

NCF's Fight for Academic Freedom Continues

**BY JOHANNES WERNER,
 WSLR NEWS DIRECTOR**

Florida has been run by Republicans for more than two decades. A Republican has been in the governor's mansion since 1999, and the state legislature has been under a Republican majority, or even supermajority, since 1996. That has meant control over higher education in Florida and public universities. Under Gov. Jeb Bush, the Republican majority abolished the autonomous Board of Regents and replaced it with a Board of Governors that has increasingly been stacked with political appointees. In other words, public universities, as they exist today in Florida, are very much a product of this conservative influence. That's why it took some observers by surprise



NCF Alumni Sophia Brown now serves as the Community Outreach Consultant, Freedom to Learn at PEN America, where she supports PEN America's work on free expression and academic freedom in Florida.

when Gov. Ron DeSantis declared war on these same universities early this year.

Last year, Ron DeSantis began a "war on woke" in the K-12 public education system, and since January 2023, supported by new laws, he has begun to turn public colleges into think tanks of his world view. On Jan. 6, 2024, it will be one year of what conservative education activist Trustee Christopher Rufo called the "hostile takeover" of New College of Florida. In an article recently published in the Chronicle of Higher Education Patricia Okker, the fired NCF president, says it wasn't about just changing the direction of a small liberal arts college.

"New College had become the epicenter of a debate about the future of academic freedom, shared governance, freedom of expression, and diversity, equity, and

inclusion," Okker says, adding that this struggle is now playing out nationwide. Forty bills in 20 states are trying to achieve similar sweeping change as Florida's SB 266.

So how has that hostile takeover in the "epicenter" of Sarasota, FL, played out? If you read just the headlines, it looks as if the besieged campus is emptying out. Indeed, many students have bailed out. Most visibly, 35 of them — including former WSLR News intern Basil Pursley — joined Hampshire College, which offers a hard-to-reject tuition deal. And one-third of the faculty are gone, either permanently or on leave, wreaking havoc on the curriculum this term. There's the fired librarian who is still looking for a new job; there's the fired diversity, equity and inclusion officer who is now launching an arts nonprofit; the French professor who now teaches at a prep school in Mississippi; the English literature professor who took on an administrative job at a university in Illinois; the data science teacher who resigned and returned to the private sector; the anthropologist who was hired by a local nonprofit; the sociologist who now teaches in Ohio; there's the theater and the philosophy professor,

Continued on page 8

Eat Local Week - October 14-21, 2023

**BY JOYCE NORRIS, EXECUTIVE
 DIRECTOR, TRANSITION
 SARASOTA**

Eat Local Week, organized by Transition Sarasota, is back for its 12th year! Events during this week-long festival will revolve around the theme "Local Food, Future Resilience". Transition Sarasota is a local nonprofit dedicated to creating food and economic security by supporting local, sustainable sources in the hopes of creating a thriving community now and for future generations.

Educational and engaging events will cover a range of topics from a farm tour with Honeyside

Farms, edible plant walk with Chinese Herbalist Bob Linde, a "Meet Your Farmer" speaker event and cooking demo at Lakewood Ranch Farmers Market, fruit tree workshop, cooking demo with Zildjian Catering & Consulting, composting lesson with Sunshine Community Compost, a tour of Palma Sola Park, and more. Festivities begin on October 14th with a plant sale at UF/IFAS at Twin Lakes Park and conclude October 21st with the popular annual Big Mama's Collard Green Fest.

Eat Local Week celebrates the rich local food environment of Sarasota and Manatee Counties with connections to local businesses and nonprofit partners and a diverse selection of independently organized events. The festival routinely offers a unique mix of fun and informative tours, classes, and presentations. Full details and how to register for events is available at <https://www.transitionsrq.org/eatlocalweek> and on Transition Sarasota's Facebook page.

Mark your calendars! Eat Local Week events have limited space, so be sure to sign up in advance. We hope you'll be inspired to join the celebration! Transition Sarasota is still accepting sponsors for Eat Local Week. If you are interested in getting involved through community support, please reach out to Exec@transitionsrq.org.



**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4
 - TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10**

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 CALL 941-894-6469
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 MAKE A PLEDGE!**

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BY EMY MCGUIRE

Over forty years ago, at 2am on a Wednesday, Leslie Harrell was walking the streets of Sarasota, high on crack cocaine. Once, Leslie had been a high school honors student and a young mother with a world of scholarships and possibilities before her. But when she was eighteen, Leslie was caught in a horrific cycle of human trafficking and substance abuse.

Leslie shuffled past closed shops and buzzing streetlamps. She contemplated God and life as she wandered. It seemed that she would continue to walk, listless and lonely, for another ten years.

Then she saw the church.

Unlike the rest of the city, which slept with shuttered windows and ‘closed’ signs, the doors to Bethel CME Church hung wide open. Someone had broken in. Leslie called the police, who immediately assumed she had robbed the church. There was nothing she could do but wait and see if she was to be arrested.

