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With FL Turn Blue! (A Meetup Group)

AGENDA

October 9, 2019, 5-7 PM

South County Regional Library

21100 Three Oaks Parkway

Estero, FL 33928

(Times are subject to change and are approximate; names in **BLUE** are not clickable links.)

The Mobilize Link to register for this meeting is <https://www.mobilize.us/leecountydec/event/132828/>.

The Meetup Link is: <https://www.meetup.com/FL-Turn-Blue/>

5 PM – Gathering (Set up tables and chairs, meet Democrats, sign in, consider becoming a member of the Club, get precinct organizing volunteer form)

5:15 PM - Pledge of Allegiance (version of your choice)

Pledge of Allegiance (Bellamy versions) (changes are <u>bolded and underlined</u>)
1892 (first version)^[1]
<p>"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."</p>
1892 to 1923 (early revision by Bellamy)^[2]
<p>"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and <u>to</u> the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."</p>
1923 to 1924^[3]
<p>"I pledge allegiance to <u>the</u> Flag of the <u>United States</u> and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."</p>
1924 to 1954^[3]
<p>"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States <u>of America</u> and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."</p>
1954 (current version, per 4 U.S.C. §4)^[4]
<p>"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one <u>Nation under God</u>, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."</p>

A few meetings ago, there seemed to be some surprise that we start our meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance. I paused. No one spoke out.

We start our meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance to symbolize that we are a United States political organization. We focus on the secular activities of our non-sectarian civil society. Politics is the process we use to select our leaders (rather than hereditary monarchy). The NorthStar of our government is our vision of equality. So, we salute the purpose of our government – even as we work to make governments more perfect.

As people active in politics and government, we may go to lots of meetings. Some are required to start with the Pledge. So, this is our chance to get used to it.

There have been several versions of the Pledge of Allegiance. The ones to the left are from Wikipedia. Here, at our meetings, you can use these, one of your own, or none. It's a free country. People have fought and died, spent their lives and fortunes volunteering for their favorite organizations, so you can have that choice.

As a Club, we could write our own Pledge of Allegiance.

Why are you here? That's a good place to start!

How about: "**We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.**"

Declaration of Independence, 1776 (<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>)

Reading of the First Amendment

“Congress shall make no law respecting

- an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or
- abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or
- the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

(<https://editorials.voa.gov/a/the-importance-of-the-first-amendment-/3733070.html>)]

Welcome to the Club – Steven Blumrosen, President

- Introduction of Officers and Directors
- Anyone not sign in?
- Please contribute what you can to the donation jar.
- Drinks with lids are allowed. Bathrooms are right next to this meeting room, to the left.
- Reminder, this is a good time to renew membership or apply to become a member. (only \$20/30!)
- The library is letting us use the room for free. We are here only until 7 PM and must leave the room the way we find it. (Thanks, Barb.)
- Yom Kippur – We are a secular political club in our non-sectarian civil society. We try to acknowledge, learn about and embrace the diversity of the “stew” that forms US culture. We’ve been Coming to America a long time! (<https://binged.it/2oZ6Njv>).

Judaism uses a lunar calendar, so days start at sunset. Yom Kippur is the holiest of holy days in Judaism. This year, it ends about 7:30 PM, October 9. The Club Board decided to hold our meeting at the usual time for the practical reason that we are a small club and it is difficult for some members when we change our meeting times and places. George Washington said in a letter to Touro Synagogue:

“It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.”

<https://www.tourosynagogue.org/history-learning/gw-letter> [Touro Synagogue, 1790]. See, also, (<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0135> [National Archives] and <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/touro-synagogue/> [Mt. Vernon].

“Effectual support” means we meet when necessary to prevent the US from devolving into dictatorship, as have other Democracies (like Rome, Greece and the Weimar Republic). This is crucial for Jews in SW Florida. Our state has become the state that sends Republicans to the White House since Al Gore chose Sen. Joe Lieberman as his running mate. Less than a thousand votes separated Gore/Lieberman from Bush/Cheney. Enough votes to change the outcome were not contested from overseas and Black voters.

Last year, 5 voters/precinct might have sent Bill Nelson back to the Senate and Andrew Gillum to the Governor’s mansion.

The ERA needs just one more state to pass.

Just a few states are needed by the movement to rip apart our Constitution and possibly take away our protections, including the right to vote, a bicameral legislature, an independent judiciary, a free press, learning-enabled public education, and the right and comfort level to question authority.

(<https://www.commoncause.org/resource/u-s-constitution-threatened-as-article-v-convention-movement-nears-success/> and <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42589.pdf> [Congressional Research Service].

