

## Officers

President: Kerri Tonkin  
1st VP: Lori Fayhee  
2nd VP: Amira Fox  
Treasurer: Chris Wappes  
Asst. Treas: Roz Lesser  
Recording Sec: Ruth Rodrigues  
Corresponding Sec: Marilyn Kostik

## Committee Chairs

Americanism: Germaine Hyatt  
Book Chat/MELP: Cheryl Harris  
Caring for America: Ashley Winstel  
Fundraising: Lori Fayhee  
Legislative: Lori Fayhee  
Membership/Hospitality: Peg Love/Joan Clark  
Museum: Kerri Tonkin/Mary Snyder  
Newsletter: Mary Snyder  
Outreach: Mary Snyder  
Publicity: Gail Langner  
Reservations: Ashley Winstel/Mary Ann Hansen  
Social Media: Mary Snyder

## Non-Committee Positions

Past President: Doris Cortese  
Chaplain: Terri Lee  
Photographer: John Fernandez

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James Dozier was born in Arcadia, Florida and graduated from DeSoto County High School in Arcadia. He was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point and the University of Arizona with an MS degree in Aero Space Engineering. He had 35 years military service with the U. S Army and NATO in the United States, Europe and Asia with two tours in the Pentagon on the Army Staff. He specialized in Current Operations and Resource Management.

General Dozier was awarded the Silver Star for heroism and the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat in Viet Nam.

He retired as a Major General in 1985 and moved to North Fort Myers and became involved in agribusinesses until his second retirement in 2004.

Currently he serves as an anti-terrorism consultant to various government and private agencies as a result of his kidnapping by the Italian Red Brigades terrorists in Italy in 1981.

General Dozier serves on the boards of various civic, political and charitable organizations in Southwest Florida. He was appointed by Florida Governor Jeb Bush to the Florida Commission on Veterans Affairs. He also served as one of Florida's 27 Electors during the 2004 Presidential Election. In 2015, he was inducted into Florida Veterans Hall of Fames by Governor Rick Scott for service both while on active duty and after retirement.

In 2006, General Dozier married former Sharlene Hamel from Fort Myers. Jim has two children: Cheryl, a retired USAF Colonel and Scott, a Coast Guard veteran and artist living in North Fort Myers. Sharlene has three children, a son, Steve, who lives in Orlando, plus a son, Art Jr., and daughter, Laura, who live in Fort Myers.

General Dozier will be sharing his life experiences with us. This will be a great experience for all. Please bring a friend...or two so that all may enjoy General Dozier's wisdom and life.

# THE MAHOUT

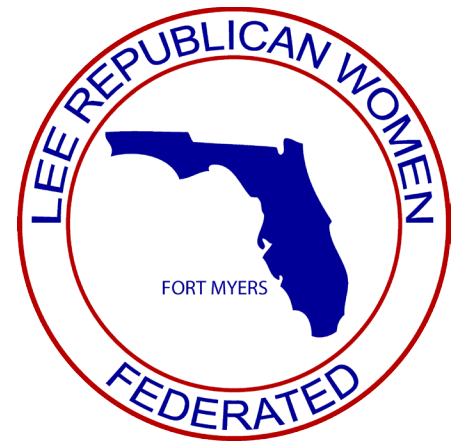
## The Keeper and Driver of the Elephant

JUNE 2019

*Strong Women for a Strong America*



James L Dozier  
Major General , U. S. Army, Retired



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### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"A lie doesn't become truth, wrong doesn't become right, evil doesn't become good, just because it's accepted by a majority."*

*Booker T. Washington*

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### JOIN US!

The next meeting of LRWF is June 10th at Pincher's Restaurant. at the Marina, in Fort Myers at 2360 West First Street. Our speaker will be James L Dozier, Major General, U.S. Army, Retired.

The menu choices are:

1. Grilled Chicken with Coconut Rice and summer squash
2. Coconut Shrimp with white rice and summer squash
3. Plain Caesar's Salad

*Social hour begins at 5:15 PM  
with dinner following*

Reservation Deadline is Thursday,  
June 6th at noon.

For reservations call or text  
Ashley Winstel at 602-708-8663 or  
email [acwinstel@gmail.com](mailto:acwinstel@gmail.com)

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

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## NEWSLETTER OF LEE REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED

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

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Kerri Tonkin, LRWF President

Hello Beautiful Ladies and Gents,

Wow! Can you believe it is June already? Time really is a jet plane and we will be in the battle of 2020 before you know it. I hope all of you had a wonderful Memorial Day celebrating our heroes.