The reverend, a man Leslie had never met before, told the cops she was one of his parishioners. The police left Leslie with the reverend who turned to her and said simply, “Leslie, go home, and I’ll see you on Sunday.”

Every year, hundreds of thousands of children in America are separated from their parents due to situations such as incarceration, drug abuse, and trafficking. Leslie Harrell was just one of the mothers shaped by this trauma. Today, she is an articulate and passionate woman with a bachelors in Theology and a Masters in Peace and Social Justice. This December she will graduate with a Doctor in Strategic Leadership, but Leslie is most proud of what she built with her daughter, Shavonne.

Truly Valued, a non-profit organization founded in 2014, has a mission to “transform communities by providing youth and families with the skills needed to be productive citizens”. They work intimately in three counties (Sarasota,

Manatee, and DeSoto) to empower parents and children in-need to believe in themselves, their families, and their futures.

Shavonne Sams is Leslie’s daughter and the CEO at Truly Valued. She spoke about the mission of Truly Valued from her perspective. “We provide care-to-development sessions, we build resiliency skills, life skills, nurturing skills, so that our families are able to achieve their full potential... When we don’t feel secure in ourselves, we make irrational choices that can cause a lifetime of turmoil.”

Truly Valued has three main areas that they work through. I AM Academy works to empower young students and involves mentoring and coaching services in fifteen different schools in Sarasota and Manatee counties. The Nurturing Families Program is designed to educate on how to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect. Parents are provided support and strategies for getting into the right headspace for their families. 90% of these parents are referred from the Department of Children and Families. E3 - or Educate, Enlighten, and Empower - takes place twice a year. It is an event open to the public where professionals share information about entrepreneurial opportunities, mental health awareness, and understanding one’s purpose in a community.

One young student began attending Truly Valued sessions when she was in fifth grade. Shavonne described her as introverted and unsure, but during her time in the program, she discovered her capabilities as a leader. Today, she is the Vice President of a club at Braden River High School, helping other youth. She educates her peers on the dangers of tobacco and gives them the opportunity to find their voice just as she did through Truly Valued.

Leslie Harrell works as the Community Engagement Manager, teaching parent classes and leading a sixteen-week program for parents transitioning into life after prison. “These were fathers who wanted to be the best they could be



Leslie Harrell (left) and Shavonne Sams (right) bake together.

for their children. And they took the initiative to be there every week... And now some of them have gone on to be reunited with their children, and they send me text messages and updates, they inbox me on Facebook just to say thank you and what it meant for them to be part of the Nurturing Families Program.”

Each parent and child helped through Truly Valued is a personal victory for Leslie, who was not able to raise her own children. Leslie told me, “Shavonne came back to me when she was around fifteen years old, and we have been inseparable ever since then... Now we have families where we are empowering parents and serving in three counties... to help them embrace who they are and to always know that they are truly valued.”

If you are interested in aiding Truly Valued in their mission, go to their website at TrulyValued.org, attend future events, or consider submitting a query to volunteer.

Critical Times is a publication of WSLR, Inc.

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Little Satchmo Wins Emmy

BY KATHLEEN MURRAY

Congratulations go out to Sharon Preston-Folta whose film “Little Satchmo” won the Southeast Emmy Award for Outstanding Historical Documentary in June of this year! Film director John Alexander and producer JC Guest were at the Awards Gala in Atlanta to accept the Emmy. Sharon Preston-Folta is a member of the WSLR+Fogartyville Board of Directors and host of “TownTalk Tampa Bay” and “Radio RESET,” which air Saturday mornings on WSLR 96.5FM.

The film is based on a 2012 memoir, “Little Satchmo: Living in the Shadow of My Father, Louis Daniel Armstrong.” The memoir and film provide details on the two-decade love affair between



The Emmy has a place of honor in Preston-Folta's Sarasota home: as the centerpiece of her vision board.

legendary trumpeter Louis Armstrong and Harlem dancer Lucille ‘Sweets’ Preston and the child that resulted from that affair.

For Preston-Folta and the “Little Satchmo” team, winning the Emmy reinforced their observations of the film’s impact. “We knew from the reaction of the audience over the last two years what a special documentary we had,” Preston-Folta said. “And to get the honor of winning the Emmy was the icing on the cake.”

At just about every audience Q&A, Preston-Folta is asked about her favorite memory of her father. “My Mom and I traveled with him in my younger years and got to see him play in concert,” she said. “I enjoyed how much fun he had, and he played a different version of

‘Hello, Dolly’ every time. It was always one big love fest between him and his audience.”

“Little Satchmo” has been racking up awards and critical acclaim ever since it premiered at Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival in 2021. It was featured in PBS Reel South Season 7 and has been distributed in Great Britain, New Zealand, Italy and the Czech Republic by PBS America. This year, it will be screened in Atlanta, Mississippi and Louisiana as part of the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers. Preston-Folta is especially looking forward to a Docs in Progress screening in Silver Spring, MD, in December.

What does the “Little Satchmo” executive producer want to accomplish next with the film? “My hope is actually for us to find a distribution on the continent of Africa,” says Preston-Folta. “I think that is our next frontier – what we’re hoping for and working towards.”

