Florida School Boards Association Legislative Committee.

*Thanks Jeanne for helping us **Paint the State Red!***



*Jeanie Dozier*  
LRWF Community Engagement Chair

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR NEW WEBSITE YET???

For a preview, click on [www.leerepublicanwomen.com](http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com)



Lee Republican  
Women Federated  
"Strong Women for a Strong America!"

HOME

ABOUT US

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MEDIA

SUPPORT LRWF

EVENTS

☰



## Politics is Women's Work

Republican Women are the Life of the Party

### THINGS TO CHECK OUT ON THE NEW WEBSITE!

**WHO WE ARE** - Learn about the history of LRWF. Click on ABOUT US then click on WHO WE ARE... or [CLICK HERE](#).

**MISSION STATEMENT** - News Flash! LRWF has a NEW Mission Statement! Click on ABOUT US then on MISSION STATEMENT...or [CLICK HERE](#).

**2015 OFFICERS** - Meet our 2015 Officers and learn a little bit about them. Click on ABOUT US then click on 2015 OFFICERS...or [CLICK HERE](#).

**EVERYBODY WINS** - A unique way to support LRWF...put your business on our website, share your profits with LRWF...get more business exposure and support LRWF at the same time. Click on SUPPORT LRWF then click on EVERYBODY WINS...or [CLICK HERE](#).

**PHOTO GALLERY** - Want to see all of the excitement that your club enjoys in pictures? Check out the new photo gallery! Click on MEDIA then click on PHOTO GALLERY or...[CLICK HERE](#).

**OUR SPONSORS** - Whether you are running for office, or are an incumbent, you can make your presence known to our LRWF ladies on our website and in our newsletter by being an LRWF sponsor. Check out our sponsors by clicking on SUPPORT LRWF and then click on OUR SPONSORS or...[CLICK HERE](#).

**BOOK CHAT REVIEW** - Want to get together with the ladies for an afternoon of conversation about things that you all have in common? Check out what happened at the last Book Chat and find out about the upcoming Book Chat. Click on EVENTS and then click on BOOK CHAT REVIEW or...[CLICK HERE](#).

Happy 4th OF JULY

## MEMBERSHIP

(Each One, Ask One)

Sharon Gibson, Chairman

- **NEW MEMBER PROJECT:** At the June general meeting, we had our new members sit together at two tables. This gave our group an opportunity to discuss a new member project for July 2015. It was decided that we would shower Lifeline Family Center in Cape Coral with items from their in-house wishlist. A couple of our mentors joined in so eight of us will be donating items in honor of all our new members this year!
- **NEW MEMBER TABLES AT THE JULY LUNCHEON MEETING** – Please look for the patriotic balloons and join us at the new members table. We'll have some of our membership team available to sit with you and answer questions about LRWF and our activities.
- **CLUB DIRECTORIES 2015** are available. See me at the meeting to get your copy.
- **EACH ONE, ASK ONE** – Wow, new member Peg Love invited her friend, Connie, to attend the June meeting. We've received Connie's application to join. Thank you Peg for taking the EACH ONE, ASK ONE challenge. You will be entered into the competition drawing for a nice prize later in the year.

Sharon Gibson  
Membership Chair 2015  
239-362-3042  
gibsonsharon@comcast.net

### NEW FULL MEMBER

Ita M. Neymotin  
PO Box 07282  
Fort Myers, FL 33919  
239-357-2980  
ita\_law@yahoo.com

Pat Baldwin  
16970 San Carlos Blvd., Suite 160  
Fort Myers, FL 33908-1236  
908-581-7617  
Pbftmb@aol.com

Gaile Anthony  
11990 Adoncia Way #1202  
Fort Myers, FL 33912-9036  
239-561-1861  
anthony7058@comcast.net

Constance Slattery  
5065 Cape Cole Blvd.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33955-3814  
941-575-4379  
cslattery@embarqmail.com

### ASSOCIATE TO FULL MEMBER

Barbara Hewitt  
224 SE 27th Terrace  
Cape Coral, FL 33904-2764  
239-458-7438  
HewittGB@gmail.com

Sheryl V. Wooley  
1400 SW 48th Terrace  
Cape Coral, FL 33914-8905  
239-549-4662  
svwool@aol.com

### NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Marc A. Stoll  
(spouse of Gina Petraglia-Stoll/  
father of Katherine)  
8990 Timber Run Court  
Fort Myers, FL 33908  
239-839-0232  
Orthoboy007@aol.com

### CURRENT TOTALS

140 full members  
29 associate members  
2 student members

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – 171 Members



The ladies of LRWF met at the home of Barbara Koeplinger on Wednesday, June 24th. The book written by Rand Paul, *Taking a Stand*, was the topic of discussion. If you haven't read it, it's an excellent insight into the view point of one seeking the Republican Presidential nomination.