If you missed our May meeting, here are some highlights for you. The food was wonderful. One lady said she was wanting to lick the plate. Representative Spencer Roach gave a very informative talk on the bills that passed this year in Tallahassee and the ones still pending for next session. Spencer took questions after and I think the meeting could have lasted another hour as there were way more questions than time. Our club proudly gave a college scholarship of \$1000 to Katherine Stoll who intends to go to college here in Florida and major in senior public policy. We also presented our Caring for America award of \$1000 to Valaries' House... A local charity that offers a special safe house for children who have lost a parent to cancer or our fallen military. So if you ever wonder what happens to our fund-

raising money, this is a small example of how we use the money to benefit our community. Our next Caring for America charity is also local and is called Lighthouse of SWFL. They help the visually impaired.

This year we activated our Outreach program. Mary Snyder is the chair and if you would like to assist please contact her. You may call her at 239-910-4634 or email her at [LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com](mailto:LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com).

2020 is going to be a big year for us in Lee County. All of our state representatives will be on the ballot along with the state senator position as many are term limited out with the exception of Representative Roach. On top of that we have the Congressional representative seat and our President to fight for. Every day 800 people move to Florida, mostly from the very liberal states up north and with them for some reason they bring their same voting habits. We need to be able to get our message out and change hearts and minds.

As part of our Outreach program I am offering a nice prize for the member who signs up the most new members.

I am urging our members to not get complacent, I know everything is good now but with the media, schools and influx of new Floridians against us, we absolutely must stay involved and get our message out on why they are moving to Florida in the first place. It just isn't the sunshine. We have low taxes, common sense regulations, business friendly communities among other things that make Florida a great place to live. The Dems have declared Florida a battleground state and we must acknowledge that they mean it. We have made so many great gains in our state and our President has done so much with little help from Congress that we do not want to go backwards. Right now we are helping to sponsor a letter campaign to newly arriving citizens who were Republicans or non-partisan and offering to help them register as Republicans. If you would like to help give me a call.

I hope to see you all at our dinner in June.

Blessings,

Kerri Tonkin  
LRWF President



*Happy Memorial Day!*

*Thanks to all who fought for our freedom!*



There will be no Book Chat until September. We will post our new book selection in the newsletter. If you are able to join us, please call or email me so we may plan accordingly. Please join us next fall for afternoons with like-minded thinkers. We will enjoy our book discussions and share political updates. Look forward to seeing you.

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

# CHINA, RUSSIA AND IRAN USE SOUTH AMERICAN UPHEAVAL TO GAIN A WESTERN FOOTHOLD

*By Francis Rooney*



*Francis Rooney  
US House of Representatives*

America has taken the relative calm of the Western Hemisphere for granted. We have paid little attention to foreign influence from across the globe descending on the region and only now are we realizing the consequences. The growing presence of American adversaries such as Russia, China and Iran in Latin America alters the strategic landscape south of the United States and should serve as a wake-up call for United States engagement in Latin America.

Russia has played a role in Latin America for decades, but its presence there has seen a resurgence which could prove troublesome to the United States. Russia serves as a lender, trade partner, arms dealer and security guarantor to many Latin American countries. Many of these countries have been openly anti-American at some point including Cuba and various others.

Cuba and Venezuela are both deeply tied to Russia. Recently, Russia forgave 90 percent of Cuba's \$32 billion debt, and Russian power company Interrao has assisted Cuba by building four power stations. In Venezuela, Russia continues to strengthen its support of Nicolas Maduro's socialist regime. Like in Cuba, Russia has restructured Venezuela's debts as it continues to hold up the failing economy. In December, President Vladimir Putin pledged \$6 billion of investment and then sent four military aircraft to the nation, reminiscent of Russia's Cold War posturing in Latin America.

Further complicating the situation is Russian gas company Rosneft's 49.9 percent stake in Citgo, the U.S. branch of Venezuela's state-owned oil company, PDVSA. A Venezuelan default on Russian loans would allow Rosneft to acquire several refineries and other assets in the United States.

Russia has solidified long-standing relationships with Bolivia and Nicaragua. They have sold armored vehicles and weapons to a corrupt government in Nicaragua, including T-72 tanks and BMP-3 and BTR-80 armored vehicles. In Bolivia, Russia is assisting in the development of energy facilities including a nuclear facility at El Alto and several oil fields operated by Russian oil giant Gazprom.

