



February 2016 Edition

NPRC

Second Edition

North Pinellas Republican Club

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January General Meeting

What a great first meeting of the year. Our guest speaker was Congressman Gus Bilirakis. Congressman Bilirakis is one of the truly outstanding members of congress today. He gave a very insightful talk reviewing congressional actions last year as well as candid assessments of John Boehner's final activities and his hopes for John Ryan's Speakership. He generally felt Mr. Boehner lacked the personal touch with members of the House. He told us Speaker Ryan is very much attuned to the rank and file. He is also willing to listen to all sides. He seemed to feel Mr. Boehner was more of a top down leader. He expressed his concerns for the veterans (he is deputy chairman for the Veteran Affairs committee), and also discussed three bills he is sponsoring. Gus is always a pleasure to listen to. He is both thoughtful and passionate concerning Republican ideals. He gave a fairly short speech and then took questions from the floor. As we expected, the questions were thoughtful as were his answers.

Before Sue Berfield, who has to be one of the best program chairman I have ever seen, introduced Gus Bilirakis to the club, Jim Downes, the club president, made important comments. He stressed this was an election year and it was vitally necessary we get involved in the campaigns. He mentioned sign waving, walking door to door, phone calls as well as other support. He envisioned the club acting as a conduit for activities to aid the party candidates. More on this soon.

Next General Meeting

As usual, the club will meet at Leo's Restaurant, 33286 US Hwy 19 N. The actual meeting starts at 7:00, but dinner may be ordered at 6:30 and pre-meeting conversations take place. Meals are \$15. The election season has began and Sue has arranged for both people vying for property appraiser to deliver comments and answer questions. The previous tax appraiser is Pam Dubov, a NPRC member, who is leaving the office to become a pastor. Google her name and a Tampa Bay Times article for a moving story of her rise to property appraiser. The two men who are running are Jim Frishe and Mike Twitty. I've included some important facts from their biographies, but if you want to get the full resume go to jim@jimfrishe.com and google Michael T. Twitty for Pinellas Property Appraiser and click on the PDF. Both men are supper qualified . Mr. Twitty is a lifelong resident of Pinellas. He is a career real estate appraiser. Mr. Frishe is a Real Estate broker and former Republican Whip for the Florida

legislature. Bring your questions such as “what does a property appraiser do?” etc. See you there.

January Book Club Meeting

Book Club President Pam McAloon reports: On January 14, at Kim and Ron Walker’s house, our group discussed FDR and the Depression. The book described the challenges that FDR faced both before and after his first inauguration. Many government programs such as the CCC and the American Recovery Act were generated. Banking reforms such as the Glass Stegall act were enacted, and ultimately Social Security was birthed as another fall out from the hopelessness of the Depression. Eleanor Roosevelt helped FDR by attending speaking engagements particularly when FDR was unable to attend. FDR and Eleanor lived parallel lives for many years. It was felt that the first 100 days of the FDR administration was a triumph since it gave the people hope for better days which was reinforced by FDR'S Fireside Chats. *Editor's report:* The meeting was lively as usual. There were several new faces with lots to add. It was a great meeting. As we are allowed, I read a different book. My book was “FDR’s Folly: How Roosevelt and His New Deal Prolonged the Great Depression” by Jim Powell. I recommend it. The chapters each discuss one aspect of FDR’s attempts. The book received a very positive review from Milton Friedman. Need I say more?

Next Book Club Meeting

Our next NPRC book club meeting will be held Thursday, February 11th, at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Pam McAloon. The address is 108 Homeport Drive, Palm Harbor. We will be discussing "Presidential Courage" by Michael Beschloss . The book is about how some of our U.S. Presidents were extremely instrumental in changing the course of America at a time when it was necessary for them to meet the many challenges that faced them and our country. There are currently copies in both small and large print available in the Library Co-op system. Audio books are also available.

Come and bring a friend. Refreshments will be served. As always, it is not mandatory that you must have read the book in order to attend and to have a good time. Please RSVP.

Tim's Corner

THE NEED FOR CONCEALED WEAPONS CLASSES - by Tim Bryce
- Why it should be considered mandatory to attend such classes.