It has been decided to suspend Book Chat until September. At that time, we will discuss Ted Cruz's book, *A Time for Truth*. This gives everyone adequate time to plan to attend and share their thoughts. We would love to see you there.

We will be meeting at the home of Mindy Moran on Wednesday, September 30th. The time is 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Just give us a call or email us so we may plan accordingly and give you directions.

Look forward to seeing you,  
Mindy and Cheryl

Mindy Moran  
239-288-7130  
mindy7156@yahoo.com

Cheryl Harris  
239-225-7390  
timcherylharris@aol.com

## UNCLE SAM, MEAT PACKER FROM NEW YORK (Was personally known and loved by certain soldiers...)

On September 7th in 1813, the United States gets its nickname, Uncle Sam. The name is linked to Samuel Wilson, a meat packer from Troy, New York, who supplied barrels of beef to the United States Army during the War of 1812. Wilson (1766-1854) stamped the barrels with "U.S." for United States, but some of the soldiers who knew Sam Wilson, began referring to the grub as "Uncle Sam's." The local newspaper picked up on the story and Uncle Sam eventually gained widespread acceptance as the nickname for the U.S. federal government.

Perhaps the most famous image of Uncle Sam was created by artist James Montgomery Flagg (1877-1960). Flagg had a difficult relationship with his parents. He later wrote: "Loyalty to family as such doesn't seem to me pertinent. Family isn't sacrosanct to me. To hell with the snobbery of inheritance." He hated snobbery. Flagg was born in New York City, later spent time in London and then eventually lived in California, Florida and Virginia with his well to do wife who was seven years his elder and generously gave of her own means to support this struggling artist. In Flagg's version, Uncle Sam wears a tall top hat and blue jacket and is pointing straight ahead at the viewer. During World War I, this portrait of Sam with the words "I Want You For The U.S. Army" was used as a recruiting poster. The image, which became immensely popular, was first used on the cover of Leslie's Weekly in July 1916 with the title "What are you Doing for Preparedness?" The poster was widely distributed and has subsequently been re-used numerous times with different captions.

In September 1961, the U.S. Congress recognized Samuel Wilson as "the progenitor of America's national symbol of Uncle Sam." Wilson died at age 88 in 1854, and was buried next to his wife Betsey Mann in the Oakwood Cemetery in Troy, New York, the town that calls itself "The Home of Uncle Sam."



*Samuel Wilson*



*Uncle Sam as portrayed by  
James Montgomery Flagg, July 1916*

## NEWS FROM LCREC

LCREC members of precinct 99 met with Ian McConnell, RPOF, for the first of several "precinct house meetings" that will take place in the next 16-18 months. Ian provided materials and explained the grassroots strategy for a 2016 win. This group discussed implementing the strategy for the upcoming Cape Coral city council elections that will take place this November. That will set the ground work for 2016. Ian was invited to attend Cape Coral Republican Club to share this information with that membership. He was also provided with valuable feedback from this group to take back to RPOF/RNC regarding messaging. Great ideas on how precinct committee persons can engage with their neighbors and begin the relationships where shared.

If you would like to organize one of these short informational meetings, please contact Ian McConnell, RPOF representative for our area. I hope this will be the first of many "house meetings" LCREC members organize to engage and energize our community for 2016 and beyond.

Carmen Salomé  
LCREC Outreach Chairperson

## CHARTER REVIEW BOARD PUBLIC MEETINGS

Come to the following public meetings regarding changes to the county charter....single member districts, term limits, and more.

July 23rd, 2015  
6:00-8:00pm  
Location:  
Mariner High School  
701 Chiquita Blvd.  
Cape Coral, FL 33993

August 27th, 2015  
6:00-8:00pm  
Location:  
East Lee County High School  
715 Thomas Sherwin Ave.  
Lehigh Acres, FL 33974



## LRWF LOVES LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE USA!

## LRWF WOMEN VISIT TED CRUZ'S FATHER IN NAPLES

The Women's Republican Club of Naples Federated and the Men's Republican Club of Collier County sponsored Pastor Rafael Cruz, the father of Senator Ted Cruz, to speak in Naples on Friday, June 12th. A nice representation of our club was present.

