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Mary Ann Hansen
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Photographer: John Fernandez

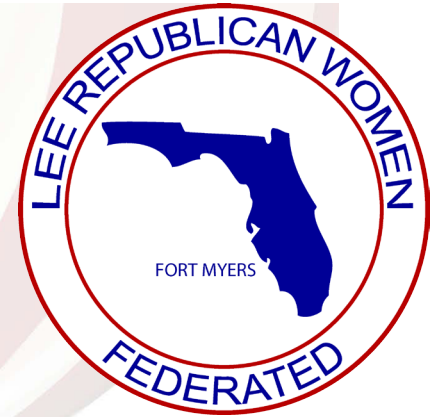
THE MAHOUT
The Keeper and Driver
of the Elephant

March 2018

Strong Women for a Strong America

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil,
Isaiah 5:20



JOIN US!

The next meeting of LRWF is March 12th at Pincher's Restaurant. at the Marina, in Fort Myers at 2360 West First Street. Social time starts at 11:15 AM with lunch following. Rep. Jay Fant, Former Judge Ashley Moody, Rep. Ross Spano and Rep. Frank White 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.

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



Rep. Jay Fant

Former Judge Ashley Moody

Rep. Ross Spano

Rep. Frank White

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.

Frank White. father of three, serves as a Deacon in the First Baptist Church and teaches Sunday School with his wife. He is also a board member for Baptist Hospital and Pensacola M.E.S.S. Hall Children's Science Museum. Recognized for his business and community leadership, Governor Rick Scott appointed Frank to the Florida Development Finance Corporation Board of Directors, where he serves as Chair. He is a successful small business leader and attorney.

NEWSLETTER OF LEE REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED

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



Doris Cortese
LRWF President

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

After the horrible school shooting right here in Florida, it is past time for our legislators to act. We need better background checks, help for our mentally ill and a register that crosses agency lines for problem people.

My heart bleeds for the families of those killed. My prayer is that God will bring peace in their time of grief. Nothing can bring back their loved ones who died, but God can heal their spirits.

Sincerely,

Doris Cortese, President, LRWF
Vice President, LCREC

Root Causes, not Knee-Jerk Reactions

By Francis Rooney

Mass shootings have troubled our country since Columbine in 1998. Our schools, workplaces, entertainment venues, and places of worship have all been targeted by mentally or emotionally unstable individuals who should never have had access to guns. Past wounds are reopened with each new tragedy, bringing new calls to "do something." Everyone retreats to their ideological corners, talking points are tossed back and forth, and nothing gets done. To find a solution that transcends politics, we should focus on facts, not anecdotal and emotional rhetoric.

Here are the facts about guns in the United States. Over 300 million guns are legally owned in America. Two-thirds of all gun deaths in America are suicides. 2% of shootings are by rifles, the rest pistols. 63% of shootings take place in private homes, and 54% are related to domestic violence. In 42% of cases the shooter exhibited at least one red flag prior to the shooting, and 34% involved a shooter who was prohibited from legally possessing firearms.

So what are the real problems we need to solve?

We can prevent school shootings by "hardening" up schools as targets, limiting access to school entry points, and hiring retired law enforcement as armed guards.

Further, there is an urgent need to put failsafe procedures and "trip wires" in place to assure all citizens that are mentally ill, demonstrably emotionally disturbed, substance abusers, or who have committed a crime do not obtain any type of gun. These individuals do not have the mental or social capacity to obey our laws and 2nd Amendment rights should not be entrusted to them. This is analogous to unprotected speech under the 1st Amendment.

Next, Parkland shows how wholly inadequate communication and response is among government agencies. Similar to the 9/11 commission recommendations for sharing intelligence, we need to overhaul how information is shared and acted upon among law enforcement agencies. I voted for the Fix NICS Act, which penalizes federal and state authorities that fail to report relevant information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). One analogy is the sex offender database, where states are required to share information for proper background checks. We need everyone to be aware and put "see something, say something" into routine observance of behaviors.

Another issue is "bump stocks." There is a growing body of thought which I agree with that they should be banned.

