



January 2016 Edition

NPRC

First Edition

North Pinellas Republican Club

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Next Meeting This month we get back to our regular schedule. The next meeting is at Leo's Restaurant and will feature an interesting and informative speaker. Arrive early (at 6:30) and discuss the latest political events while eating your meal. This meeting kicks off the "Year of the Election!" For most of the rest of this year we will try to feature election related speakers and talks. It is also the year to get involved in elections. I know President Jim Downes wants to get people involved in helping candidates by carrying signs, making phone calls, or working some other aspects of a Republican candidate's campaign. And to start the election season off right, this month's speaker will be Congressman Gus Bilirakis. This is a chance for club members to find out what has been going on in Congress and what we should expect in the next few months. Bring your questions and opinions. This is a great opportunity to get that "inside scoop" we all crave. Gus has always been a supporter of our club, so let's get out and welcome him.



Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis is a Republican from Palm Harbor, representing Florida's 12th Congressional District, which includes all of Pasco and northern parts of Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. He was first elected to Congress on November 7, 2006, and is currently serving his fifth term in the United States House of Representatives.

As a young boy, Gus learned the importance of public service from his father, Michael Bilirakis, who represented Florida's Ninth Congressional District from 1983 to 2006. The elder Bilirakis also instilled in his son a pride in the family's Greek heritage, which Gus proudly carries into his career today.

Gus serves on the Energy and Commerce Committee and is Vice-Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. He is Chair of the Veterans' Affairs Task Force for the Republican Policy Committee, Co-Chairman of the Military Veterans Caucus and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus and the Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance. Working in a bipartisan manner, his main priorities include controlling government spending, creating jobs for middle class

Americans, finding ways for government to operate smaller and smarter, and lowering taxes. He is also committed to strengthening homeland security, improving education, increasing access to quality health care, protecting veterans' benefits, and ensuring the long-term viability of Social Security and Medicare.

The Energy and Commerce Committee is the longest-standing committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. As the only Florida Republican on the Committee, Gus continues to be a strong voice for Florida, and his roles on the Health, Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade, and Communications and Technology Subcommittees are highly beneficial for our state. With the fourth largest GDP, Florida is an important and robust economic engine that should carry great consideration when Congress examines ways we can drive this economy forward. Our state also has the greatest proportion of residents 65 years and older, making it even more important for Congress to ensure a quality and affordable healthcare system for current and future generations. Finally, with the highest per capita residential electricity demand, Florida has a vested interest in ensuring our country becomes more energy independent and has reliable access to a broad array of energy sources.

Gus is also known for his work on behalf of Veterans. In his role as Vice-Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and member of the Health Subcommittee, Gus continues to ensure our nation's heroes remain a top priority. In addition, Congressman Bilirakis is fighting to bring additional health care resources to Florida and the Twelfth Congressional District. Since coming to Congress, he has worked with local and national VA officials to expand the Pasco County VA Outpatient Clinic, bringing additional health care services, such as dental care and mental health services, to area veterans. He also has visited the James Haley VA Medical Center (VAMC), meeting with the medical center staff and Veterans to discuss the care and services provided at the VAMC.

Prior to being elected to Congress, Gus served four terms in the Florida House of Representatives (1998-2006), where he chaired several

prominent panels, including Crime Prevention, Public Safety Appropriations, and the Economic Development, Trade and Banking Committee. While in Tallahassee, he won bipartisan acclaim for his leadership on efforts to make communities safer, improve transportation, reform government, recognize the sacrifices of America's Veterans and expand the role community health centers play in making health care more available to lower-income individuals. During this time, he also served as Senior Partner at the Bilirakis Law Group in Holiday, Florida, where he specialized in wills, trusts and estate planning.

Gus earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Florida in 1986 and a J.D. from Stetson University in 1989. He interned for President Ronald Reagan and the National Republican Congressional Committee, and worked for former U.S. Representative Don Sundquist (R-TN). He also currently teaches government classes at St. Petersburg College.

Gus and his wife, Eva, have four sons – Michael, Teddy, Manuel and Nicholas.

Last Regular Meeting. There was no regular meeting in December, nor was there a book club meeting. Instead, we had ...

The Christmas Party This year's Christmas party was held at the home of Kim and Larry Marlin. It was the lone club event for the month. About 40 people attended the party and we had a great time. Editor' note: *If the club ever asks you to host a party, do it. Our house was cleaner after the members left than when they arrived.* Rachelle Warmouth made several visits to the house to lay out the party venue. Later, other members began arriving to deliver items such as appetizers and deserts. Jim Downes and his son delivered the coolers and ice. Those who arrived early did a great job of setting up. The food was from the Lucky Dill and it was great.

Besides a really nice party with plenty of Christmas wishes and cheer, there was the usual informed political talk and discussions. I kept switching political positions as I listened to various members, because they are such skillful debaters. In the end, I would be happy with any Republican winner! Speaking of winners ...

Joe Barbara was chosen as “Republican of the Year” by the club. Joe has always been very active in the club and party. We all know him as the host and chef for the club’s picnic. But many of us don’t know the hard work he has done for the Republican party over the years. A couple days after the Christmas party, I was speaking with some members who have not been too active in the club in recent years. They knew Joe very well and told stories of his efforts during elections. They told me that if you needed any help during a campaign, you just called on Joe. He certainly deserves the honor.

