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1st VP: Kerri Tonkin  
Treasurer: Mindy Moran  
Asst. Treas: Roz Lesser  
Recording Sec: Marj Tyrer  
Corresponding Sec: Marilyn Kostik

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Book Chat/MELP: Cheryl Harris  
Bylaws/Parliamentarian: Kerri Tonkin  
Caring for America: Renie Frank, Anita Diamond  
Fundraising: Keri Tonkin  
Hospitality: Barb Koeplinger  
Legislative: Lori Fayhee  
Membership: Peg Love  
Newsletter: Mary Snyder  
Publicity: Gail Langner  
Reservations: Wren Morefield/Mary Ann Hansen  
Social Media: Mary Snyder  
Non-Committee Positions  
Chaplain: Terri Lee  
Photographer: John Fernandez



# THE MAHOUT

## The Keeper and Driver of the Elephant

### December 2017

*Strong Women for a  
Strong America*

### DOLLY MADISON COMES TO TOWN



The LRWF members and guests will host Dolly Madison, the fourth First Lady of the United States, at its holiday dinner on December 11, 2017.

Mrs. Madison, through local thespian, Annie M. Mrozinski, will transport her audience to her 19th century Christmas open house at Montpielier, her Orange County mansion in Virginia.

Dolley, nee Payne, rose from an obscure Quaker background to marry James Madison, the "Father of the U.S. Constitution" who served as President from 1809 to 1817. The "Presidentress", as she was called when she entered the newly re-decorated Executive House, was 41 years old. She was witty, charming, bright eyed, fashion forward, and at ease with all regardless of rank. Her influence in defining the role of the "First Lady" carried well into the middle of the 20th century.

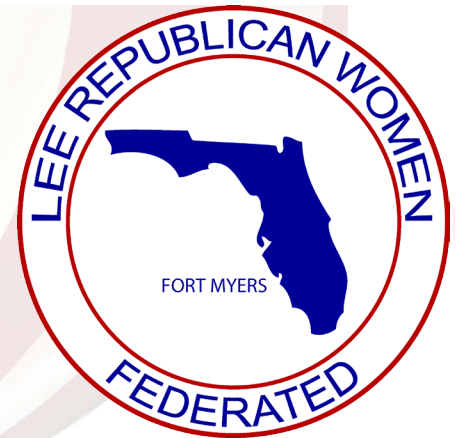
If she is known for one heroic act it is when she saved the portrait of George Washington by cutting it from its frame and running out of the mansion just before the British set fire to the building in the War of 1812.

Widowed at age 68, Mrs. Madison continued to enthrall her guests at her salons until her death at 81 in 1849.

Her funeral was the largest of any First Lady attended by government officials and by President James Polk.

The former Dorethea Todd led a remarkably full life. This would include the fact that she lived long enough to have her photo, which accompanies this article to the right, taken in 1848 when she was 80.

Mrs. Mrozinski has been doing her one-woman show for a number of years. She is a member of the Lee Republican Women's Club and lives with her husband, Ken, in Fort Myers. Previously the couple lived in Manhattan, Kansas.



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"That government is best which governs least."  
Henry David Thoreau*

## JOIN US!

The next meeting of LRWF is our annual Christmas celebration on December 11th at Pincher's Restaurant. at the Marina, in Fort Myers at 2360 West 1st Street. Social time starting at 5:15 PM with dinner following. Dolly Madison, portrayed by Annie Mrozinski, will be our guest.

The menu choices are:

1. Burgandy Braised Chicken
2. BBQ Pulled Pork  
(Choices 1 & 2 come with au gratin potatoes, slow roasted carrots, house salad and rolls)
3. Plain Caesar Salad with toppings on the side.

Dessert: Chocolate Mousse.



Deadline is Thursday  
Dec. 7th at noon.

For reservations call  
Wren Morefield at 270-210-1284 or  
email at [wrenspet@hotmail.com](mailto:wrenspet@hotmail.com).

To make a reservation online go to  
<http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com/store>

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

**Everyone MUST check in at the  
Reservation Desk.**

## NEXT MONTH

**Jan. 8th Jonathan Martin,**  
Pres. LCREC will be speaking on  
open primaries.

**Jan. 29th Richard Corcoran**  
State Speaker of the House

**NEWSLETTER OF LEE REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED**

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

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Doris Cortese  
LRWF President

I want to thank Kerri Tonkin and her committee for the many hours spent working on the fashion show. It was a great success with wonderful models and clothes. We made in excess of \$4,000.00 profit for the club. Those who didn't attend missed a fun occasion. My only problem was jealously, looking at the beautiful models in their outfits and saying "if only, I weighed 50 pounds less." Again, kudos to the committee and thank you to Judy O'Donnell for getting us the use of the Forest.