Additionally, we have to recognize that a generation of violent video games and movies, and the breakdown of the family and community, have had an impact on American youth. There is an alarming number of boys growing up without fathers, a sociological challenge with far reaching effects.

We can take actions to make it harder for an unstable person to get a weapon and invade a school, theater, office, restaurant, etc., but at the end of the day we need to confront the negative societal trends in contemporary American life - only then can we begin to fix the underlying issues and true causes of these deadly attacks.



Francis Rooney
US House of Representatives

MEMBERSHIP

NEW FULL MEMBERS

Joan Clark
900 Angelo Avenue
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971
239-332-1976
jclark.40chevaus@gmail.com

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Louise Dowd
265 Indies Way, #605
Naples, FL 34110

Justin Hummell
No information at this time

Carmen Kettlewell
825 NE 10th Lane
Cape Coral, FL 33909
239-424-8835

Barbara Maugham
1101 Periwinkle Way, Ste 103
Sanibel, FL 33957
239-472-2424
Barbara@maugham.com

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

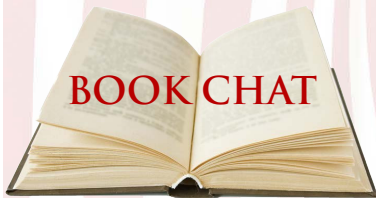
THEN CLICK ON THE LINK TO PAY FOR YOUR RENEWAL

Peg Love
peglove810@gmail.com
941-740-0228



Please pray for America's pastor's family.

*Billy Graham will be missed by all...
a wonderful example of God's love.*



Ladies,

Since our last chat was cancelled, we will meet at Mel's Diner on Wednesday, March 7. Our meeting time will be from 1:00 - 3:00. We will discuss the book, *Let Trump Be Trump*. This is the inside story about the President from two of the President's closest campaign advisors. Written by Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie, it highlights the drama that has mesmerized the world. It offers a view of Donald Trump like we have never seen. 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 with thoughts about the book and share insight into today's political scene. It's a great afternoon for lunch and conversation.

Please call or email me if you plan to attend, so we may plan accordingly.

See you at Mel's,

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

A DIFFICULT TOPIC

This opinion page contains a topic that is very difficult for me to discuss. It is very personal, and I have first hand knowledge of it. I have felt for a long time that I must speak out on this topic, so perhaps now is the time. My son was mentally ill. I feel a need to share what a mother goes through when their son is mentally ill. I'm not talking about mildly mentally ill. I am talking about seriously mentally ill.

Let me give you a little background...from a mother. When my son Mike was born, I felt that God was telling me that my son was very special. I am sure many mothers feel this way, but even though I truly loved my little girl, I felt that God was telling me that my son would be set apart as something very special. I could go on for hours about how special I felt my son was, but I will try to shorten it. As he grew, he became the "perfect son."

He was active in the church youth group, he was great in school, his grades were better than average. He played Chopin on the piano before his feet could reach the pedals. He held first chair on the trumpet from his first year of playing. He was in the prestigious jazz band in his high school. He had many friends. He treated all women and girls with total respect. He played hockey and was great at that too. He was also on the wrestling team.

Sounds like a perfect son, right? Well, he was. He had one minor problem. He was five years behind in his bone growth...and muscle development as well. That means he was extremely short (way under five foot) and grossly underweight. In the 5th grade, he weighed 45 pounds and played hockey against a kid who was 145 pounds...who was also in the 5th grade. And guess what! He was so fast on his feet that the 145 pound kid got so frustrated with him because he couldn't catch him that he started tripping other kids on the team and got kicked out of the game.

That's where the good news stopped. Early on, Mike was sent to the University of Michigan Hospital so the doctors could keep an eye on his bone growth. This university had one of the top five bone growth clinics in the nation. We would have nothing less than the best for our son's health. They wanted to put him on human growth hormones as part of an experiment. We said no. We did not want our son to be a guinea pig. Then they said they wanted to put him on anabolic steroids to help him grow. The older he got, the more his size became a problem for him, especially in his muscle development, so we said okay, as we were assured that anabolic steroids were safe, and they had been using them with no problems for 40 years. At that time, they did not know of the problems of anabolic steroids. He took them for two years.

