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Bylaws/Parliamentarian: Kerri Tonkin  
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Fundraising: Keri Tonkin  
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Legislative: Lori Fayhee  
Membership: Peg Love  
Newsletter: Mary Snyder  
Publicity: Gail Langner  
Reservations: Wren Morefield/Mary Ann Hansen  
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Non-Committee Positions  
Chaplain: Terri Lee  
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# THE MAHOUT The Keeper and Driver of the Elephant

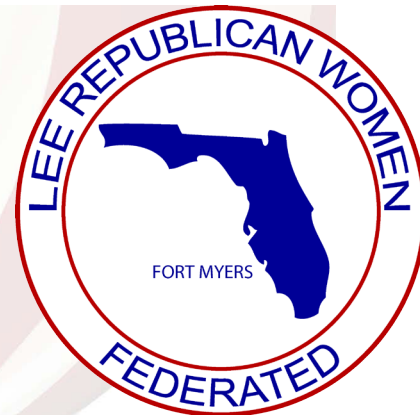
February 2018

*Strong Women for a Strong America*

**March 12th**

Join us for a forum at Pincher's with three candidates who are running for Pam Bondi's position of Attorney General.

Representative Jay Fant  
Former Judge Ashley Moody  
Representative Ross Spano



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"If it were true that the primary reason that people (illegal immigrants) were coming here is to work, then the Democrat Party would be the ones building the fence on the border. Why do you think the Democrats welcome them? Why do you think the Democrats want amnesty? They know that they've got them as voters." Rush Limbaugh*

## JOIN US!

The next meeting of LRWF is March 12th at Pincher's Restaurant. at the Marina, in Fort Myers at 2360 West 1st Street. Social time starts at 11:15 AM with lunch following. Rep. Jay Fant, Former Judge Ashley Moody and Rep. Ross Spano will be the featured guests providing a forum on why they each feel qualified to take Pam Bondi's position of Attorney General for the State of Florida.

The menu choices are:

1. Tuna Salad on a croissant with chips  
2. Garden Green salad with grilled chicken and rolls and  
3. Plain Caesar Salad with toppings on the side. With carrot cake for dessert.

Reservation Deadline is Thursday  
March 8th 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.**

**IN APRIL...**

**State Attorney 20th Judicial Circuit  
Candidates -**

**Amira Fox & Chris Crowley**



Representative Jay Fant



Former Judge Ashley Moody



Representative Ross Spano

**Jay Fant** was born in Jacksonville in 1968 to a family who started First Guaranty Bank in 1947. He attended Washington and Lee University, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1990, and then the Fredric G. Levin College of Law at the University of Florida, receiving his Juris Doctor in 1994. Upon graduation, he was elected to serve on the board of First Guaranty Bank. In 2003 he was named the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank. In 2009 he was promoted to Chairman. In 2012, the bank failed because it had acquired a number of troubled loans. In 2014 he became a member of the Florida House of Representatives.

**Ashley B. Moody** was elected in 2006 as judge for the 13th Judicial Circuit Court in Florida. Moody resigned from the bench in April 2017 to run for Attorney General of Florida. She earned both a B.S. and Master's in accounting, and a J.D. from the University of Florida and a Master of Law degree in international law from Stetson University College of Law. Prior to her election in 2006, Moody served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Florida. Her experience also includes work as an associate for the law firm Holland & Knight LLP, an assistant to the president of the American Bar Association, and an adjunct professor for Stetson University College of Law.

**Ross Spano** was born in Brandon. He later got a degree in history at the University of South Florida, got a law degree at the Florida State University College of Law. In 2012, Spano ran in the newly created 59th District, and won with 40% of the vote. In the House of Representatives, he has worked on many projects. One of the more notable is his work on human trafficking.

**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

On February 6th at 9:30 AM the Lee County Board of Commissioners will vote on when to hold the vote for a 1/2% sales tax increase requested by the School Board. The School Board doesn't want people to come out to vote, so they want to hold a special election in May. Special elections only draw special interest groups and not as many people come out to vote.

Call or email your County Commissioners and ask them not to put it on the ballot in a special election in May at cost of \$887,000. If it is on the ballot in August, the cost would be under \$100 which is when the primaries are held. More people will come out for the primaries and there would be a vote with more representation. Call or email the Commissioners.