New Interns Bring Fresh Energy to WSLR

BY DANIA HEFLEY

WSLR, Sarasota’s community radio station, has a time-honored tradition of embracing New College students into its fold every year through its internship program. This year, they continue that tradition by welcoming four new interns to the team. We caught up with these interns, Aria Lockman, Sarah Malickson, Emy McGuire, and Dania Hefley, to learn more about their backgrounds, aspirations, and what they hope to contribute to WSLR during their internships.

Aria Lockman, a second-year student at New College of Florida, is no stranger to the world of journalism, having worked for the Catalyst, the New College student newspaper. This year she holds the position of Communications Intern at WSLR. Aria’s responsibilities range from writing and recording PSA’s for programmers to crafting various kinds of articles and even taking on different marketing projects for the station. Aria noted that despite having experience with written journalism, radio is something completely out of her realm, and just the kind of new experience she needs to further her career goals. To future interns, Aria advises, “Put yourself out there, especially for new experiences. It may be nerve-wracking, but it’s worth it. You get such a good experience

out of something like this.”

Sarah Malickson is an English and Music Major at New College of Florida. Sarah brings a rich background in writing and journalism to WSLR. Sarah’s previous endeavors in freelance writing, music journalism, and even interning at a record label equipped her with essential



writing skills for the position. For Sarah, the internship offers an opportunity to expand her audio editing skills and overcome her natural shyness, preparing her for a potential career in music journalism. Her advice to future interns: “Be strategic and be able to think fast on your feet. Your best is always enough.”

Emy McGuire is a fourth-year student at NCF is a double major in Theatre Dance and Performance and creative writing. Although she

has no prior experience with journalism, she has written seven novels, as well as a musical. Her excitement for the internship lies in the opportunity to gain hands-on skills, engage with people, and refine her writing to be instantly engaging. To future interns, Emy advises, “Communicate with the staff. It’s an industry that benefits from communication, not only with interviewees but also with your coworkers and bosses. It makes everything work more smoothly.”

Dania Hefley is a second year Creative Writing Major at NCF. While Dania has no prior journalism experience, her love for writing, combined with her creative writing classes at New College, have equipped her with valuable skills for the job. Dania recognizes that certain aspects of writing transcend genres, making her confident in her ability to contribute effectively. She’s excited to gain real-world experience and connect with her community. Her advice to future interns is simple: “Don’t be scared. if you feel like you don’t know something, it’s because chances are, you’re just about to learn it.”

As WSLR continues to be a place where new talents thrive, these interns are enthusiastic about their role in contributing to both the station and the community.

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Speaking of Death: An Exploration of Mortality

BY MITSU ITO AND ROBIN RUSSELL

There is no question that all of us face mortality at some point in our lives – either through the death of a friend, relative, beloved pet, or when contemplating our own. So why is it that we find it so difficult to talk about, or even think about death? Is this unwillingness a cultural or religious phenomenon, or is it based on fear, or the direct result of the industrialization of death that began in the early 20th century? Presumably the reasons are as varied as people are.

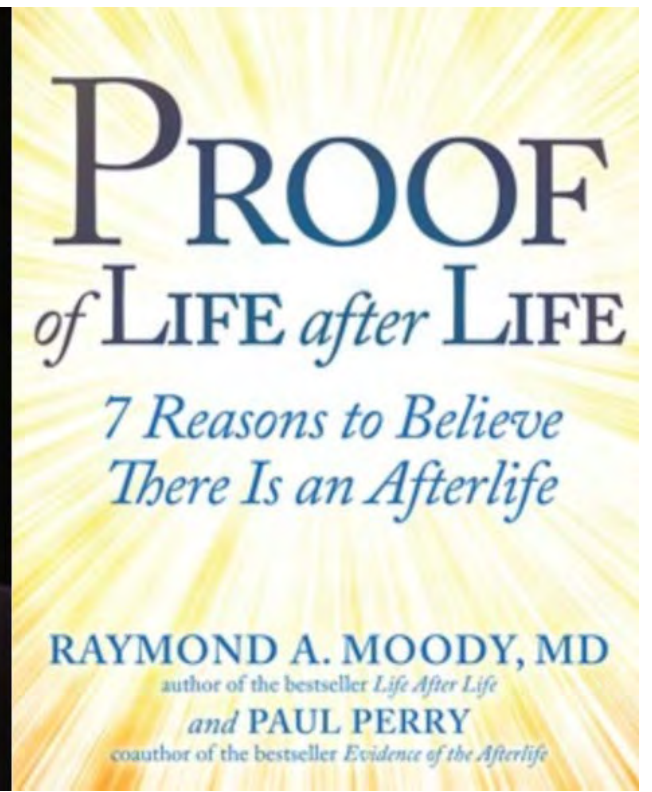
Beginning November 1st, Fogartyville will be presenting a bi-weekly series of events that will address our cultural resistance to discuss death and mortality and some of the most common factors related to our personal and societal reactions, as well as exploring rituals and beliefs of other cultures. The events will invite open and honest conversations around the topic of death, and offer information and resources to meet specific needs. The series, will consist of panel discussions by scholars; faith leaders from different religions; professionals in the death industry; death cafes (non-judgmental spaces where all things death can be openly talked about); films focusing on different aspects of death; facilitated conversations on grief and the importance of personal ritual when facing our own mortality; an art exhibit; and a final workshop where people can experience for themselves different modalities or rituals that may provide solace and comfort when facing any and all of these issues.