When Mike became a senior, I was watching him rake the back yard without being asked. I called my husband to look out the back door at our great son. That was the beginning of our new life. Later that night, I started calling around to find Mike, because no one that Mike was supposed to be with seemed to know where he was. That was not like Mike. Later that night, I got a call from the police. My son had committed a horrible crime, and was in jail. The arresting officer told me what a wonderful son I had. He said he wasn't a thug. He said he didn't belong there, and he was going to put extra officers on duty to protect him all night. He said he would not talk to the press, because Mike just didn't belong there. The next day, we got one of the finest lawyers in our state. After meeting Mike for the first time, this self assured lawyer could barely speak. When he did get his composure to speak, he told my husband and me how wonderful our son was. We got Mike out of jail and the first thing he said to me was, "I never thought you would ever speak to me again." The second thing he said was, "Mom, I need a psychiatrist." I told him that we already found one for him. As we got into the car, my first thought was, "Those damned steroids." At that time, I didn't know, but later found out that the steroids most likely did this to my son. I'm not making excuses, but we talked to the #1 steroid expert in the world, and that is the conclusion that he came to.

That information about steroids didn't change anything. Mike spent about nine months in a mental hospital. He found help with some medications, but he was now 18 years old and when he thought he could handle things without the medication, we were in trouble. Since Mike was 18, I couldn't have discussions with the doctors. Since he was 18, I couldn't have discussions with the police, because no one wanted to listen to me. I tried pastoral counseling for him, but Mike was in trouble and needed more help. Every time I heard about a crime on television, I would call Mike and ask him what he was doing at the time of the crime. To sum it up, we went through hell for 20 years. Our son eventually started telling us that he had five or more different personalities. No matter what the cause, Mike was mentally ill. His values changed. He hated himself because he knew he was sick, but he didn't know what to do about it. He truly believed the medicine didn't work even though it had.

So what is my point? If we want to solve the gun problem associated with mental illness, we need to involve, listen to and empower mothers...or parents in general. Fathers will bring their own perspective to things. I knew my son was mentally ill. Others knew he was mentally ill. But no one...not one soul...would speak to me about it, because Mike was 18 years old. I had no power to have him committed. Mike lived below the radar. He never again did anything after that first crime, but I knew what he was capable of. Eventually, he got in with a bad group of people. When he was a young kid, he wouldn't hang out with certain people because, as Mike said, "Mom, they aren't nice. You wouldn't want me to be around them."

Finally after 20 years of Mike's mental illness I got a phone call. Mike was found dead. My hope was gone. It was ruled a suicide, but there was no gun residue on his hands, and he was right handed with the bullet going in the left side of his head. Private detectives that we hired, assured us that he was murdered. We were so devastated that we had our son cremated, but never had it in our ability to even hold a service for him. I look at his ashes and remember how wonderful he had been. I say all of this to say just one thing. Please get parents involved at figuring out what is going wrong. And listen to them when their children are adults. Parents often are looked down upon instead of looking to them as a resource for the answers. Not all mentally ill children or adults come from bad homes with uncaring parents. We cared and loved deeply.



Legislative UPDATE By Lori Fayhee

In the aftermath of the tragic school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Broward County, Florida, several significant issues are now pending this Legislative Session, including, legislation to address student safety and school security. Governor Scott, the Senate, and the House have all recommended legislation on student safety and school security. At the time of this printing, three bills that appear to be the joint effort of the Senate and House have been filed to address these issues: SB 7022 relating to Firearm Safety, SB 7024 relating to Public Records with regard to Victim of a Crime of Mass Violence, and SB 7026 relating to School Safety.