Contact info for the County Commissioners:

District 1: John Manning. 239-533-2224 - [Dist1@leegov.com](mailto:Dist1@leegov.com)

District 2: Cecil Pendergrass. 239-533-2227 - [Dist2@leegov.com](mailto:Dist2@leegov.com)

District 3: Larry Kiker. 239-533-2223 - [Dist3@leegov.com](mailto:Dist3@leegov.com)

District 4: Brian Hamman. 239-533-2226 - [Dist4@leegov.com](mailto:Dist4@leegov.com)

District 5: Frank Mann. 239-533-2225 - [Dist5@leegov.com](mailto:Dist5@leegov.com)

Sincerely,

Doris Cortese, President, LRWF  
Vice President, LCREC

## *Immigration Reform and Securing our Borders*

*By Francis Rooney*

Thoughtful and earnest debate is a necessary precondition to the success of our American system of government. In our Republic, it is rare that one side gets 100% of what they want. As Ronald Reagan famously stated, "The person who agrees with you 80% of the time is a friend and ally – not a 20% traitor." As is often said in legislative negotiating, we can't let the perfect become the enemy of the good. This was certainly the case with our recent tax reform success.

Solving the immigration crisis facing our nation will be another test of legislative will. Securing our borders, fixing our broken visa system and ending immigration abuses like "chain" migration and the "diversity" lottery are potential benefits to justify extending the DACA program, as President Trump has suggested. There are those who say that we must fully fund a border wall, and immediately deport all illegal immigrants, regardless of the circumstances. On the other end of the spectrum, many believe in full amnesty and citizenship for all illegal immigrants in our country right now, and want to continue open-ended "chain" migration. Any bill brought forward will require sixty votes in the Senate, so a proposal from either end of the spectrum described above would be dead on arrival. Accordingly, what might a responsible and realistic plan that would pass the Senate look like?

First, we must begin with securing our borders. You aren't much of a sovereign if you can't control who enters or leaves your territory. We must assure that no additional illegal immigrants are entering our country. A significant component in securing our borders is fixing our broken and leaking visa system. Almost half of all illegal immigrants in the U.S. at this time came here legally and later overstayed their visas. As to family migration, the idea that spouses and minor children might accompany a new entrant seems like a reasonable narrowing of the abusive "chain" migration. Any additional avenues for immigration should be strictly skill-based. We certainly need to end the "diversity" lottery, which is the polar opposite of skill-based immigration, to assure that the best and brightest enter our country. Of course, if we extend the DACA program to get these important immigration and visa reforms, we should immediately deport those with criminal records. Instead of a path to citizenship now, I would suggest a framework that allows for permanent legal resident status provided they learn English, pay any back taxes and meet work or education requirements. This permanent status would be revocable for criminal violations and the recipients of this status could follow the same guidelines as all other immigrants wishing to become citizens, provided they are not placed ahead of the legal immigrants who have already applied for citizenship.

It is time to be realistic and stop talking past each other on this issue. Congress should properly fund the government on February 8th without attaching non-related issues -then use the above outline to enact the immigration fixes that have alluded us for a generation.



Francis Rooney  
US House of Representatives

## MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to the well over 70 people who have already paid your memberships for 2018. The forms keep coming in every day, either by mail or online or at the meetings via charge cards through Wren Morefield. We look for a year of members participating in the very serious campaigns with successful outcomes!!

If you have any difficulty finding a form or handling it on line via our LRFW website, do not hesitate to call me or email me. My contact info is below.

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

## YOU MAY NOW RENEW ONLINE!

GO TO <http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com>

WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE "SIGN UP OR RENEW" POP UP

CLICK ON THE PICTURE THAT SAYS "SIGN UP OR RENEW"

FILL OUT THE RENEWAL APPLICATION AND SUBMIT

THEN CLICK ON THE LINK TO PAY FOR YOUR RENEWAL

**COULDN'T BE EASIER!**

## 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

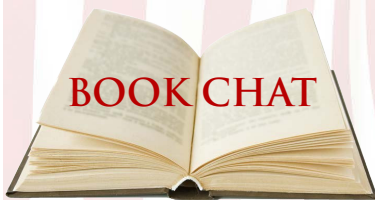
284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-3041  
or email at

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

### FRANCIS ROONEY

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

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



Ladies, you are invited to join our Book Chat group on Wednesday, February 7. We will meet at Mel's Diner on US 41, from 1:00 - 3:00. We have lunch along with discussion of the book, Let Trump Be Trump. Finally, we have the inside story about the President from two of President Trump's closest campaign advisors. The eyewitness account tells the stories behind the headlines. From the Access Hollywood recording and the Clinton accusers, to Paul Manafort, to the come-from-behind comeback and victory that reads like something out of a suspense novel.