As the Christmas season nears, I want to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year. As you have a time of fellowship and joy during this special time of year. Remember the reason for the season and enjoy.

Sincerely,  
Doris Cortese, President, LRWF  
Vice President, LCREC



## *Tax Cuts for Hard Working Americans*

In November, I proudly voted in favor of tax cuts that will lower the tax burden for hard working Americans. In addition, small businesses will see tax rates cut to a level that is on par with the rest of the industrialized world, meaning more jobs for our country and our Southwest Florida community.

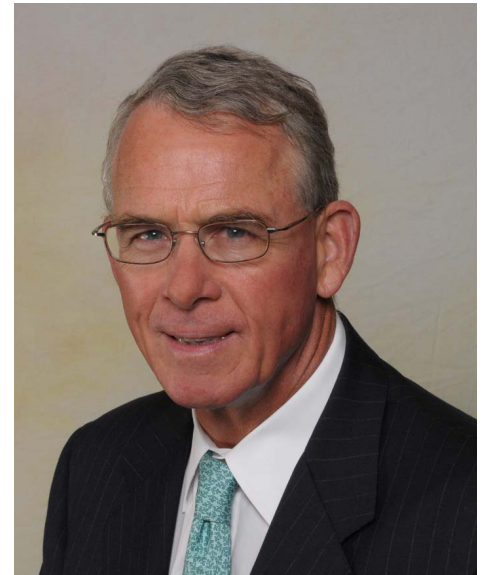
It is easy to be misled by skewed data or half-true statistics spouted by the left, so here are some important facts about the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that relate directly to our area:

- Increases median household income in Florida by \$1,945.
- Nearly doubles the standard exemption – the first \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for couples is now tax-free.
- Increases the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$1,600 per child. There are 43,634 taxpayers in FL-19 that claim the child tax credit.
- Reduces the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 20 percent and the rate for pass-through businesses down to 25 percent, making it possible to open or expand businesses and increase worker paychecks.
- Significantly reduces taxes for small business owners, impacting 62,041 taxpayers in FL-19 that have small business income.
- Eliminates the Alternative Minimum Tax, which currently impacts 13,911 taxpayers in FL-19
- Maintains deductions for charitable donations, property taxes up to \$10,000 a year and the mortgage interest deduction. The mortgage interest deduction would be capped at \$500,000 for mortgages (down from \$1 million now).

The bill isn't perfect – bigger cuts, spending reductions, and repeal of the Obamacare mandate would all be optimal, however it is a starting point for economic growth that can be built upon in future years. With a return from the anemic growth rates of the Obama years that hovered at 1.5% annually, to a more robust 3.3% that was the average during the presidency of Ronald Reagan, we will be able to reduce our obscene national debt while increasing jobs and wages. I look forward to the Senate doing its job and passing tax reform before Christmas so that we can deliver a great gift to hard working Americans.

Have a blessed Christmas.

Francis Rooney  
U.S. House of Representatives



Francis Rooney  
US House of Representatives



## MEMBERSHIP

Now is the time to renew your membership for 2018. Please fill out a renewal form, one of two ways:

1. Click on the LRWF Website

Look under ABOUT US, go to GET INVOLVED, then LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP.

At the bottom of the page on Levels of Membership the documents will be the Letter and the Application.

Please print and fill out the renewal and mail with your check, or bring it to the December 11th dinner meeting.

OR

2. Call me at 941-740-0228 or email [peglove810@gmail.com](mailto:peglove810@gmail.com) and I will send you an application!

Thank you,

Peg Love  
[peglove810@gmail.com](mailto:peglove810@gmail.com)  
941-740-0228

## NEW MEMBERS

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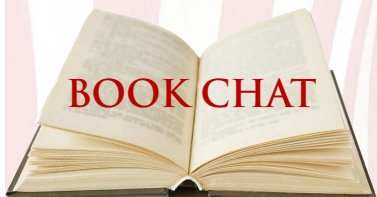


*Museum News*

## WE'VE MOVED!!! COME SEE US AT...

7050 Winkler Road, Suite 103  
Myerlee Square (Next to Pizza Pub)  
Phone: 239-936-8779  
Mon-Fri 10:00-4:00 Sat 10:00-2:00

*Merry  
Christmas*



Thanks to the ladies who joined us at Mel's Diner for Book Chat on November 1st. What a great historical read. Enjoyed everyone's insight.