Let me begin by saying I believe everyone in the country should attend a concealed weapons class. Whether you are a pro or anti gun advocate, every citizen should attend such a class, be it privately taught, in schools, or some other venue. If you are unfamiliar with the class, let me clear up an important misconception, it is NOT about gun advocacy, it is about gun safety. Although such classes vary from state to state, it is essentially used to teach the fundamentals of how a gun is used, how it should be stored and maintained, and all of the pertinent laws associated with it.

I took such a class a few years ago here in Florida and was very much impressed by the knowledge and professionalism of the instructor. Again, this was less about the actual firing of the weapon as opposed to a description of the various types of weapons (e.g., rifle, shotgun, semiautomatic, single and double action revolvers, etc.), what their capabilities are, gun safety "do's and do nots," and what to do in an emergency. For example, in my class, the instructor gave some pragmatic advice as to what to do if someone breaks into your home while you are there. It wasn't so much about shooting the suspect as opposed to contacting the authorities and protecting yourself. Overall, I found the class to be equally useful for those who were already knowledgeable about guns as well as the uninitiated.

While some people see gun control as the answer to solving weapons accidents and assaults, I believe an educated populace would save more lives and result in fewer victims whether it is due to an accident or premeditated assault. An informed public is less likely to become a victim and more likely to survive a shooting situation. Anyone who has attended such a class would probably agree, education is the key. Everyone from Middle School onward should be taught the lessons of gun safety. Even children in Elementary grades should learn some of the basics.

Again, let me be clear, this is not about gun advocacy or how to hurt anyone, and it certainly is not intended to glamorize guns, which we will leave to Hollywood. Instead, it is about safety and knowing what to do in dangerous situations. It is about survival.

Keep the Faith!

Ron Ogden's take on Solar Power Debate

While registering voters in December I met some petitioners working both sides of the solar power amendment proposed for Florida's constitution. Some backed the Floridians for Solar Choice (FSC, flsolarchoice.org), claiming their amendment would free people to build solar on their property and sell the power to their neighbors. They said the competing "utility-backed" amendment, Consumers for Smart Solar (CSS), was an attempt to stop them.

CSS says its amendment maintains solar regulation and that FSC would sandbag utilities by fiddling with their business models, hurting people who don't self-generate.

The free-market-oriented James Madison Institute (jamesmadison.org) calls the FSC proposal an exercise in "crony capitalism", complaining that it unfairly subsidizes solar-power companies. JMI points to the problem of "cost-shifting". Utilities and their customers pay to maintain enough generators and power lines to meet the needs of all consumers. If some customers buy solar power instead of utility power, that cost shifts to customers who stick with utilities.

Another issue: utilities now pay a wholesale rate for power they buy, but when they buy backyard solar they pay retail. They'd be required to buy it through "net metering rules" and they would have either have to eat the difference.

FSC says its amendment will do none of those things and that's its only purpose is to "remove a government-created barrier to customers' right to buy solar energy, so solar can compete in the market against other

forms of energy." It says the support it is getting from libertarians show it is market oriented.

CSS touts its amendment as the "Smart Solar" amendment and labels the other the "shady solar" amendment. Be careful if you want to look it up on line as it appears there have been some shenanigans with web addresses. You can access it on Facebook.

It appears now neither amendment is likely to get on the November ballot, but stay tuned.

The Lincoln Day Dinner and the Club The premier County Republican Party's event is the Lincoln Day dinner. It will be held on March 12th. If you would like to attend the dinner with North Pinellas Republican Club members please send a check to Ron Walker, NPRC Treasurer at 2524 Marine Key Lane, Clearwater, FL 33763. Make the Check out to the NPRC. Ron will send the money to the PCREC and you will be seated at the North Pinellas Republican Club table. Cost is \$130 per person. If you are not a member of a Republican club or the PCREC, the cost is \$160 per person. You will probably get a much better seat if you sit with the club.

Upcoming Events:

Book Club Meeting. February 11 at 6:30. Venue is Pam McAloon's home 108 Homeport Drive, Palm Harbor. Book Discussed is *Presidential Courage* by Michael Beschloss.

General Meeting. February 18th at 7:00 (Pre-meeting conversation at 6:30) @ Leo's Restaurant, 33286 Highway 19 North, Palm Harbor 34684. Program is a debate between Property Appraiser candidates.

February 18

March 17

April 21

Leo's Restaurant

Leo's Restaurant

Leo's Restaurant

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