Pastor Cruz started with a quote from Proverbs 29:2. "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan." This in Pastor Cruz' opinion was exactly what is happening today. The wicked are ruling and the people are groaning.

Born in Cuba, Pastor Cruz arrived in Texas on a student visa in 1957 and worked his way through the University of Texas. He became involved in politics during President Jimmy Carter's term, becoming an activist during Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign. He said Reagan was successful because he was a complete contrast to his Democratic opponent. He said that is what it will take for Republicans to be successful in 2016.

"We need to understand that the way to win for Republicans is not what we have been doing for the last 40 years," said Cruz. "Every time the Republican Party has had a squishy moderate, we've lost. When is the RNC (the Republican National Committee) going to learn you don't win an election by looking like the Democrats? You win an election presenting a clear contrast!"

He told a story of things that happened when he was a young boy growing up in Cuba. He said that they had a charismatic person come to the people and promise them hope and change. He told people that the rich were evil. The man's name was Fidel Castro. Eventually he sent soldiers into the schools and the soldiers told the children to pray to God for candy. They all did, and got no candy. The soldiers then told the children to pray to Castro for candy and while the children's heads were bowed and their eyes closed, the soldiers put candy on all of their desks. That was the beginning of the destruction of religion in Cuba. He then told us that separation of church and state is not in the Constitution and it is not in the Declaration.

Instead, separation of church and state came from a letter written to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802 in response to a letter that had been written to Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson was a man of deep religious conviction — his conviction was that religion was a very personal matter, one which the government had no business getting involved in. This letter was to state that the government should stay out of the affairs of the church and leave people to their own religious convictions. It in no way was intended for the government to restrict religion...only that it stay out of religion.

In the question and answer session, someone asked Pastor Cruz what he thought of our new relationship with Cuba. His answer was that the new relations with Cuba were an abomination. According to Cruz, Cuba will not change, and we will suffer the consequences. In his final statements, Pastor Cruz said, "We don't need diversity in this country, we need a melting pot!"



*Rafael Cruz with Carmen Salomé  
and her husband J.D. Salomé*

## FOURTH OF JULY TRIVIA

What day did most signers of the Declaration of Independence actually sign the document? Aug. 2, 1776

How many people signed the Declaration of Independence on July Fourth? Two

Three of the first five presidents died on the Fourth of July: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe. Adams, the second president, and Jefferson, the third, died on the same day in 1826, the 50th anniversary.

Which president was born on the Fourth of July? Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president, in 1872

What other countries celebrate the Fourth of July? Denmark, England, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. Danes and Norwegians celebrate American Independence Day because thousands emigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s. England, Portugal and Sweden, hold celebrations near American military bases and or spots frequented by American tourists

John Adams would think the country is celebrating Independence Day on the wrong date: Adams wrote that July 2, the date the Second Continental Congress voted in Philadelphia to declare independence from Britain, not July 4, would be the day patriots celebrated their freedom. "The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoch, in the History of America," Adams wrote on July 3.

When did the Fourth of July become a legal federal holiday? 1938

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Donna Clarke, Legislative Chair

The Legislature passed a responsible balanced \$78.7 billion budget.

Tax Relief to Floridians: \$400 million in broad-based tax cuts. Major tax relief initiatives in the package included a(n):

- Permanent 1.73% cut to the Comm. Services Tax (CST) on cell phone/TV services.
- 10-day "Back to School" sales tax holiday to save Florida families more money.
- Exemption of college textbooks and related course materials from sales tax for one year.
- Exemption of gun club memberships and fees from sales tax.
- Exemption of vehicles purchased by service members or their spouse overseas.

Education: This budget includes a \$206.52 increase in per-student funds and a \$500 million increase in total school funding. The budget makes college more affordable for families by holding the line on tuition increases. It also sets aside \$200 million for performance funding to reward state universities that help students get jobs after graduation, not just framed degrees. Also \$30,000 to conduct a financial literacy pilot program in Florida.

Environment: To implement Amendment 1, \$772.1 million was directed to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund, \$132 million for Everglades restoration, allocated \$205 million to Florida Forever, with \$50 million designated for the purchase of lands to restore Florida's priority springs.