Russia has also expanded its influence to other friendly Latin American nations, selling military helicopters and hardware to Argentina, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil. These trends are reminiscent of Cold War Soviet strategy to expand its presence in America's sphere of influence and draw our attention and resources from other global issues.

China's influence in Latin America is relatively new, but has quickly outpaced that of Russia. Communist China is already the largest export market for many Latin American countries including Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Peru, and Uruguay. From 2006 to 2016 total trade between China and Latin America increased by 200 percent compared to an increase of only 38 percent between the United States and Latin America.

Further, the Export-Import Bank of China is positioning itself as the primary option for large-scale investment and infrastructure projects across the region. China has invested \$150 billion in more than 100 infrastructure projects in 16 countries across Latin America through their Belt and Road Initiative.

In Ecuador, the Export-Import Bank of China funded the construction of the Coca Codo Sinclair Hydroelectric Plant which now produces 35% of the country's energy. China is also exporting its nuclear technology through contracts it has signed to build two nuclear power plants Argentina, and a Chinese company has bought a 90 percent stake in Brazil's most profitable container port, the Port of Paranaguá.

Perhaps most troubling is the evidence of Iranian involvement in the region, which is markedly more covert and nefarious compared to the Russian and Chinese presence. The tri-border area (TBA) between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay has long been known as a base for illicit and terrorist activity. Hezbollah has been active in the TBA and it is estimated that the terrorist group earns \$20 million each year from their activities in the area. This is essentially a terrorist training ground on America's doorstep.

Iran also partnered with Venezuela to build a Parchin Chemical Facility, which produces some of the key components of rocket fuel. Iran was able to use this facility to circumvent U.S. sanctions for several years while developing their missile technology in our own hemisphere.

This influence is simply the first step that our adversaries will take as they seek to influence events and actors in our own hemisphere. The United States must recognize the vulnerabilities we will face if we continue to ignore the geopolitical importance of our southern neighbors. As events in Venezuela illustrate, disastrous authoritarian and socialist policies result in deleterious consequences for our friends in the region and produce a vacuum filled by our adversaries in an effort to destabilize our hemisphere.



*Americanism*  
By Germaine Hyatt

## Chester Alan Arthur

1881-1885



Chester Alan Arthur  
5th Republican President

Chester Alan Arthur, President 1881-1885, the handsome son of a Baptist minister, like many of the preceding presidents served in the military during the civil war after which he practiced law. He represented Lizzie Jennings, an African American, where he won the case against discrimination on public transportation in New York City showing strong abolitionist beliefs. Hailing from Vermont he soon took to New York and was befriended by Senator Rosco Conkling the Republican boss of New York. Senator Conkling backed Arthur to become the custom collector where the bulk of the nations tariff revenues were collected. And having been appointed by President Grant (1871) to be the ranking official of customs he had many Republican party members as employees. Supported by Conkling he was not successful in seeking the Presidency but was slated as Vice President running mate with James Garfield. With the short term of Garfield, due to his assassination, Arthur acceded to be the 21st President of the United States.

As President he confounded his critics and many friends, among the Stalwart faction of the Republican party, by supporting the Pendleton Civil Service Act 1883, which provided for the open appointment and promotion of federal employees based on merit rather than patronage. The Arthur Administration enacted the first Federal immigration law where Arthur approved a measure in 1882 excluding paupers, criminals and lunatics. Congress suspended Chinese immigration for 10 years.

He did not get the nomination for another run for President and died the following year, 1886, from kidney disease.

## Outreach Unlimited...

*With Mary Snyder*

Many things are continuing to develop for our Outreach Committee.

Doris Cortese is the new chairman of the Jonathan Project. Ask her about it and how you can help.

Go to our newly re-created "Outreach" facebook *group*. Put Lee Republican Women in the search bar. Join us if you are not already a member of the group. There are two Facebook pages under that name. They are both ours.

We also have gone out to Centennial Park to talk to felons and register them to vote. What a great opportunity for us to do this. If we don't reach these people, the Democrats will.

Below are some bullet points of things that I want to accomplish. I need your help to do this, so PLEASE come forward. Call me or email me because time is short. I can't do this alone.