Please meet with us on Wednesday, December 6th for lunch and discussion of the movie, *Let There Be Light*. This movie was produced By Sean Hannity. The story is based on the unwavering love and faith of Dr. Sol Harkens wife, Katy. Dr. Harkens dedicated his life to the cause of atheism after losing his young son to cancer. He turns attacks on Christianity into a very lucrative business. He is anxious to share his disdain for God and debates his Christian opponents on stage. But, even with all the fame and success, Sol is empty and distraught. His life continues on a downward spiral. He becomes isolated from his friends and tells Katy that he is sick and tired of her praying for his soul.

His self-destructive habits eventually catch up to him and a serious car crash leaves him clinically dead. It's a miracle he is still alive, but what really changes, is Sol's outlook on life due to this experience.

The movie is showing at local theaters. Bring your tissues.

We will meet to discuss the movie at Mel's Diner from 1:00-3:00 PM. Come join us for an inspiring afternoon.

For those who care to read ahead, we will be reading Brian Kilmeade's book, *Andrew Jackson and The Miracle of New Orleans*. We will meet on Wednesday, January 3, same time and same place. More information to come in December.

Please call or email me if you plan to attend.

Cheryl Harris  
239-225-7390  
[timcherylharris@aol.com](mailto:timcherylharris@aol.com)



There have been more accusations of sexual wrongdoings recently than anyone could have ever imagined. I have listed below some of the politicians who have had allegations made against them. In addition to this list, if you would add the number of athletes and people in the entertainment world who have had allegations made against them, the numbers would skyrocket.

This past week, President Trump urged people from Alabama to vote for Roy Moore, stating that he had been accused of crimes 20 years ago and that Roy Moore denied the allegations. He also said that Moore had been involved in many years of elections and *this has never come up until now.*

The controversies rage on. It's good that all of this is being exposed, but before I give you my take on these things, read below to see just how bad it is getting.

- Florida Democratic Party Chairman Stephen Bittel resigned after being accused of sexually inappropriate comments and behavior toward a number of women.
- Democratic state Sen. Jeff Clemens resigned after a report that he had an extramarital affair with a lobbyist.
- Republican state Sen. Jack Latvala is being investigated by the Senate over allegations of harassment and groping. Latvala has denied the allegations.
- Former President George H.W. Bush was accused of patting seven women below the waist while posing for photos with them in recent years, well after he left office. The 93-year-old Republican has repeatedly apologized through a spokesman "to anyone he has offended," with the spokesman stating that the former president uses a wheelchair and that his arm sinks below people's waists when they take photos with him.
- U.S. Rep. John Conyers (D) was accused of sexual harassment toward staffers in his office and has settled one claim of harassment. He has denied the allegations, including the one he settled.
- Sen. Dan Schoen (D) said he would resign after being accused of groping, persistent unwanted sexual advances and sexting.
- Rep. Tony Cornish (R) said he would resign after being accused of groping colleagues, persistent unwanted sexual advances and sexting.
- Kentucky House Speaker Jeff Hoover stepped down as speaker this month after news surfaced that the Republican had settled a sexual harassment claim from a GOP caucus staffer. Hoover denied the harassment allegation but said he sent consensual yet inappropriate text messages. He remains in the Legislature.
- U.S. Sen. Al Franken (D) was accused of forcibly kissing Los Angeles radio anchor Leeann Tweeden while rehearsing for a 2006 USO tour; Franken also was photographed with his hands over her breasts as she slept. He also has been accused by three other women of touching their buttocks. Franken has apologized, but has not admitted to groping or other inappropriate touching. He has acknowledged that some women felt that he had done something offensive during their encounters. He faces a Senate ethics investigation for improper conduct.
- U.S. Senate candidate Roy Moore (R) was accused of sexually assaulting two women decades ago when they were teenagers; about a half-dozen other women have accused Moore of inappropriate conduct. The former state Supreme Court chief justice denies the allegations. He has rebuffed pressure from national Republican leaders to step aside; the state GOP is standing by him.
- Johnny Anderson, a staffer for Democratic Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards resigned to avoid becoming a "distraction" to the governor. Accused of sexual harassment, he denies any wrongdoing.