The opening event features Dr. Raymond Moody, the renowned scholar, philosopher, physician, and author, who will introduce his latest book *Proof of Life After Life*. This book picks up where his first major book, *Life After Life* (1975), ended. Dr. Moody will also speak on the overarching aspects of the series. In his words, “We cannot escape grief, but we can discover tools that will transform our pain and bring us new understanding and awareness,” Dr. Moody, from *A Brief Guide to Grief*.

This series does not pretend to provide all the answers regarding the topic of death – that would be impossible. What ‘Speaking of Death:



Raymond Moody. Photo Credit: Marlin Darrah



Exploring Mortality’ will provide is a participatory opportunity to engage with experts and resources that address many of the lesser known or discussed issues. For example, did you know that thanatophobia (an extreme fear of death) is a real anxiety disorder that is widely pervasive in our modern-day society. There is also a fast-growing “death-positive movement” striving to address and decrease such fears by facing death with greater curiosity and encouraging early steps of planning for “End-of-Life” choices well before they are needed. Death Doula Sally Gabriel, PhD explains that in this “positive” view “death is not seen as taboo or depressing, and honest conversations around death and dying and even planning for its inevitability are considered part of a healthy mental state.”

All events are meant to foster a safe and supportive environment where conversations about this universal experience of facing our own mortality can be held. The final experiential event will be on a Saturday afternoon in April where participants will engage in trying out new ideas and experiences while connecting with practitioners and vendors that provide services, create art and literature, and who provide information around emerging science, rituals and related alternative choices.

Anyone interested in exploring the many layers related to mortality is welcome to attend a single event or the whole series. More and more people are finding that by facing their fears and engaging in planning and conversations, they not only become less anxious, but also begin to shift their focus to live life more fully and on new terms. Living “well” and “well-being” are common themes we hope to inspire as we head into 2024. Visit www.wslr.org/community for full details.



Image: Sequence, 36" x 36", oils + acrylic on canvas, 1982, courtesy of Dr. Richard and Pamela Mones

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2024 Ballot Initiatives

STAFF REPORT

The Florida State Legislature has referred two constitutional amendments to the 2024 ballot. One would make school board elections partisan and the other would provide a constitutional right to hunt and fish.

The **Florida Partisan School Board Elections Amendment** will appear on the November 5, 2024 ballot. The amendment would make school board elections partisan beginning in the November 2026 general election and for primary elections nominating party candidates for the 2026 election.

Currently, Article IX, Section 4 of the Florida Constitution requires all school board elections to be nonpartisan, which means that party labels disclosing the party affiliation of candidates in school board elections cannot appear on the ballot. As of 2023, Florida was one of 41 states with state laws providing for nonpartisan school board elections. The requirement prohibiting party labels for school board elections — among multiple other elections, campaign, and voting provisions — was approved by voters in 1998. It was referred to the ballot by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission.

The **Florida Right to Hunt and Fish Amendment** would provide a state constitutional right to hunt and fish and declare that hunting and fishing are the preferred means for "responsibly managing and controlling fish and wildlife" and "shall be preserved forever as a public right." The amendment would not limit the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's constitutional powers under Article IV, Section 9.

As of 2023, a total of 23 states had constitutional provisions that protected the right to hunt and fish. This right was first constitutionalized in Vermont in 1777, with 22 additional states following suit starting with Alabama in 1996. The most recent state to adopt such an amendment was Utah, where it was approved by 75% of voters in 2020.

State Rep. and amendment sponsor Lauren Melo (R) said, "[The amendment] is about the heritage of Florida. Many people don't realize the economic value fishing and hunting provides our great state, combining just over \$15 billion annually. People come from all over the world to catch our tarpon and snapper, and chase our turkeys and ducks. Passing this legislation is a powerful statement that we support and champion our fishing and hunting traditions, and we want to protect (them) for our future."

There is currently no registered opposition to this amendment.

One citizen-initiated amendment has received the required number of signatures to appear on the ballot. The **Florida Marijuana Legalization Initiative** would legalize recreational marijuana for adults 21 years old and older. Individuals would be allowed to possess up to three ounces of marijuana (about 85 grams), with up to five grams in the form of concentrate. Existing Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers would be authorized under the initiative to sell marijuana to adults for

personal use. The Florida State Legislature could provide by state law for the licensure of entities other than existing Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers to cultivate and sell marijuana products. The Amendment still faces a Florida Supreme Court review and a legal challenge from state Attorney General Ashley Moody. Moody stated that she'd argue the proposal doesn't comply with state law, which includes a requirement that it contain "clear and unambiguous language." Briefs in the case are due July 12.