- Go to the new citizens at their naturalization ceremonies and present them with a gift bag that also includes an invitation to be a guest at one of our meetings, a brochure explaining why they need to be a Republican along with a registration form.
- Set up tables at various locations that we have been given permission to occupy with registration forms.
- Reach out to Hispanics and Blacks letting them know what the Republican party does for them... breaking the mistaken concept that we are against them.
- Get involved with talking to the felons who have served their time, telling them why the Republican party can help them and registering them to vote.
- Reaching out to evangelical with registration forms and also teaching them to vote their values and to NOT sit home on election day.

Time is short. If we do not win the 2020 election, we will be faced with late term abortion, infanticide, losing gun rights, losing our religious freedom and all kinds of things that go against our moral values.

Email me at [LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com](mailto:LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com) or call me at 239-910-4634.



## *My Opinion* *By Mary Snyder*

### **UNCLE JOE...** *(all fact, no opinion)*

Joe Biden and John Kerry are best friends. In 2009, Joe's son, Hunter Biden and John Kerry's stepson, Christopher Hines, went into business together. They brought in a third person who went to school with Christopher at Yale. His name is Devon Archer. Devon also co-chaired Kerry's campaign finance committee when Kerry ran for president. The three started some international investment companies, Rosemont Capital and Rosemont Seneca Partners. The businesses were located between John Kerry's house and the Vice Presidential mansion in Washington D.C. They also brought in two other partners from the Ukraine. They were Mikola Zoleski and Ihor Kolomoysky. They were both founders and owners of a company by the name of Burisma, the largest private natural gas company in all of Ukraine. Mikola was a former Ukrainian government minister with Russian ties and Ihor was so bad that he could not get a visa nor could he get permission to enter the U.S.

In February 2014, when Russia invaded Crimea, Obama made Biden his point man to the Ukraine. Biden flew back and forth and talked on the phone constantly with Ukrainian officials. This continued until 2017. Foreign Policy magazine said, "No one in the U.S. government has wielded more influence over the Ukraine than Vice President Joe Biden."

One month after Biden became Obama's point man to the Ukraine, he met with Devon Archer at the Whitehouse. Five days after that, Joe Biden flew to the Ukraine and met with all of the leaders of the Ukraine. In those meetings, he brought very specific plans to give a \$1.8 billion loan to help the Ukraine meet its financial obligations and protect vulnerable citizens from the impact of economic adjustments. He stated that U.S. government agencies would travel to the Ukraine to meet immediate and long term energy needs.

The next day after receiving the \$1.8 billion dollars from the U.S., the Ukrainians needed experts to come in to help get the gas out of the ground so they invited Burisma to help out. Burisma brought in Devon Archer. Three weeks later Hunter Biden was brought in to help. The combined experience between Devon Archer and Hunter Biden on gas was zero. But... both were on the board of Burisma.

What kind of a company was Burisma? An energy journalist, James Tapper stated "Burisma fails to pass the most basic due diligence check. Its registration documents are impossible to run down. It publishes no asset information or financial records, nor does it release any audited financial statements... the complete lack of transparency means that anyone interested – including potential investors – must rely solely on press releases about Burisma's future plans and intentions."

Hunter Biden and Devon Archer joined the board of Barisma right before the British government decided to freeze \$23 million in assets of their partner and the founder of Barisma, Mikola Zoleski. Nine months later, they gave up and unfroze the assets because they couldn't get the Iranian prosecutors to cooperate.

After Hunter and Devon joined the company, the owner of Barisma, Ihor Kolomoysky was suddenly off of the U.S. ban and could suddenly get visas. Not only did the ban on the visas disappear, but the \$1.8 billion disappeared. Where did it go? The United States paid it, but they had to put it in a bank. They put it into the biggest bank in the Ukraine... PrivatBank.

PrivatBank is owned by none other than, Ihor Kolomoysky. After some investigation, it was found that at least one billion dollars was laundered through Ihor's offshore businesses. The Ukrainian government took control of that bank, but the money that you worked hard for and paid to your government was laundered by Joe Biden through his son and Barisma.

This is a sad state of affairs, but to top it all off... at the time, Uncle Joe was preaching in the Ukraine against corruption. Uncle Joe threatened that he would pull a billion dollars from the Ukraine unless the president of the Ukraine would fire the federal prosecutor. He said the prosecutor was too soft on corruption. As it turns out, the federal prosecutor that he had fired was investigating Barisma.