### I READ THAT PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTE MONEY HAVE A LOT OF INFLUENCE ON CONGRESS. DO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS PAY ATTENTION TO COMMUNICATIONS ON ISSUES FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT SENDING MONEY?

"If you ask any Member of Congress they will say, 'Absolutely.' And, they're telling the truth. Members of Congress would not be able to retain their jobs if they ignored their constituents. It's important to know that Members come to their decisions on votes using a process that we call the Madisonian Feedback Cycle. You can find more information about it in the latest report on "Online Town Hall Meetings: Exploring Democracy in the 21st Century," (available on the CMF website) but in essence it is a cycle where Members listen to the views of their constituents through all kinds of means, including email and postal mail, visits, media reports, town hall meetings, and events. They take all that information from citizens and all the other information they have access to - including policy analysis, research provided by their staff, and, yes, information from lobbyists - and they craft their views and policies. Then they go back to their constituents to explain what their views and policies are based on, and they try to persuade their constituents they've done the right thing. Then the cycle starts again with constituents providing feedback." The preceding is a quote from Tim Hysom, Congressional Management Foundation. To read more about this, [CLICK HERE](#).

### HOW TO CONTACT YOUR NATIONAL LEGISLATURE

Click on the links below to contact your senators and representative in Washington. You must fill in your name and address before your message. They all have multiple offices and phone numbers.

<http://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact>

<http://www.billnelson.senate.gov/contact-bill>

<http://clawson.house.gov/contact/>

### HOW TO CONTACT YOUR STATE LEGISLATURE

You can easily email any state representative by going to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov)

Lee County's Delegation:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Matt Caldwell</b>       | <a href="mailto:Matt.caldwell@myfloridahouse.gov">Matt.caldwell@myfloridahouse.gov</a>             |
| <b>Dane Eagle</b>          | <a href="mailto:Dane.eagle@myfloridahouse.gov">Dane.eagle@myfloridahouse.gov</a>                   |
| <b>Heather Fitzenhagen</b> | <a href="mailto:Heather.fitzenhagen@myfloridahouse.gov">Heather.fitzenhagen@myfloridahouse.gov</a> |
| <b>Ray Rodrigues</b>       | <a href="mailto:Ray.rodrigues@myfloridahouse.gov">Ray.rodrigues@myfloridahouse.gov</a>             |

You can easily email any state Senator by going to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Lizbeth Benaquisto</b> | <a href="mailto:Benacquisto.lizbeth.web@flsenate.gov">Benacquisto.lizbeth.web@flsenate.gov</a> |
| <b>Garrett Richter</b>    | <a href="mailto:Richter.garrett.web@flsenate.gov">Richter.garrett.web@flsenate.gov</a>         |

**Thank our Senators for supporting funding for hospitals!**

You can easily email your Governor by going to [www.flgov.com/contact-governor](http://www.flgov.com/contact-governor)

**Governor Rick Scott**     [Scott@myflorida.com](mailto:Scott@myflorida.com)

Chair of the Health Care Appropriations subcommittee is Speaker Pro Temp Matt Hudson

**Matt Hudson**     [matt.hudson@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:matt.hudson@myfloridahouse.gov)

## OUR SPONSORS

*Click on Pictures to View Their Websites*



*Jeanne Dozier*  
*Lee County School Board*



*Mike Scott*  
*Lee County Sheriff*



*Donna Clarke*  
*Lee Memorial Hospital Board*

## GUEST COMMENTARY

Lee Memorial Health System Disputes State's Hospital Data by David Collins

As a resident of Southwest Florida for more than 30 years, I know firsthand the quality and dedication of Lee Memorial Health System's doctors, staff and administrators. My family members and friends have received excellent care at its hospitals and medical facilities. My children were born at Cape Coral Hospital and HealthPark Medical Center.

So it's disappointing and frustrating to see incomplete, misleading information about Lee Memorial Health System (LMHS) and its finances being circulated statewide. As treasurer of LMHS's board of directors, I feel compelled to address the inaccuracies and set the record straight.

LMHS is the largest public health care system in Florida to operate with no taxing authority, meaning it depends on its own revenue to pay for day-to-day operations and long-term improvements. Our success is achieved through hard work and vision.

LMHS is governed by a 10-member board elected by the public to four-year terms. As a team, we work together to further the goals and objectives of LMHS and oversee the administration. A longtime mortgage banker, I work closely with LMHS's chief financial officer and can state with confidence that our system operates efficiently and transparently to the public.