Floridians Protecting Freedom volunteers collect petition signatures

Medical marijuana was adopted by Florida voters in 2016 by a vote of 71% to 29%.

In Florida, constitutional amendments require a 60% supermajority vote of approval to pass. This requirement was added to the state constitution through voter approval of Amendment 3 in 2006. Since then, nine constitutional amendments (including Amendment 2 of 2014, designed to legalize



Volunteers for the Right to Clean Water collecting signatures

medical marijuana) received a majority of votes in favor, but failed to reach the 60% threshold and were therefore defeated. The state's largest medical marijuana company, Trulieve, is bankrolling the effort by Smart & Safe Florida, pouring \$38.5 million into the campaign so far.

Chris Cano, executive director of the **Suncoast NORML chapter**, an advocacy group that lobbies for the legalization of marijuana at the state and federal levels, is not entirely pleased with the initiative. His review finds that the proposal will benefit the current marijuana industry players, solidifying the status quo with retention of a vertically-integrated industry where licensees cultivate, produce, and market marijuana from seed to sale. Advocates also fault the amendment for failure to allow home cultivation.

As for what the amendment might do to the election, a study by NORML, the cannabis advocacy group, found that infrequent voters tend to turn out when pot is in play and overall turnout increases by 10%.

Two Abortion initiatives are also working to make their way onto the 2024 ballot. The Florida Prohibit Laws Restricting Abortion Initiative would provide that "no law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider". **Floridians Protecting Freedom** is leading the campaign in support of the initiative. Planned Parenthood and the ACLU of Florida are major supporters of the campaign. Floridians Protecting

Freedom said, *"The overwhelming majority of Floridians think we should all have the freedom to make our own personal health care decisions without interference from politicians. Despite that, politicians in Florida just signed the most extreme abortion ban in the nation. It bans abortion before most people even realize they are pregnant. Help put these decisions back in the hands of Florida families and their doctors, not extreme politicians. There are so many reasons why someone may make the deeply personal decision to have an abortion – maybe their birth control failed, or they were a victim of rape or incest, or carrying a pregnancy would*

endanger their lives. Politicians shouldn't be allowed to interfere in this personal decision or to prevent nurses and doctors from treating their patients." In September, Floridians Protecting Freedom reached the signature threshold needed to trigger a state Supreme Court review of the ballot question's language.

Working to counter the initiative to protect Abortion Rights, the **Florida Right to Life of Preborn Individual Initiative** would amend the Florida Declaration of Rights to state: "The right to life of the preborn individual is God-given, thus unalienable and recognized accordingly. Therefore, it shall not be infringed at any stage of development." The organization **Protect Human Life Florida** filed the ballot initiative, which was approved for signature gathering on August 12, 2022 (currently show 19,920 verified as of 9/5/23).

The **Florida Right to Clean Water Initiative** would create a "fundamental right to clean and healthy waters," (as defined) in the state constitution and give legal standing to residents, non-governmental organizations, or government entities to sue in order to enforce or defend such rights. **Florida Right to Clean Water.org** sponsored the initiative. (currently show 61,279 signatures verified as of 9/5/23).

Information from ballotpedia.org.

THE REQUIREMENTS TO GET AN INITIATIVE CERTIFIED FOR THE 2024 BALLOT

Signatures: 891,589 valid signatures

Deadline: The deadline for signature verification is February 1, 2024

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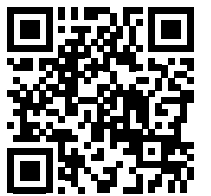
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2pm Sunday December 10

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Acclaimed jazz pianist with the chops.



Saturday December 16,

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Friday + Saturday November 10 + 11 8pm \$48/\$52



MARCIA BALL / TINSLEY ELLIS

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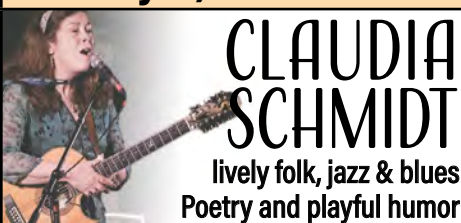
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January 19, 2024 \$18/\$20



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Sunday January 14, \$15

WILL MCLEAN BEST OF FLORIDA FOLK SERIES FEATURING

HANNAH'S WHIRL

Acoustic duo



Friday November 17 \$15/\$18



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Saturday Nov. 18 8pm \$17/\$20

Passerine

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January 20/21 \$30/\$35



Mary Gauthier

"one of the best songwriters of her generation" - AP

Greetings from Kumquat Court!

-Jesse Coleman, WSLR Station Manager

As we begin to steer away from the sticky heat of summer, WSLR continues the drive to bring in a diverse ensemble of community-centric programming for the Fall that encourages listeners to LISTEN LOCAL and ACT LOCAL.

The autumn season kicks off with **Hispanic Heritage Month** (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15). WSLR has brought members of the community together to produce our Hispanic Heritage Month Minutes. These segments feature a different community voice every day of the month and celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central & South America.