When the new prosecutor came on the scene, he got wise and realized that the investigation on Barisma had not been completed and he took it back up. One thing that was found was that Barisma was paying consulting fees to Rosemont Seneca Partners, one of the two companies owned by Hunter Biden, Christopher Hines and Devon Archer.

In 2016 Devon Archer was arrested for a securities scam to defraud a native American tribe. It was discovered through Devon's financial records that between April 2014 through October 2015, Barisma paid a total of \$3 million to Rosemont Seneca Partners, There were checks written, so there was a paper trail. The checks were written to Hunter Biden, the son of Uncle Joe Biden.

Seven people were tried as co-conspirators in the case where Devon Archer went to jail. They were all put in prison, but five months later, a federal judge overturned the conviction of Devon Archer, and he was released from prison. I pray to God that Joe Biden does not become our President. And then there was China. More to come... unfortunately.

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## THE HISTORY OF MEMORIAL DAY

- The original name for the holiday was Decoration Day.
- Memorial Day is set aside to honor those who died in our Nation's service.
- Originally started to commemorate the deceased of the Civil War.
- Waterloo, NY was declared the official birthplace of Memorial Day by President Johnson in 1966.
- Over two dozen towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day.
- Southern women are said to have started the tradition of decorating the graves of Confederate Soldiers with flags and flowers.
- Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5th, 1868.
- A General, not a President, declared Memorial Day.
- Memorial Day was first observed on May 30th, 1868.
- Memorial Day is celebrated on the last Monday in May.
- The first state to recognize the day was NY.
- On the first, official Memorial Day a large ceremony was held at Arlington National Cemetery and flowers were placed on the headstones.
- Most southern states refused to recognize the day officially until after WWI.
- After WWI the Day was adjusted to celebrate the deceased in all wars.
- A National Holiday Act was signed by Congress in 1971, ensuring a three day weekend for the Federal Holiday.
- Texas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Tennessee, all have separate days to honor the South's Civil War hero's.
- Red poppies are the unofficial flower of Memorial Day.
- The VFW was the first veterans' organization to sell poppies nationally.
- The "Buddy" Poppy Program sells imitation poppies made by veterans.
- Memorial Day parades were once a standard of the day.
- In 2000 the National Moment of Remembrance was initiated.
- The National Moment of remembrance asks that all Americans at 3:00 pm, pause from any action to somehow honor the deceased of our many wars.
- In 1951 the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis began the placement of 150,000 flags at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. This tradition still stands.
- In 2004 Washington D.C. held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.
- Memorial Day is the, unofficial, beginning of summer activities.
- US death tolls for Memorial Weekend are higher than almost any other weekend.
- On Memorial Day the flag should be flown at half staff until noon and full staff the rest of the day.
- Hundreds of thousands of motorcyclists descend on Washington D.C. each Memorial Day in a parade of appreciation for fallen soldiers, MIA's, and POW's. This tradition started in 1988 with 2,500 motorcyclists.

# MEMORIAL DAY

## REMEMBER AND HONOR OUR SOLDIERS

## PRAY FOR OUR VETERANS





*This month I would like to share with you the  
2019 Final Legislative report written by Jean Gonzalez Wingo, 1st VP  
Florida Federation of Republican Women (FFRW).*

### **FFRW 2019 FINAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Thanks to the tremendous cooperation between Gov. Ron DeSantis, Senate President Galvano, and Speaker Oliva, 2019 was the most responsible and victorious Session we have seen!

In the 2nd week, the FFRW put forth 5 priority issues: (1) Human Trafficking requiring hotels and restaurants to train employees, (2) a large increase in Hurricane Relief for the panhandle, (3) the courageous Rule of Law bill by Gruters/Byrd known as Sanctuary Cities preventing cities from inhibiting law enforcement's cooperation with ICE, (4) implementation of amendment 4 by Grant requiring restitution to victims for felons to vote (the amendment said complete "all terms of their sentence" - that IS part of the sentence!) and (5) Red Tide mitigation.

Of the 3400 bills filed, 150 passed. Our 5 were among them as well as one we supported last year, distracted driving, which was bogged down by Parkland shooting legislation. That completed our list of top priority bills from last year also!

In the closing weeks, we asked that rainy day funds be used for Hurricane Michael as the Democrats in Congress refused to provide relief even as people continued to live in half destroyed trailers and tents and unprecedented amounts of trees lay on the ground inviting wildfires. We joined CFO Patronis, legislators, the cabinet, and victims in a press conference highlighting the concern. The Florida legislature added \$1 billion from reserves to the \$783 million from the state budget! This included money to rebuild destroyed schools and hospitals.