Written by Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie, the highlights the drama that has mesmerized the world. It offers a view of Donald Trump like we've never seen. The man whose success was built not only on great skill, but on loyal relationships. He developed strong bonds with a band of outsiders and idealists who became his team because they believed in him and his message.

Come join us. We share like minded views and have a pleasant afternoon. Please call or email me know if you plan to attend, so we may plan accordingly. See you at Mel's.

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

## TAKING ACTION IN NORTH FORT MYERS NOW MEANS A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR LEE COUNTY

*Written by Brian Hammon  
Lee County Commissioner*

The time for change in North Fort Myers is now, which is why I pushed for and my fellow commissioners unanimously approved a \$2 million, first-of-its kind program, aimed at jumpstarting redevelopment. The effort combines a revitalization package (offering performance based grants to attract private developers) with the county's new Mixed Use Overlay regulations, which will help streamline the development process.

Take a drive down either of the 41's in North Fort Myers and you'd have a hard time believing that Lee County is in the middle of a strong recovery from "The Great Recession." Shopping plazas and storefronts that were once occupied by popular name brands are sitting empty. Every few months a new restaurant will open, only to close a few months later. County Commissioners wanted to know why this historic community, originally homesteaded by John Powell, one of our first county commissioners, is still struggling as the rest of Lee County comes back. To answer that question, we commissioned a market-based assessment of North Fort Myers in 2016.

The results confirmed much of what our longtime residents and business have believed for years. North Fort Myers, specifically the area between Pondella Road and the riverfront has become a pass-thru and not a destination. The challenges are many, according to the study. It calls out the high number of retail vacancies, limited East-West travel connections, the poor level of building maintenance and the fact that the riverfront area has no sense of place or identity.

This new program will be performance-based - with rebates paid out after the redevelopment project is completed. Through this initiative, I am confident that North Fort Myers will become an enticing location for new development. The goal is to level the playing field between North Fort Myers and other parts of the county that have raw, undeveloped land by allowing for faster permitting and resolving environmental burdens.

The potential is there to create a beautiful community that will provide job opportunities for our future generations. Community redevelopment is not a traditional role of the county, but we can work to create the right environment for economic improvements. As Lee County grows, it will be important to direct our growth to areas that can be filled in, instead of sprawling out towards our borders. Making smart investments now to strengthen our existing communities and get people working closer to home will ensure that we can handle our future growth.



*Brian Hammon  
Lee County Commissioner*

## COME ON GIRLS...LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!!!

### **Gordon River Princess Naples Cruise**

*February 21, 2018, Wednesday, Boarding at 11:30, 550 Port O Call Way, Naples*



**Join the ladies of LRWF  
for an afternoon of cruising,  
shopping and lunch!  
Cost for cruise: \$60**

**Register at  
[www.leerepublicanwomen.com](http://www.leerepublicanwomen.com)  
or call Kerri at 907-321-0419**

## REPUBLICANS ARE RACISTS AND HATE WOMEN AND POOR PEOPLE!

If you don't believe me, ask the Democrats!!! They won't hesitate to tell you how much Republicans hate women and hate anybody who is not white or rich! Nancy Pelosi will definitely tell you that Donald Trump and the Republicans want no one but white people around them!

Is that really true though? It's not, but what upsets me the most is that they get away with saying all of that...without an ounce of evidence, except for statements that they take out of context...and they aren't really taken to task for it!

It really did my heart good though when Orrin Hatch was listening to his peers talk about how the tax cuts were for the rich and he lost his cool! "I'm sick and tired of Democrats saying this tax plan is for the rich!" he said. He then continued, "I come from

the poor people, and I have been here working my whole stinking career for people who don't have a chance, and I really resent anybody who says I'm just doing this for the rich — give me a break. Listen...I have honored you by allowing you to spout off here, and what you've said is NOT right. I come from the lower middle class originally. We didn't have anything, so don't spew that stuff on me. I get a little tired of crap." Wow! Was that good, or what??? Way to go Orrin!!