The new program additions radiate a strong commitment to the values of peace, sustainability, democracy, and social and economic justice, giving listeners an electrifying synthesis of talk and music that inspires a deep and nuanced understanding of important issues.

Join Nef on alternating **Saturdays at 6pm**, as she provides listeners a half-hour of thought-provoking analysis in her new program, **A Deconstructionist Mind**, where she brings a healthy dose of social justice, theory, politics, history, and personal narrative wrapped beautifully within a socially-conscious playlist of music.

Also, joining WSLR's roster is **Nice Guy Eddy's Dystopian Lullaby** alternating Sundays 9-11pm.



In the Lullaby, host **Nice Guy Eddy** invites listeners to join him as he spins music inspired by sci-fi, fantasy, and table-top gaming while giving his wry and quirky commentary on the current state of the world. Between sets of music you can't help but "nerd out" as, **Nice Guy Eddy** draws parallels between the dystopian elements of his favorite films, tv series, and comics and our present social circumstances, never allowing his wide-eyed optimism to get sucked into the void.



Our Fall Membership Drive kicks off on **October 4th** - call in to support your favorite programs. You can also select your favorite programs when you contribute online (at wslr.org). Make sure to keep your radio tuned to all the great programming on **96.5FM**, and remember to **LISTEN LOCAL** and **ACT LOCAL!**

wslr lp 96.5 fm WEEKLY PROGRAM GUIDE

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listen to it all

Music

Public Affairs

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12 mid.		Down The Road Syndicated	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	That Driving Beat (Syndicated)	All Mixed Up Syndicated	Dave Radio Dave Wilkens	In My Room Syndicated
1 a.m.	Deep Threes Syndicated					Synthelectico Syndicated	
2 a.m.	Music Automated playlist	Midnight Special Syndicated	Music Automated playlist	Upfront Soul Syndicated	Music Automated playlist		
3 a.m.							Music Automated playlist
4 a.m.	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Music Automated playlist	
5 a.m.							
6 a.m.	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Donne Del Mondo Syndicated	Keeping Democracy Alive Syndicated
7 a.m.							
8 a.m.	Blues to Bluegrass John D.	Corduroy Sebastien Wegeng	Indie Psych Show Alecia Harper	Eclectic Blender Dave Pedersen	Latin Explosion Juan Montenegro	Saturday Morning Gospel Beat Jonah Ray	Interfaith Voices
9 a.m.			Music with a Purpose Pat Monahan				Wings of the Heart Carol or Salima
10 a.m.	ArtBeat Kathleen Murray	Our Changing Environment	Peace & Justice Report Tom Walker & Bob Connors	The Detail Cathy Antunes	Surreal News Lew Lorini & Steve Norris	TownTalk	The Bradenton Times Mitch Maley
11 a.m.	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Radio Reset Sharon Preston-Folta	Law and Disorder (Syndicated)
NOON	Music of the World Marco Ciceron	Global Village Syndicated	The Blue Groove Mark Gruder	Metropics Carlos Pagan	Complex Waveforms Mark Zampella	Juke In The Back Syndicated	Folk Alley Elena See (Syndicated)
1 p.m.						WSLR NEWS (Rebroadcast)	
2 p.m.	Thom Hartmann Show (Syndicated)	Thom Hartmann Show (Syndicated)	Thom Hartmann Show (Syndicated)	Thom Hartmann Show (Syndicated)	Thom Hartmann Show (Syndicated)	Shortwave Report (Syndicated)	Dadee-O's Collector's Corner Dadee-O
3 p.m.	Positive Friction John Haupt	Second Wind Seany G	Louisiana Gumbo Kid Red	Outta the Basement, On the Road Purple Mike	High Tide Susan Runyan	Attitude of Gratitude The GratiDude	
4 p.m.						Community Conversations Mel Lavender	Velvet Hammer Blues Beth Hammer
5 p.m.	Music Museum Ed Foster	Synthetic Age JR	Jazz And More Brian Jones	Ted's Head Ted	Friday Happy Hour Bartender Tommy D.	Rhythm Revival Reverend Billy C. Wirtz	
6 p.m.							Discovery Road Louise Coogan
7 p.m.	Economic Update	Ralph Nader Radio Syndicated	WSLR NEWS	Alternative Radio Syndicated	WSLR NEWS	Train to Skaville (Syndicated)	A Deconstructionist Mind Nef
8 p.m.	Capitol Update State News		Ruthless Truth Ruth & Ali		Counterspin (Syndicated)		
9 p.m.	Yesterday's Dead Today Mark Binder	The Root Cellar Roger & Peter	Out of the Woods (Syndicated)	Velvet Radio Elissa Bello	Longboat Luau The Ho-dad	Ripper's Rarities Russ Yodice	New Radio
10 p.m.	SynthWorld Damon	First Voices	The Old Folk & Americana Festival				Soul Kitchen Paul Junior
11 p.m.	Indigenous Nation	Bullwinkle's Corner Keith Winkle	Random Precision Alex	Music Is The Best Mark Markus	Microgroove Fallon Markwell	The In Between Jay Ackermann	Songs for Knitting and Mayhem Laura
12 mid.	Down The Road Syndicated	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	That Driving Beat (Syndicated)	All Mixed Up Syndicated	Dave Radio Dave Wilkens	In My Room Syndicated	Dystopian Lullaby Nice Guy Eddy
							Cafe Chill Syndicated