Additionally, our list encouraged more money be given to education and the environment due to Florida and Trump's strong economy. A large increase per pupil was funded for schools, 18,000 more scholarships were given to charter schools and numerous environmental issues were funded.

Other positive issues for women, the safety net hospitals got \$310 million, new safety standards were placed on plastic surgery centers, the business rent tax was cut again (we supported this 2 years ago), and an increased penalty for injuring police animals. An attempted run at allowing previously banned horrendous puppy mills was defeated which we also opposed.

It is impossible to imagine a more perfect Session for us! You made a tremendous difference by following legislative issues, making calls and emailing legislators. The liberal women's groups like NOW opposed many of these important issues and the women of Florida owe you a debt of gratitude! Please send a thank you to your legislators and then share with your members as you use the information to recruit new women who want to make a difference. Let them know what this great Republican legislature and Governor are accomplishing as we begin to re-elect Donald Trump!

Jean Gonzalez Wingo,  
1st VP FFRW

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### **Lee County School Board Update**

Following a series of widely publicized blunders and investigations, Lee schools Superintendent Greg Adkins survived an effort by school Board Members and the community to fire him, with a 4-3 vote. The seven-member board completed the Superintendent's annual evaluation — and Board Member, Giovannelli, noted at the end of her evaluation that she planned to move to terminate Adkins during the meeting. The board evaluated Adkins in the four areas of educational leadership, professional leadership, community leadership, and executive leadership and rated Adkins with a score between 1 and 4, in each category, to calculate an overall rating. Adkins has been the Superintendent since he was appointed, by the Board, as the interim Superintendent in 2015.

Giovannelli gave Adkins an overall rating of 1.42, Unsatisfactory, while Gittens and Vaughn rated Adkins as Needs Improvement. Patricca, Jordan and Morgan — rated Adkins with nearly perfect scores of 3.93, 3.82, and 3.82, Highly Effective. Fischer gave Adkins an Effective rating. The board members who gave Adkins poor evaluations questioned his leadership and mentioned district missteps in their evaluations, like the Bonita Springs High School construction controversy and a recent omission on a teacher scholarship form that could cost the district at least \$200,000. Giovannelli's evaluation, among other issues, criticized Adkins for not being transparent, not communicating effectively, and for the resignation of high-ranking leaders in the school district. Board Chairwoman, Gittens, included many areas of concern, including controversial raises given to executive leaders, unfilled positions, and the way Adkins has addressed her, 'in a very insubordinate way' at some

meetings. Patricca called Giovanelli's plan to ask the board to fire Adkins "absurd" and a "political move to serve a special interest group." She questioned how the board could fire Adkins based on his accomplishments, including, what she referred to as his greatest accomplishment, the passage of the half-percent sales tax last year.

The School board also completed evaluations of their work as a board, and gave the board low-performance marks, grading its performance with 3 Unsatisfactory ratings, 3 D's, and one C. Unsatisfactory is the lowest possible grade on the board's evaluation system.

On May 8, 2019, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill that allows teachers in Florida public schools to be armed in classrooms - if the school district 'opt-in' to the Guardian program, which allows qualified teachers and other staff to volunteer to carry a gun on campus after they have received intensive mental health screening and intensive training by a sheriff's office. Lee County school board voted unanimously to only support the use of trained law enforcement officers to safeguard its schools and will not allow teachers to be armed in Lee County Schools.

### ***Where are your tax dollars being spent?***

Lee County School District is under investigation by the Florida Department of Education, following a December 2018 investigation by the Florida Auditor General, and the District may have to repay as much as \$3.9 million in funding after the state said that Lee County School District misspent millions in taxpayer money, the Board was informed this month. The deadline for the District to respond is May 31st.

In April, the School District is purchasing 15 acres in Estero for over \$4M. The two pieces of land are near the end of Block Lane, northwest of Estero High School and west of River Ranch Road. According to the district, their immediate plan is to use the properties to build another K-8 school in Estero - the area with the lowest population of students in Lee County.