I'm also sick and tired of people saying that Republicans are racists, and I speak out about it every time I get a chance. The Republican Party was formed in 1854 in Ripon, Wisconsin. Abraham Lincoln was the first Republican president, and we all know what he did for the blacks! In 1856, the Republicans came out against polygamy and slavery. They had to fight the Democrats in their endeavors. They felt that polygamy devalued women and that slavery devalued blacks. They supported and voted for the 13th Amendment which freed the slaves, the 14th Amendment which gave citizenship to the slaves and the 15th Amendment which gave the slaves the right to vote. They fought the Democrats all the way to do these things. In 1870, we had the first black congressman and senator who just happened to be Republicans. All the black congressmen were Republicans until 1935 and all black senators were Republicans until 1979. And...there is no evidence anywhere to show that there is any prejudice with Republicans towards blacks up to today!

And then let's look at President Trump! He hires blacks, he has blacks as his friends, and he has lowered the unemployment rates to historical lows for the blacks. In fact, during the election, one of his "female" black employees was so tired of the way people talked about her friend and boss that she made a video to show the world everything that President Trump had done for her...before he was even running for office. And told how he had saved her from drugs and took her in as a family member. There is one story after another telling how President Trump has helped or become a friend of blacks. And what have the Democrats done for blacks? I'll tell you what!!!! Nothing!!!!!! The Democrats have held them down, put them on welfare and given them no way to get out of the ghettos! President Trump does not want that for blacks. He loves them and wants to help them.

So you say, what about his comment that Haiti was a "shithole." First of all, not only did Trump say that he didn't say that, but people who were in the meeting with him said he didn't say that! So, do you think we should believe the one Democrat in the room who had an agenda to make Trump look bad? Did he really say it? I prefer to believe all of the ones that said he didn't say it. After all, aren't we innocent until proven guilty? More people said he didn't say it than said he did say it. And what if he did? I know for a fact, that Haiti is not the nicest place to live. And what about the people? They're great! At least many of them are, but some aren't. Just like everywhere you look, some are good and some are not. But that isn't even what they were talking about in that meeting. President Trump was stating that we need to bring people to the United States that can add value to our country...people who have skills that we don't have. Some Haitians might fit that category, and if they do, they would be welcome. He was contrasting it to what we have now. Right now, we have a lot of illegals...not all... who are criminals. We also have good ones, but are we not allowed to talk about the bad without getting labeled racist?

I personally know illegals that I don't want to see go back. I love them and I think they have added value to our country and especially to my life. My life is better for having had the opportunity to get to know them. But I also agree with President Trump. We need to be more selective about who we bring into the country.

In regards to President Trump and women...the Washington Post stated that many women who have worked closely with Trump say he was a corporate executive ahead of his time in providing career advancement for women. While some say he could be boorish, his companies nurtured and promoted women in an otherwise male-dominated industry. Several women said they appreciated how Trump granted them entry to a new playing field.

"From the standpoint of being a woman, I just thought he was phenomenal," said Louise Sunshine, a female employee of Mr. Trump for 15 years. "So supportive and encouraging. . . . He gave me the ropes, and I could either hang myself or prove myself."

Some people are upset because President Trump insults women. He insults men too! He's an equal opportunity insulter. If he doesn't like you, he's not phony enough to pretend that he likes you and then stab you in the back. So he's considered against women because he insults them. If women want to be treated equally, they need to get over themselves and let President Trump talk to them honestly and bluntly just like he does to men.

As for me...I'm a woman of ethnic Syrian heritage without a lot of money...and I love President Trump!



# Legislative UPDATE By Lori Fayhee

Locally, the Lee County School District (LCSD) Board voted on January 23rd, in a 6-1 vote, to hold a special election on May 15th to ask voters to increase sales tax in Lee County by a half-penny. The dissenting vote was from Board member Melisa Giovannelli. The issue is less about the tax hike and more about how much money might be spent just to pose the question to voters. The minimum cost of this special election would be \$888K, without providing for mail-in ballots. Lee County Commissioners have expressed a preference for putting the referendum question on the ballot at either the August state primary or at the November general election at the cost of \$50.

The News-Press reported that Superintendent Greg Adkins and Board chair, Cathleen Morgan, each told reporters that they consider the cost of the special election an 'investment' that will return more than \$500 million for school buildings and other improvements. During the LCSD Board meetings public comment, constituents questioned the Board's fiscal responsibility of spending nearly one million dollars for a special election and requested that the District perform an external Capital Funds audit to prove good stewardship of public funds and provide more transparency to the public.

Included on the agenda of the Lee County Board of County Commissioners meeting, to be held on Tuesday, February 6, at 9:30 am, will be a discussion of the School Board Resolution. Interested citizens will be afforded three minutes at the beginning of the meeting to discuss any item on the agenda that day.