The following pictures are courtesy of Ron Walker (Pictures of Deputy of the Year award) and Bill Hickman (pictures of the Republican of the Year award and view of Christmas party participants).



Joe receiving Republican of the Year award from the club. Award is presented by club president Jim Downes.

Also honored at the party was the “deputy of the year” Afram Bassous. He is a man obviously capable of taking care of himself, but, as is so often the case, he comes across as a caring and self-effacing hero.

NPRC RECOGNIZES PCSO “DEPUTY OF THE YEAR”

Posted on December 14, 2015

by [nprc2012](#)



(L-R): Captain Jack Peterson, Deputy Afram Bassous, and Lieutenant K.W. Somers.

OLDSMAR, FL (December 13, 2015) – The North Pinellas Republican Club (PCRC) recently recognized Deputy Afram Bassous of the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office (PCSO) as “Deputy of the Year.” The tribute was developed to thank the men and women of the sheriff’s office for their service to the county. In particular, it identifies an individual deputy who best exemplifies the PCSO’s code of “*Trust, Integrity, Accountability, and Respect.*” Deputy Bassous was selected because of his role on November 29th in apprehending four burglary suspects in Dunedin. It appears the suspects spent the greater part of the night committing burglaries at various locations in Pinellas and Pasco counties. Dep. Bassous’ quick apprehension of them resulted in the recovery of property stolen from known and currently unknown victims, and the closure of several cases. It is

believed additional victims will be identified as the investigation continues.

The presentation was made at the NPRC Christmas Party at the home of Kim & Larry Marlin, where Deputy Bassous was formally recognized. Also in attendance were his superiors, Lieutenant K.W. Somers, and Captain Jack Peterson. Making the presentation was Tim Bryce of the NPRC and Ken Giesow, PCSO retired. NPRC Club President Jim Downes remarked, *“As a community, we owe the men and women of the PCSO a lot for their service. This presentation is the least we could do to show our support for them. We hope others will recognize their fine work as well.”*

The North Pinellas Republican Club supports members of the GOP in the north end of the county. They can be found on the web at: <http://nprc.me/>



(L-R): Ken Giesow, Capt. Peterson, NPRC President Jim Downes, Tim Bryce, and Afram Bassous



Next Book Club December Book Club Meeting. On January 14th, 2016, @ 6:30 p.m., the NPRC Book Club will be discussing "The Defining Moment: FDR's 100 days and the Triumph of Hope" by Jonathan Alter. The book deals with the Great Depression and how Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who became President on March 4th, 1933, had to deal with millions of Americans who not only lost money in the stock market, coupled with bank failures, but were left with little hope of employment. Roosevelt designed and implemented policies that we will explore at our next meeting.

Please join us for a lively discussion on this very important and volatile time in our American history. It is not required that you read the book in order to both attend and enjoy the meeting. There will be refreshments provided. The location of the meeting is as follows: Ron Walker's house: 2524 Marina Key Lane, Clearwater 33763. In the Sunset Pointe Townhomes Community, behind Ashly Furniture at US 19 and Sunset Point Road.

Pam's Letter Pam sent this letter for the last Trumpeter and I neglected to include it. It is almost an anthem for Republican beliefs. Here it is:

The Beauty of Self Reliance

Recently, one individual with whom I was discussing voter registration, said that he felt disenchanting with our government because his elected official was not doing enough for him. As our discussion continued, my thoughts reflected upon a compliment that was eloquently stated by Alexis de Tocqueville in the book "Democracy in America", French Political Historian, 1831. Rugged individualism and self-reliance were two

of many factors that made America the America he both liked and respected. He cited an example whereby on a European ship, should a sail malfunction, the captain would have to change their itinerary and sail, as best they could, to the closest port to complete the necessary repairs, thereby prolonging their journey. On an American ship, the crew would have immediately improvised and repaired the sail with whatever means they had, thereby completing their mission on time.

Have we in America lost our individual ruggedness and self-reliance at the expense of defaulting to the federal government? More than half of the government's federal budget is now being spent on entitlements and safety nets that have now become hammocks. We are allowing the federal government to take a larger cut of our paychecks just so we can be cared for and kept safe; from whom, ourselves? We are hampered with an exorbitant increase in governmental regulations, thereby yielding to less self-reliance and individual ruggedness. In closing, I am reminded of a statement, "Those who sacrifice liberty for security deserve neither" Ben Franklin.

Upcoming Events:

Book Club. January 14th at 6:30 @ Kim and Ron Walker's house 2524 Marina Key Lane, Clearwater 33763. Book to be discussed is "The Defining Moment. FDR's First 100 Days" by Jonathan Alter.

General Meeting. January 21st at 7:00 (Pre-meeting conversation at 6:30) @ Leo's Restaurant, 33286 Highway 19 North, Palm Harbor 33286

February 18

March 17

April 21

Leo's Restaurant

Leo's Restaurant

Leo's Restaurant

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