The school district bought the 5 acres from Park Place of Estero. The Lee County Property Appraiser's office listed the market value of this land as \$910,000. The district has not released its own appraisal of the land yet. The district bought the 10 acres from the Newquist Family. The county appraiser's office listed the market value of the land as \$371,698. The school board approved this 10-acre land purchase of \$2,670,933.00 at the April 9th meeting.

The district cites its growth in students as the reason it needs to build more schools and they state that their figures show there were 83,111 students enrolled in Lee County public schools, not including charter schools, last month compared to 81,579 in April 2018 - an increase of 1,532 students. The District lists eight schools on the sales tax project list, including five new schools, with the first new school being built with tax proceeds to be a high school in Gateway, scheduled to open in 2021. They plan to tear down and rebuild Franklin Park Elementary and Cypress Lake Middle schools and the state must approve those plans before the district can proceed. The district is also studying whether to build a new facility or renovate a building to meet the needs of Fort Myers Technical College.

In March, The school district considered paying \$625,000 for 20 acres in Fort Myers, along Michael G. Rippe Parkway, south of Briarwood Terrace for building a warehouse, bus depot, student enrollment office and administrative office. The Site Selection Committee voted in favor of this purchase, but the Superintendent decided against it, based on the advice of school district staff, according to the district spokeswoman.

May 21, 2019 The Board approved an estimated expenditure for branding, awarded to Priority Marketing of Fort Myers, in the amount of \$350,000.00, for the third year of the base contract period through June 2020. According to the Board agenda, 'Services include creating a District brand, communication of the District's brand, preparing District staff to deliver the District's message, leveraging technology to reach all stakeholders and recruitment advertising.'

Be prepared for the possibility of another school district tax referendum on your 2020 ballot asking for another increase in your tax dollars. A 2019 editorial posted on NBC2, titled, 'Chris Patricca explains how the district is funded, and how you can help get those funding decisions made locally', summarized the desire to have the school District able to exercise the same discretion with regard to setting millage rates that the county and municipalities have - and to raise the Required Local Effort (RLE), the expected property tax revenue for the district.' She expressed concern that the PUBLIC SCHOOL - BY STATE LAW millage rate decreased due to homestead exemption, 'and the amount you are paying is less than last year - even though your property is worth more.'

Isn't that the reason we support homestead exemption? The actual 2019 LCSB legislative priorities on this read: 'Update of the calculation for the Required Local Effort (RLE) millage rate to capture the increase in residential and commercial property values and revenue gained from new construction.'

An April 24th Wink News headline read, 'Property Tax Hike Proposed - Money would pay for teacher salary increases in Lee County.' This article stated that 'The Lee County Teachers Union is pushing to increase property taxes in hopes to get a more significant raise.' According to Reporter, Brendon Leslie, he spoke with several school board members and "the general consensus is they are open to the idea of a conversation around a property tax hike."





To: Lee Health Everyone

As the 2019 legislation session comes to a close, I wanted to update you on the request I made two weeks ago to contact your Florida Senator about two bills that will change the scope of the delivery of health care in our community.

Our local senators received hundreds of e-mails against these bills, and I thank you for taking the time to voice your opinion. The Florida

Hospital Association worked tirelessly with lawmakers throughout session to come to reasonable compromises, but did not prevail. The repeal on CON will roll out in two phases, becoming effective for general acute care hospitals this year and specialty hospitals in 2021.

Most hospitals will now be free to enter our region without the following requirements: a 24/7 emergency room, a requirement to provide charity care and Medicaid services or a minimum bed requirement. While we feel this could have detrimental effects to the quality of care Southwest Florida patients receive, we must adapt to the new environment the legislature has created and continue to serve as the region's leader in high quality and safe health care. We are also still looking into how the bill might affect our CON hearing with AHCA for our planned hospital at Coconut Point.

In addition to CON repeal, ambulatory surgery centers will now be permitted to keep patients for up to 24 hours and perform more complicated procedures. This will be marketed as a cheaper option for patients, however ASCs are not subject to the same rigorous regulations as a traditional hospital and are often not equipped to provide critical care services should a complication arise.

These changes to Florida's health care landscape will significantly impact our health system, and we must take them seriously. New hospitals will be coming to Lee County, and it is imperative we continue to build on the successes of ExceptionalLee and Performance Excellence to provide high-quality, safe and compassionate care to our patients. This will help us build loyalty in our community, and we need to work together to ensure Southwest Floridians and visitors alike think of Lee Health as the best possible provider for their health care needs.