THE FLORIDA FEDERATION OF REPUBLICAN WOMEN (FFRW) RELEASED THEIR 2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AS FOLLOWS:

FFRW SUPPORTS:

## PREVENTION OF TEXTING WHILE DRIVING BILLS

CS/SB 90 Perry - Use of Wireless Communications; HB 33 Toledo and Slosberg - Texting while driving. The bill moved through the first House and Senate committees during the opening week of Session.

## PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING BILLS

HB 167 Spano - Provides for Civil Action against Human Traffickers/prevention of Human Trafficking Act. The first Reading was on Tuesday, January 09th. SB 1044 Book - Provides for Civil Action against Human Traffickers. SB 96 Steube - Provides education in schools regarding Human Trafficking.

## HOMELESS VETERANS AND DISABLED VETERANS

Appropriation - HB 2213 Byrd, 5 Star appropriation - currently \$796,250 for Homeless Vets. The first Reading was on Tuesday, January 9th.

## INCREASING OPEN, HONEST GOVERNMENT

SB 432 Lee/CS HB Raburn - Community Redevelopment- Prohibits a person from lobbying a community redevelopment agency until he or she has registered as a lobbyist with that agency

## HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

HB 473 Leek and Brodue/SB 952 Steube - Animal cruelty definitions - overloading, overdriving, tormenting, depriving of sustenance or shelter, unnecessary mutilating or killing, carrying in a cruel manner in a vehicle and prohibits certain people from owning animals. HB 473 has been added to Judiciary Committee agenda of Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

HB 153 Porter/SB 132 Steube - Guidelines for animal shelters and preventing importing animals to FL. HB 153 first Reading was on Tuesday, January 9th.

SB 222 Bean/HB 6021 Stevenson - Extends Guardian ad litem DSO (Direct Support Organization)

HB107 Fant & Williamson/328 Baxley - Veteran's ID SB 1000 Grimsley/HB 527 Magar -under Keeps Homestead Exemption certain circumstance for surviving spouses of deceased, disabled veterans.

SB 748 Grimsley/HB 881 Burton - Back the Blue Assistance Program

FFRW SUPPORTS CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION COMMISSION ISSUES - (1) Repeal of Blaine amendment forbidding using state money for religious groups and (2) the elimination of Greyhound Racing

FFRW OPPOSES

CS/HB 9 Metz, Co-sponsor Fant/SB 308 Bean. Steube - Rule of Law Adherence - Sanctuary Cities. Passed the full house after much debate. HB 61 Watson, HB 430 Thurston - Restoration of Civil Rights - OPPOSE - With a 40%+ recidivism rate, plea bargains affecting sentences and many exemptions not covered such as armed robbery and gang-related activity, FFRW believes each case must be decided individually for public safety. HB 61 first Reading was on Tuesday, January 9th.

## 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



Linda Doggett  
Lee County Clerk of Courts



Dane Eagle  
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Florida House of Representatives



Larry Hart  
Lee Co. Tax Collector



Donna Clarke  
Lee Health Board  
Vice Chair



Kathleen Passidomo  
Florida State Senate



Heather Fitzenhagen  
Florida House of Representatives



Larry Kiker  
Lee County Commissioner  
District 3

## THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES



*Amira Fox, Candidate for Florida State Attorney and  
Richard Corcoran, Florida Speaker of the House*



*Doris Cortese, President LRWF,  
Richard Corcoran and  
Kerri Tonkin, 1st Vice President, LRWF*



*Left is Joan Clark, a very new member  
and Chris Wappes, also a new member.  
Welcome girls!*





*Joyce Easton, left with our friendly neighborhood tax collector, Larry Hart!*



*All smiles...Marilyn Kostick with her financial advisor Taylor*



*Left to right, Peter Simmons, Mayor of Bonita Springs, Jonathan Martin, Chairman LCREC, Brenda Skupny, Richard Corcoran, Florida Speaker of the House, Donna Clark, Vice Chairman of Lee Memorial Health Board and Cecil Pendergrass, Lee County Commissioner.*



*Spencer Roach, Assistant to Francis Rooney, Richard Cocoran Florida Speaker of the House, Donna Clark, Vice Chair of Lee Health Board of Director and Michael Nacheff, Director of Legislative Affairs for Lee Health*



*Ray Rodrigues, Majority Leader of the Florida House of Representatives gives accolades to Richard Cocoran*



*Richard Corcoran with Lori Fayhee, Legislative Chair of LRWF*

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

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