Proposed Safety & Security Measures

Governor Scott proposes, mandatory School Resource Officers (SRO) in every public school or 1 resource officer per 1000 students, that must be sworn sheriff's deputies or police officers with staffing level to be set by sheriff's office. Authorize sheriffs' departments to train additional school personnel or reserve law enforcement officers students, if requested by the local school board. Increase Safe Schools allocation and authorize funds to be used for school safety needs, including hardening measures like metal detectors, bulletproof glass, steel doors, etc. Require each school district that receives a Safe Schools Allocation to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local sheriff's office, DJJ, DCF, FDLE, and community behavioral health providers for sharing information to coordinate services for prevention/ intervention services and strategies. Require each school to have a threat assessment team consisting of a teacher, a local law enforcement officer, a human resource officer, a DCF employee, DJJ employee, and the principal, to meet monthly to review any potential threats. Establish a new, anonymous K-12 "See Something, Say Something" statewide, with a dedicated hotline, website, and mobile app. Require crisis intervention training for all school personnel, which must be completed before the 2018 school start. Implement mandatory active shooter training for faculty and students. School districts must use all capital outlay funds received from taxpayers for school hardening before it can be spent on any other capital outlay projects. Establish funding to require access to dedicated mental health counselors to provide direct counseling services to students at every school; with the stipulation that these counselors cannot serve dual roles, such as teaching or academic advising. Expand mental health service teams statewide to serve youth and young adults with early or serious mental illness. Require all individuals to be 21 or older to purchase firearms, with exemptions for military and law enforcement. Ban purchase or sale of bump stocks. Restrict gun purchase and possession for mentally ill individuals under the Baker Act. Create the "Violent Threat Restraining Order" which will allow a court to prohibit a violent or mentally ill person from purchasing or possessing a firearm under certain conditions. Prohibit a person from possessing or purchasing a firearm if they are subject to an injunction for protection against stalking or acts of violence. Establish enhanced criminal penalties for threats to schools, such as social media threats of shootings or bombings. Governor Scott's proposed funding would be \$500 million, with \$450 million for school resource officers and \$50 million for mental health services.

The House and Senate propose to improve school security capabilities through additional school resource and security officers, including a "marshal" program to enhance safety and security in schools through the use of law enforcement trained and screened school personnel who function as part of school security teams. Increase Safe Schools allocation and establish safe school and security standards. Review school safety and security plans. Codify and enhance the activities of the multiagency network for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Implement a school safety specialist training program, and update risk assessment procedures. Require each school district to designate a school safety specialist and each school to establish a threat assessment team to provide a coordinated approach to evaluating and responding to students who pose a threat of violence. Require emergency drills for active shooter and hostage situations involving students, school personnel, and law enforcement experts. Review prior incidents and establishes Commission on School Safety & Security within FDLE to investigate system failures in the Parkland shooting and prior incident. Increase funding for mental health training, screening, counseling, and services in schools. Remove barriers preventing school district and law enforcement authorities from referring students appropriately to mental health services or law enforcement. Require all individuals to be 21 or older to purchase firearms, with exemptions for military and law enforcement. Ban purchase or sale of bump stocks. Restrict gun purchase and possession for mentally ill individuals under the Baker Act. A three-day waiting period for all gun purchases to allow for "cooling off period and sufficient time for a more thorough background check. The House and Senate proposed funding is not specified, but the total is expected to be in excess of \$400 million.

Currently, the funds in Specific Appropriation 81 is \$64,456,019 provided for Safe Schools activities and is allocated as follows: \$62,660 is distributed to each district, and the remaining balance is allocated as follows: two-thirds based on the latest official Florida Crime Index provided by the Department of Law Enforcement and one-third based on each district's share of the state's total un-weighted student enrollment.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE CONTINUED

Lee County School District (LCSD) has 93,167 students enrolled in 120 schools, which includes 24 charter schools. According to the Florida Department of Education, Lee County employs 151 Guidance Counselors, 38 Social Workers, and 26 School Psychologists to serve these students. Many of the school mental health professionals have dual roles as school testing facilitators. In Lee County School District, the ratio of students to mental health providers is roughly 465 students to one mental health provider. These School Mental Health Professionals, Guidance Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists are not funded through Safe Schools.

Lee County School District, in partnership with the Lee County Sheriff's Office, employs 47 School Resource Officers (SRO), one detective, and one supervisor to protect 120 schools. While some schools have a dedicated SRO, many schools have 'rover' SROs, who rotate between schools. Lee County School District's cost for this service is \$1.4 million, and the District received \$989,000 from the state of Florida to cover this expense under Safe Schools this year.