While these two bills did not go how we hoped, we were able to defeat several other bills that also would have had a negative impact on patient safety. These bills included measures that would've allowed the creation of recovery care centers, repealed personal injury protection insurance and allowed outpatient C-sections at advanced birthing centers.

In addition to defeating these bills, we fared extremely well in the legislature's budgeting process. We secured an appropriation for our Graduate Medical Education (GME) program, made significant gains in Medicaid rates and reimbursement structure and will receive a more equitable patient distribution for our Provider Service Network, Vivida Health.

Thank you again for your advocacy during the closing weeks of session. We are entering uncharted waters for the delivery of health care in our area. While it could take a few years to determine the full impact of CON repeal, we are already beginning to look at how we will need to adjust strategically. We are the largest and most trusted health care provider in Lee County, and now more than ever we must embrace our caring culture, compassionate delivery of care and exceptional safety standards to ensure the SWFL community knows that Lee Health is the health system where themselves and their loved ones receive the best possible care in the region.

Yours in Health,

Larry Antonucci, M.D., MBA  
President & CEO, Lee Health



**GO TO OUR  
LEE REPUBLICAN WOMEN FEDERATED  
FACEBOOK GROUP**

**(Type Lee RepublicanWomen Federated  
in the Facebook search bar)**

**THEN... IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER,  
REQUEST TO BECOME ONE.**



At the May meeting there were several guests in attendance. Membership applications went out the door with each person. We're happy that our members are encouraging both new and "old" friends to come and visit LRWF and become prospective members. Personally, I brought my friend and neighbor, Hilde Wegrzyn and I met Rollie Fisher while working my Saturday volunteer day at Republican Headquarters. Rollie in turn invited her friend Candace Patton.

Hearing Spencer Roach speak was an excellent introduction to what our meetings are all about. Spencer never disappoints!

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

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**Renew your membership at:**

<https://www.leerepublicanwomen.com/store>

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**2019 LRWF Meeting Dates and Times**

July 8: Luncheon 11:15 AM  
August 12: Dinner 5:15 PM  
September 9: Luncheon 11:15 AM

October 14: Dinner 5:15 PM  
November 11: Luncheon 11:15 AM  
December 9: Dinner 5:15 PM

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**OUR SPONSORS**

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*Amira Fox  
Florida State Attorney  
20th Judicial Circuit*



*Francis Rooney  
US House of Representatives  
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*Cecil Pendergrass  
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*Spencer Roach  
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*Jenna Persons  
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*Brian Hammon  
Lee County Commissioner*



*Linda Doggett  
Lee County Clerk of Courts*



*Larry Hart  
Lee Co. Tax Collector*



*Randy Krise  
Krise Commercial Group*

## THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES



*Three lovely ladies...Cheryl Harris, chair of Book Chat, Diane Van Parys, President of Women of SW Florida Federated and our own President, Kerri Tonkin.*



*Meet Katherine Stoll...take a good look, because she will be President of the United States some day. She speaks to our group after receiving the LRWF Scholarship check. Katherine is a great gal! She will make a great impact on our world.*



*Katherine Stoll gets an LRWF Scholarship check for \$1000 from Kathy McMichaels. Congratulations Katherine. No one deserves it more*



*Katherine Stoll with her mother Gina on the left and grandmother in the middle. You raised a great gal ladies! Congratulations to the three of you!*



*Lance Wissinger and Erica Racz his assistant came as visitors to our club, they will be registering felons to vote as they are coming out of prison.*



*Hilde Wegrzyn and Candace Patton are two lovely ladies that were guests of Peg Love. Hoping to see them again.*



*Ashley Winstel is presenting Angela Melvin from Valerie's House with a \$1000 check from our Caring for America project.*



*Ashley Winstel and Angela Melvin are all smiles. The Valerie's House project was very worthwhile.*

*Doris Cortese, Past LRWF President, Spencer Roach, Florida Congressman and Renie Frank who has been up north for too long! Welcome back Renie!*





*Left to right...Cheryl Harris of Book Chat, Kerri Tonkin, LRWF President and Donna Doyle, the lovely wife of our Supervisor of Elections*



*Rita Miller from the Clerk's office and Lori Fayhee, LRWF 1st Vice President*



*Spencer Roach, Florida Congressman was a star at our meeting. He gave us an update on the Legislation in this past session. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated legislator*



*Linda Dogget, Clerk of Courts with Lorraine Albino-Hinkley*