Financially, LMHS has done modestly well in recent years, averaging a 2.7 percent operating margin between 2009 and 2013. Last year was exceptional, resulting in a 7.4 percent margin because of an influx of patients and cost-saving initiatives. As a nonprofit, we reinvest those earnings back into the community to accommodate growth, update technology and modernize aging facilities. Our numbers differ significantly with recently released data from the state showing higher profits for LMHS than many other health care systems and hospitals statewide. Regrettably, this has created confusion for our employees, patients and community members and distracts from our mission of caring for people.

The state's figures fail to take into account some of our key system costs, such as our physician services, skilled nursing facility and home health agency, programs that typically aren't profitable but are vital to the community. The numbers also include investment gains, which vary from year to year depending on the stock market, and a one-time, substantial reimbursement from the federal government to help pay for an electronic health record upgrade.

We have accomplished these results in a challenging environment. Southwest Florida has struggled in recent years with high unemployment and poverty rates. Areas hard hit by the foreclosure crisis saw businesses close and employers leave. Even now, only 20 percent of LMHS's patients have traditional commercial insurance.

Absent from discussions about hospital profits has been our huge, nearly \$1.5 billion investment in technology, facilities and staffing necessary to try to keep up with the region's growth. Nor have the discussions included the economic benefits a health care system such as ours brings to the community.

LMHS is the region's largest employer, providing more than 10,500 jobs. Its workforce generates about \$1 billion a year in spending for local businesses and, for every 100 LMHS employees, another 78 jobs are created through additional demand for goods and services. In other words, the region's success is heavily dependent on LMHS's success.

LMHS stands out as a model health care system for Florida and the nation. Its hospitals and medical centers have received multiple recognitions, with Lee Memorial Hospital and HealthPark Medical Center placing among the top 1 percent of hospitals nationwide. In May, Cape Coral Hospital earned the Governor's Sterling Award for achieving excellence in management and operations. It was the first time a community hospital has received this prestigious honor.

I am extremely proud of our achievements and look forward to an exciting future as the region continues to grow and prosper. I urge the public to join me in supporting LMHS and applauding its efforts. While it's disheartening to see our finances skewed with inaccurate information, we remain passionately committed to providing the best possible health care to all citizens.

## JUST A TID BIT OF INFORMATION

### *Salaries of US House and Senate*

Currently, rank-and-file members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate earn \$174,000 a year. House and Senate leadership members receive \$193,400 per year, and the Speaker of the House receives a salary of \$223,500. There is an annual cost-of-living adjustment made to these salaries unless Congress rejects it, which the House of Representatives voted to do on January 1, 2013.

Congressmen and Senators receive the same retirement and health benefits as other federal employees after five years of service. Members of Congress contribute 1.3% of their salary to their retirement fund, and 4.2% to Social Security taxes (the same amount as the private sector). A Member is eligible to receive a pension at the age of fifty if he or she has served for twenty years in Congress, otherwise he or she is not eligible until sixty two years of age. Members who have served for more than twenty-five years are eligible at any age. The formula used to calculate the pension benefits of a Member is based on the number of years of service and the average of the highest three years of his or her salary. By law, the starting amount of a member's retirement annuity may not exceed 80 percent of his or her final salary.

JEB HENSARLING  
Member of Congress  
Texas 5th District



## CARMEN APPLAUDS THE NEWS PRESS

Carmen Salomé, Cape Coral

These last six months on The News-Press Citizens Editorial Board have been very rewarding. I have a greater appreciation of the perspective of others from working on this committee of diverse thinkers.

Andy Coy, Christine Patricca and Gail Lamarche each brought a different community view to the table. At each session I became a better listener and walked away with a better appreciation of our differing opinions. Each topic challenged me. I was stretched to think outside the norm, question the process and respect differences. The environment in each session was safe and inviting allowing me to be free to express my thoughts and opinions without hesitation. Our conversations during the biweekly meetings were always rich with content and full of thought.

The News-Press editorial team's community knowledge and professionalism is impressive. I learned about the media process and its value in sharing important news. Benjamin Franklin wrote, "Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing." I applaud the News-Press for continually informing our community on a variety of important topics. Six months is not long enough to inform the community on tough complex issues, especially when there are candidate interviews during that cycle. I enjoyed participating in the candidate interview process. We were encouraged to ask tough questions. These interviews are vital for our community when making important decisions regarding who will represent us. I have always believed it was the newspaper's role to report information fairly and let the people of Southwest Florida come to their own decision. Armed with that information, voters could then make endorsements at the ballot box.