The last time there was a Constitutional Convention, delegates scraped the old constitution and wrote a new one. Can you imagine a US Constitution like the one Stalin used?

I chose to attend this Club meeting because politics and Club meetings are that important.

Some Board members commented that this is about electing Democrats and stopping Republican one-party rule. We would meet on Christmas or Ramadan if they fell on our usual meeting date. And, we would learn from and embrace our members who chose their need to worship over attending that meeting.

Secretary's Report - [Scott McElhane](#) is our new Club Secretary.

[Shadia Mahmoud](#) prepared the minutes of the last meeting. Thanks, Shadia!

Treasurer's Report – [Mona Abdelall](#).

Vote on whether to confirm Scott as Secretary, Mona as Treasurer, and Shadia as a member of the Board.

Membership Committee Report – [Nancy Staub](#).

Precinct Organizing: [Dan Rotigal](#), with [Lisah Maupin](#).

Candidate: [Winston Negrón](#) (Introduction) and [Cindy Banyai](#) (Candidate for CD-19).

Lobbying: HUD has proposed rules Re: Disparate Impact in Housing. Public comments close about 10/17. (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/08/19/2019-17542/huds-implementation-of-the-fair-housing-acts-disparate-impact-standard> and <https://www.curbed.com/2019/8/19/20812039/disparate-impact-hud-fair-housing-ben-carson>). The Supreme Court, in 2015, expanded the use of statistics to prove discrimination from employment law to fair housing law, over objections by Scalia and Thomas:

Supreme Court: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/13-1371_8m58.pdf

The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/26/us/justices-back-broad-interpretation-of-housing-law.html>

The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/supreme-court-inclusive-communities/396401/>

Dorsey, Update: <https://consumerfinancialserviceslaw.us/update-on-the-u-s-supreme-courts-inclusive-communities-decision/>

Florida Housing Coalition: <https://www.flhousing.org/affh/>

(Your intrepid reporter contacted Julian Castro's campaign press office and, by the time of the meeting, may have **breaking news** with a statement by Obama's Secretary of HUD, Julian Castro.)

6:30'ish PM – Other unfinished business

6:37'ish PM – New Business

6:45 PM – Adjourn and put chairs and tables the way they were.

Thank you for attending tonight's meeting.

Next Meeting:

2nd Wednesday of November (11/13/2019). Time and Location TBD. **Save the Date!**

I've been asked for Some useful Links

Current US Constitution: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution>

Marbury v. Madison: <https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/marbury.html>

Bas v. Tingy: <https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep004037/> [For context and information about the limited powers of the military's civilian Commander-in-Chief, with the Congress declaring the scope of US involvement in a war, see Blumrosen and Blumrosen, Restoring the Congressional Duty to Declare War, Rutgers Law Review, 2011, www.Warpower.us)

Brown v. Board of Education (Topeka)

Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/brown-brown.html>

United States Courts: <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/supreme-court-landmarks/brown-v-board-education-podcast>

National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/brvb/index.htm>

Thirteen, NY PBS: https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/supremecourt/rights/landmark_brown.html

C-SPAN: <http://landmarkcases.c-span.org/Case/8/Brown-v-Board-of-Education>

NAACP Legal and Education Fund: <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/landmark-brown-v-board-education/>

NBC News: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/65-years-brown-v-board-ed-school-segregation-persists-n1006356>

Just the Case: <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=87>

Recent case confirms Brown, Griggs and expands use of statistics to prove intentional discrimination. (Or, is it implied bias?):

Lead up: <http://michiganlawreview.org/griggs-at-midlife/> (Deborah Widdis, University of Michigan Law Review, 2015)

Supreme Court decision: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/13-1371_8m58.pdf and <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/576/13-1371/>

History and context: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/supreme-court-inclusive-communities/396401/>

Actual Oral Argument in the Supreme Court: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?323917-1/texas-department-housing-v-inclusive-communities-project-oral-argument-audio> (needs good internet connection)

ACLU: <https://www.aclu.org/cases/texas-department-housing-community-affairs-v-inclusive-communities-project>

DNC: <https://democrats.org/>

National Democratic Training Committee: <https://traindemocrats.org/>

Democratic Senate Campaign Committee (DSCC): <https://www.dscc.org>

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee: <https://dccc.org/>

Florida Democratic Party (FDP): <https://www.floridadems.org/> (Statewide Convention this weekend!)

Democratic Party of Lee County (FL): <https://leecountydems.org/>

Lee County Democratic Clubs and Caucuses: <https://leecountydems.org/about-us/clubs-and-caucuses/>

Elizabeth Warren Organizing Night School:

https://events.elizabethwarren.com/?event_type=11&is_virtual=true&utm_source=email-20191006-v2s2