Streaming live 24/7/365 at WSLR.org · Studio line **941-954-8636**

2023 EcoSummit and Green Living Expo

STAFF REPORT

In early December, the Science and Environment Council (SEC) – a not-for-profit consortium of the 40 leading science-based environmental nonprofit and government organizations in Sarasota and Manatee counties - will present the 2023 EcoSummit and Green Living Expo. The event is designed to inspire the community to connect on environmental issues and engage in more sustainable practices in their homes and businesses.

The **Green Living Expo** will highlight green solutions for energy conservation, waste reduction, water protection, local food, and nature conservation. It's a two-day trade-show loaded with ideas and demonstrations about how to reduce our impacts on the environment. It runs December 2-3, 10am-5pm, at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium. It's free with advance registration or \$5 per group at the door.

The **EcoSummit** will feature lively, solutions-oriented lectures, panel discussions, storytelling, and music. Dozens of national, regional, and local experts will share their insights and future-forward innovations for recharging our environment and reducing our impacts – crucial to sustaining our coastal community's environment-based quality of life. The EcoSummit will kick off on **December 4, 5-8 pm at The Bay Park Nest** with a free outdoor screening of the film "2040" with the film's creator, award-winning Australian documentary filmmaker and EcoSummit keynote speaker **Damon Gameau**. The event continues December 5-6, 9am-5pm at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.



presented by
CHARLES & MARGERY BARANCIK FOUNDATION
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ELIZABETH MOORE

ECO SUMMIT

DEC 5-6, 2023 • VAN WEZEL HALL • SARASOTA, FL

2 DAYS of BIG IDEAS & SOLUTIONS

Join us for a lively & entertaining solutions-oriented experience with lectures, panel discussions, storytelling & music. To preserve quality of life, we must find a new balance with nature. We must counter increasing impacts from development, population growth & climate change with solutions that recharge our environment & reduce our footprint.

WITH CARL HIAASEN

Enjoy an unforgettable evening with Florida's most savagely funny, riotous, and cathartic storyteller, with emcee Craig Pittman, local storytellers & musical guest.

DAMON GAMEAU

Journey with this award-winning Australian filmmaker & actor to envision mankind's relationship with the earth & how stories shape our community's understanding of who we are & what is possible.

SESSIONS

- GROWTH & BALANCE
- LAND, LEGACY & SPECIAL PLACES
- MAKING A PLACE FOR NATURE
- BILLION DOLLAR BAYS
- IT'S ALL ABOUT CLEAN WATER
- REDUCING PERSONAL POLLUTION

Visit us online for sponsorship opportunities, exhibitor information & tickets.

eco-summit.org

Produced by THE SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL • scienceandenvironment.org

The evening of December 5, 7-9pm features **Florida Stories with Carl Hiaasen**, an unforgettable evening with Florida's most savagely funny, riotous, and cathartic storyteller, with emcee (and award-winning journalist) Craig Pittman, local storytellers and a musical guest. A Florida native, Hiaasen has been writing about the Sunshine State since his father gave him a typewriter at age 6. Thirteen books and nine national bestseller books later, his fiction is not far from the bizarre truth he found in his Florida reporting for the *Miami Herald* from 1985 until 2021.

"Over the past century in Florida, population growth and development patterns have increased pollution and decreased the environment's capacity to process it," said Dr. Jennifer Shafer, SEC's co-executive director. "Our natural environment is the foundation of our economy and quality of life; by working together to educate and activate the community, we hope to bolster efforts to conserve and restore our treasured natural resources—and protect quality of life for generations to come."

EcoSummit ticket options are \$155/Standard, \$185/Premium to include the Hiaasen event, and \$285/VIP to add on the Hiaasen pre-show reception and premium seating. Standalone tickets to see Hiaasen are \$85/general admission, \$185/VIP Experience, with pre-show reception and premium seating.

Other associated events include family-friendly Ever-GREEN Days at The Bay Sarasota, with a week-long schedule of interactive and eco-friendly (and free!) experiences – such as guided tours, hands-on eco-education, family friendly activities and much more – from November 30-December 6.

To learn more, visit eco-summit.org.

NCF's Fight for Academic Freedom

the microbiologist, the neurobiologist, all of them teaching throughout the United States - the list of New College refugees is long, and growing.

But then, there are also those who decided to stay and stand up. Early this summer, the pushback began, and shock and awe turned into something that looks more like hand-to-hand combat.

Student Trustee Grace Keenan and faculty Trustee Amy Reid make sure board meetings are not public shows of unanimity and maintain a modicum of transparency. Faculty union UFF has played a key role in the early stage of pushback. Most importantly, alumni have rallied students, faculty and sympathizers in the community through two organizations, NCF Freedom and Save New College. They have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, provided access to lawyers and media, and have initiated Alt New College, an online institute to support the academic freedom of faculty and students (see <https://www.altnewcollege.org/courses>).