Working with Mei-Mei Chan (who has since retired), Tom Hayden, Cindy McCurry-Ross and Cory O'Donnell, I learned that our community welcomes those who volunteer time and energy. I'd like to continue to see a citizen editorial board that reflects the rich diversity of our community. I encourage every reader to consider becoming involved. Our community needs the fresh perspective you can bring! I am thankful to The News-Press team for providing the opportunity for an inclusive voice in the process of sharing news in our community. To use Franklin's words, thank you for writing "something worth reading." Thank you for your commitment to Southwest Florida.

## PATRIOTIC ELEPHANT QUILT RAFFLE

LRWF Fundraising will begin selling raffle tickets for a beautiful and patriotic "Elephant Quilt" at \$5.00 per ticket or five tickets for \$20.00 starting with our July meeting. The final drawing will be held at the Fashion Show in November.

The quilt will be on display at our meetings and club events until the drawing for the lucky winner in November.

So don't miss out! We appreciate your support for our club!

THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES  
JUNE 2015



*Carmen Salomé with the Entrepreneurial Club at the Quality Life Center...  
earning money for their summer activities with a car wash!*

RAFAEL CRUZ SPEAKS AT WOMEN'S  
REPUBLICAN CLUB OF NAPLES



*Photo by Jessica*

*Ted Cruz's father, Rafael, in Naples with Missi Lastra,  
LRWF Website Chairperson.*



*Our LRWF ladies, Lucy Breitung, Carol Beaumont and Mary  
Palazzo go to the airport to greet a returning soldier and  
show their appreciation of his service.*



Photo by Jessica

Joanie McMahon, new LRWF member (right) with her new friend from another area Federated Club! They hit it off at the Rafael Cruz event!



Photo by Jessica

Several Federated clubs came together for a great time at the Cruz event. Seated above is Diane Van Parys from the Republican Women of S.W. Florida Federated.

**GOVERNOR SCOTT COMES TO D3 GLASS  
ON ALICO CENTER ROAD...MANY CAME OUT TO GREET HIM!**



Photo by Jessica

Photographers, news media personnel...all getting ready for the arrival of Governor Rick Scott on his visit to D3 Glass on Alico Center Road, Fort Myers. He came to talk about the \$400 million in tax cuts that have recently gone into effect. It was an up-close gathering of grateful workers, students, politicians and Florida citizens of every walk of life.



John Fernandez Photography

The Governor greets the people as they crowd around him holding signs up high showing their appreciation for his \$400 million in tax cuts.



John Fernandez Photography

LRWF women gather around to talk to the Governor.



Photo by Jessica

The sign says it all.....



Photo by Jessica

Mary Snyder, LRWF Newsletter Chair greets the governor.

LRWF JUNE MONTHLY MEETING PHOTOS



*John Fernandez Photography*  
One of our two student members...Katharine Stoll.



*Photo by Jessica*  
Something really tickled Doris Cortese, LRWF president... she sure knows how to have fun! God bless her!



*Photo by Jessica*  
Cynthia Henderson, FFRW President, spoke to us about the Federation.



*John Fernandez Photography*  
Judy O'Donnell and Cindy Lignelli, both Past LRWF Presidents ... Just hangin' out!



John Fernandez Photography

Donna Clarke, LRWF Legislation Chair and Lee Memorial Health System Board Member with Kevin Ruane, Lee County Commissioner candidate



Photo by Jessica

John Fernandez, LRWF Associate Member and photographer...posing for Jessica Armstrong, LRWF Photographer and Student Member.



John Fernandez Photography

Left to right are Diane Van Parys (President of Republican Women of S.W. Florida Federated), Michel Doherty (Member of LRWF), Cynthia Henderson (President Florida Federation of Republican Women) and Rita Miller Administrative Assistant to the Lee Clerk of Courts

[CLICK HERE FOR THE MOST INCREDIBLE FIREWORKS DISPLAY YOU HAVE EVER SEEN!](#)

IF YOU MISSED ALL OF THIS FUN...  
MAKE SURE YOU GO TO THE NEXT  
LUNCH MEETING ON JULY 13TH.

*Happy 4th of July!*