Now that you know how bad it has gotten, let me say just one thing. Whatever happened to the law of innocent until proven guilty? I understand that women need to be believed or they won't come forth, but since when does a person not get a right to a fair trial with evidence of wrong doing being submitted? In some of the cases above, the alleged perpetrators have admitted to wrongdoing, but some of them have not.

I don't claim to know if Roy Moore is guilty or if he is not, but I am not going to try him in the arena of gossip and public opinion. Give me facts! Give me evidence! If the evidence is there, then he is guilty and if it is not, then let it go!

Currently I am concerned about *Republicans* in particular being accused of sexual sins *only* when they are running for office and have a chance of winning. Do you all remember Herman Cain? He was running for the office of the President in the 2012 election. Suddenly, for the first time in his life, women came out of the woodwork accusing him of all sorts of sexual sins. He dropped out of the race because it was destroying his family. After the election was over, Herman Cain sued the women and won his case. Unfortunately, no one likes to talk about that. All of them were proven in court to be lying.

Now we see Franken, who has admitted to wrongdoing, stating that he will not resign his position, but will submit to the Senate ethics investigative committee. By the way, the last time the Senate ethics committee took serious action against a sitting senator was more than two decades ago. Franken has admitted wrongdoing, but will not step down from his seat. Moore states that he is innocent and his wife has spoken out on his behalf, but without a trial, he is asked to step down from his election and Trump is ostracized for defending his right to be considered innocent until proven guilty.

I don't know if we have another situation like Herman Cain here, or if Moore is really guilty, but in my humble opinion...the jury is still out and he is innocent at this moment. If some proof comes forth at a later time, then perhaps he will leave his position...although, I still wonder why cries are not going out against those who have admitted guilt, but still are in their positions. Is this politics or what??? Drain the swamp Mr. President!



**LRWF IS DONATING TO TOYS FOR TOTS...**

**Bring an unwrapped NEW toy  
to the next LRWF meeting!**

**Give the gift of joy to a child this Christmas!**



Kathy McMichael, one of our members, will be at Cypress Point rehab until December 4th and would love to see you or hear from you! Cypress Point in Fort Myers, FL is located at the corner of Daniels and Six Mile Cypress Parkway and adjacent to the CenturyLink Sports Complex. Let's spread some Christmas cheer to Kathy...send her a card or visit if you can.

6870 Alister Way  
Fort Myers, FL 33912

<https://cypresspointseniorliving.com/>

*Remember the Reason for the Season!*



**CALL YOUR CONGRESSMEN TODAY!**

Tell our congressmen what you are concerned about. Encourage them to get behind our president!

**BILL NELSON**

716 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-5274  
or email at

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

**MARCO RUBIO**

284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-3041  
or email at

<https://marcorubio.com/contact/>

**FRANCIS ROONEY**

120 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-2536  
or email at

<https://francisrooney.house.gov/contact/>

*Legislative*

**UPDATE**

*By Lori Fayhee*

## SCHOOLS IN THE LEGISLATURE

At the state level, the legislation of K-12 education has been dominating the news.

During a recent Lee County School Board meeting, Board Member Melisa Giovanelli, made a motion to introduce a resolution to support Representative Matt Caldwell's idea on school board term limits, saying that it would maintain more local control. Senator Greg Steube introduced a bill, SJR 194, that would amend the State Constitution and limit school board members to two 4-year

terms. Representative Caldwell shared that, "In discussion with some board members I've indicated support for instead, giving school board's the right to put terms limits on the ballot in each county." The support of the Board would be helpful to him in presenting this local control alternative. The motion was rejected by three Board Members, without an official vote to the motion, and was tabled for later discussion with a vote of 5-1. Dissenting Board Member, Chris Patricca, stated that she sees the term limits discussion as a distraction, and is not willing to discuss it further.

Controversy continues over last session's HB 7069 education bill, which became law, with nine school districts across the state, filing a second lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the bill. This suit was filed directly with the Florida Supreme Court. It names House Speaker Richard Corcoran, Senate President Joe Negron, and officials with the state's Department of Education as defendants and contends that the 274-page bill violates the "single subject" rule, which states that bills must cover only a single subject matter. Bay District School Board Attorney Franklin Harrison, whose law firm Harrison Sale McCloy is doing much of the work for the lawsuit pro bono, said the bill amends more than 70 provisions of school codes, ranging from recess time to funding new school construction.

The legal challenge to the bill had already been filed in Leon County Circuit Court by 14 school districts, to date, including Lee County School District. Harrison said this new challenge will run concurrently with the suit in the lower court and will put the challenge immediately in front of the Supreme Court, who has the power to take immediate action against the bill if warranted.