Update on the half-penny sales tax referendum: Due to the passing of HB 317, which provides that a referendum to adopt or amend a local discretionary sales surtax must be held at a general election, the Lee County School Board agreed to place the half-penny sales tax referendum on the general election ballot this fall.

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

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or email at

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

FRANCIS ROONEY

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Phone: (202) 225-2536
or email at

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

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Linda Doggett
Lee County Clerk of Courts



Francis Rooney
U.S. Congressman Dist. 19



Larry Hart
Lee Co. Tax Collector



Americanism

By Erin Casey



Susana Martinez, Age 54

Governor Susana Martinez is the first female Hispanic governor in the United States and a Republican. She is the current governor of New Mexico. Governor Martinez began her political career as a state prosecutor and earned the title of “New Mexico Prosecutor of the Year” in March 2010. She ran in a tough gubernatorial primary that same year and was endorsed by Sarah Palin. She won the election that November. The Governor gained some national recognition in 2012 at the GOP convention in Tampa with her speech to the GOP. Martinez was born in El Paso, Texas and is descended from a hero of the Mexican Revolution. Although she grew up as a Democrat, in 1996 she was invited to lunch by two Republicans and made the startling realization that she was really a Republican at heart and made the switch.

Recently, Governor Martinez gave a State of the State speech highlighting the stark difference between the current economy in New Mexico as compared to last year. She indicated that instead of facing a shortfall, the state is now projecting a budget surplus of \$330 million. She has proposed a six-part plan to continue to grow New Mexico’s economy. Martinez credits this surplus to the fact that back in 2013 lawmakers were able to work together across party lines on a historic tax reform to make New Mexico more business-friendly. Martinez also called for harsher pen

alties for gun crimes, drunk driving and child abuse. The entire transcript of the speech is here: <http://www.kob.com/politics-news/governor-susana-martinez-state-of-the-state-address-transcript-2018/4745938/> .

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IF YOU MISSED THE LRWF CRUISE...YOU MISSED THE FUN!!!

Our ladies set sail on Wednesday, February 21st for a Princess Cruise on the Gordon River. What fun!

A day of food, shopping and congregating with great people!!!



THE LINCOLN REAGON DINNER IN PICTURES



The Color Guard represented our flags well.



Cecill Pendergrass, Lee County Commissioner, stands with his hand on his heart in reverence of our flag and country.



Jonathan Martin, Chairman of LCREC, stands with hand on heart as Caria Everly sings the Star Spangled Banner.



It was a sold out crowd! Thanks Republicans for your support to our Party!



Dane Eagle, State Representative, Brooke Iwanski and Roger Stone pose pretty for the picture!



Matt Calwell, State Representative and candidate for State Secretary of Agriculture speaks to the crowd.



Mrs. Larry Hart, Roger Stone and Mr. Larry Hart...your friendly neighborhood tax collector are all posing pretty for the picture too!



Roger Stone, longtime friend of Donald Trump, lays it all out for us! He was a great speaker!



Marilyn Kostik, LRWF Corresponding Secretary, Amira Fox, candidate for State Prosecutor and her hubby, Mike, having a great time.



*Young Republicans...our future...show up for the gala!
Kevin Karnes, President Young Republicans in front and in the back is Andrew Sund, Treasurer of LCREC and also a Young Republican.*



This is one of five tables sponsored by LRWF. Seated around the table from the far left and then around to the back are Caria Everly, Todd Everly and Therese Everly, Lee Health Board Member, Rita Miller from Linda Doggett's Office, new members Chris Wappes and Joan Clark, Mary Snyder, LRWF newsletter editor and social media chair and Donna Clarke, Lee Health Board Vice Chair.

A graphic for John Fernandez Photography. At the top, it says "JOHN FERNANDEZ" in large white letters, with "P.H.O.T.O.G.R.A.P.H.Y" underneath in smaller white letters. Below this is a photograph of a large, ornate chandelier in a room with a patterned floor. At the bottom, the phone number "239.571.6293" is displayed in white, followed by the email "john@johnfernandezphotography.net" and the website "www.JohnFernandezPhotography.net".