School districts argue that changes made by the bill take local control away from county school districts. One of the major issues the districts are fighting is the requirement to share capital property tax funds, money raised to pay for school buildings and infrastructure, with charter schools. The lawsuit also challenges the standardization of charter school contracts at the state level, the creation of "Schools of Hope," which creates incentives for charters to open near low-performing public schools, and allows charters to operate as public schools over which the local electorate that is funding them has no authority to change leadership or influence policy.

Legislators have been actively moving forward with bills to amend the newly created Schools of Hope. SB 216 would revise enrollment requirements for a hope operator to receive a loan under the Schools of Hope Revolving Loan Program and require hope operators to employ school administrators and instructional and non-instructional personnel who meet specified certification requirements. HB161/SB294 removes the requirement for mandatory retention of third-grade students based on low performance on English Language Arts (ELA) Florida Standards Assessment (FSA). HB577/SB856 Amends Florida High School Graduation Requirements by authorizing students to use credit earned upon completion of apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program to satisfy specified high school graduation requirements.

Rep. Byron Donalds has filed HB1 The Hope Scholarship Program, which establishes Hope Scholarship Program and authorizes certain persons to elect to direct certain state sales & use tax revenue to be transferred to nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations for Hope Scholarship Program. Under HB1, a student enrolled in a Florida public school in kindergarten through grade 12 is eligible for a Hope scholarship under this program if the student has been subjected to an incident of battery; harassment; hazing; bullying; kidnapping; physical attack; robbery; sexual offenses, harassment, assault, or battery; threat or intimidation; or fighting at school.

According to [FloridaPolitics.com](http://FloridaPolitics.com), Altamonte Springs State Rep. Bob Cortes is looking at possible legislation to address high school graduation of Puerto Rican high school students who evacuated to Florida because of Hurricane Maria. Rep. Cortes has been speaking with Florida Commissioner of Education Pam Stewart who is working with her counterpart in Puerto Rico on a plan that would allow these students to study for and receive Puerto Rico diplomas in Florida, rather than Florida diplomas.

There is concern that many of the thousands of Puerto Rican evacuee students enrolling in Florida schools have spent their schooling studying Puerto Rican curriculum and may be unable to meet Florida's graduation requirements, including the requirement to pass the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA). That could not only prevent these students from earning a standard high school diploma, but it also could alter school test scores and school funding, as well as graduation rates for the high schools welcoming them in this fall.

An estimated 160,000 displaced Puerto Ricans have moved to Florida in the past seven weeks, and more are expected, with estimates as high as 300,000 evacuees eventually moving to Florida, at least temporarily.

## OUR SPONSORS

*Click on Pictures to View Websites*



Lizbeth Benacquisto  
Florida State Senate



Ray Rodriguez  
Majority Leader  
Florida House of Representatives



Francis Rooney  
U.S. Congressman Dist. 19



Tommy Doyle  
Supervisor of Elections



Carmen Salomé  
FFRW District 75 Rep  
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Jeanne Dozier



Lori Fayhee



Donna Clarke  
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Linda Doggett  
Lee County Clerk of Courts



Dane Eagle  
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Dan Sinclair



Kathleen Passidomo  
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Heather Fitzhagen  
Florida House of Representatives



Mike Scott  
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District 3



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*Senior Vice President*

6900 Daniels Pkwy Ste 29-119  
Fort Myers, FL. 33912  
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Email: [rtonkin@arborim.com](mailto:rtonkin@arborim.com)

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## THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES



Welcome to our first time guests, from left is Carolyn Brady and Chris Wappes!



Chris bought tons of raffle tickets! Way to go Chris! Thanks!



To the left, Judy O'Donnell won a darling framed picture!  
What fun!!!



THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES...CONTINUED



*Diane Luzny and Martha Hall are first time guests too!  
Just two more of many wonderful guests that came to the style show!*



*Martha bid on a purse and WON!!!*



*Kerri Tonkin, left, Chairwoman of the style show with her  
daughter and best friend...Ashley Winstel!*



*And guess what!!!! Kerri's granddaughter was there too!  
She even helped Terri set up! Wow! It was a family affair!*

**JOHN FERNANDEZ**  
P • H • O • T • O • G • R • A • P • H • Y

239.571.6293  
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www.JohnFernandezPhotography.net

THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES...CONTINUED



*Thanks to all the models  
and to everyone  
who made this style show so  
successful!*