Funded by the faculty union, and money and support from alum organizations such as NCF Freedom, several simultaneous actions are now playing out against the new trustees and (as of deadline of this article still-interim) President Richard Corcoran.



NCF Alumni Derek Black and X Gonzalez were interviewed by WSLR News about the 'takeover' of the school.

They include:

- a formal grievance filed by faculty members who were denied tenure;
- a subsequent lawsuit over SB 266, which denies the right to arbitration;
- another lawsuit over SB 266, filed by professors and students who say the law limits their academic freedom;
- a federal complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education, alleging civil rights violations; and
- eight complaints filed with the accreditation agency that approves New College, claiming the new administration violates accreditation principles.

Critical coverage from media outlets near and far — The New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, CNN, MSNBC, Frankfurter Allgemeine, and locally the Herald Tribune and, of course, WSLR News — has helped boost morale. As have support statements by high-profile alums such as Derek Black and X Gonzalez (via WSLR News), and by celebrities such as cartoonist Gary Trudeau of *Doonesbury* fame, and documentary filmmaker Michael

continued from page 1

Moore. Organizations such as the American Association of University Professors, PEN America, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Council on Education have condemned the political takeover of New College. The University of Illinois granted the student staffers of "The Catalyst" the Downs Award of Intellectual Freedom for its coverage.

"As an ousted college president, I am deeply grateful for the statements of support that my campus and I personally received", Okker says. "But they are not, by themselves, enough."

Okker suggests four more steps:

- Closer coordination between faculty representatives, student representatives, and staff.
- Establish crisis communication training.
- Develop statewide partnerships, beyond higher education, to lobby for better legislation.
- Develop bipartisan support for academic freedom.

To see the Board of Trustees meeting schedule visit <https://www.ncf.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees>.



Brady: United Against Gun Violence

BY CAROL RESCIGNO

The Brady Sarasota chapter is gearing up for its 2023-2024 work year, knowing that Floridians are concerned about gun safety and the laws passed by our Legislature earlier this year – particularly the new Permitless Carry bill that allows anyone to carry their concealed weapon without first obtaining a permit or undergoing training.

Upcoming events:

- **October 3:** Tabling at Police Night Out with free gun locks and raffle of a safe. This family event is open to everyone and residents throughout Sarasota are invited by the Police Department to spend time with their neighbors, organizations like Brady and, of course, police officers. The event is usually from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. 2099 Adams Lane.
- **October 19:** Welcome Back meeting, 4 pm, First Congregational UCC on S. Euclid Avenue in Sarasota.

- **October 26:** Bayfront rallies begin. 4 pm, Southern end of the parking lot in front of Bayfront Park. Every Thursday through the end of 2023 except Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving) and Dec. 28
- **December 8:** Vigil for Victims of Gun Violence, 6 pm - First Congregational UCC, 1031 Euclid Avenue Once a year, Brady holds a Vigil for Victims to remember those who have died and those who grieve because of gun violence. The program has not been finalized, but this is always a poignant and important evening of reflections, candle-lighting, poetry and music.



On June 22, Aaron Hunter III, a student at Brookside Middle School, was shot in the head by a stray bullet a block away from his home in the 2900 block of Gillespie Avenue. Here his mom Erica speaks at a rally against gun violence organized by the Queens of Domestic Violence, attended by over 200 people in MLK Park in July.

To find out about any of these events or to find out more about our chapter, email Sarasota@BradyUnited.Org.

SOUTHERN CIRCUIT TOUR OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS

We hope to encourage community engagement using film as a conduit for discussions about social/community issues

October 18, 7pm



Crossing Overtown - exploring the long narrative of racial conflict in Miami, from its roots in the reforms of Reconstruction, through its incorporation under dubious representation and continuing on through one of the earliest civil rights movements in the country.

February 20, 7pm

Breaking the News - this film is about more than a newsroom. It's about America in flux, and the voices that are often left out of the American story, following a scrappy group of fearless women and LGBTQ+ journalists band together to buck the status quo and launch The 19th*, a digital news start-up.



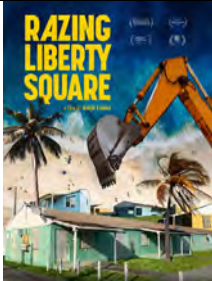
March 19, 7pm



Battleground - is an urgently timely window into the intersection of abortion and politics in America, following three women who lead formidable anti-abortion organizations to witness the influence they wield. As the nation faces the end of Roe, the film also depicts those on the front lines of the fierce fight to maintain access.

April 16, 7pm

Razing Liberty Square - Dramatic changes happening in Miami's Liberty Square are a looking glass for contemporary issues of wide-scale significance: the affordable housing, the impact of systemic racism and climate gentrification. What is happening is a prescient story of what is to come, and strategies put to the test here are being closely observed by the rest of the world.



May 7, 7pm



1946: The Mistranslation That Shifted Culture - a documentary film that chronicles how the misuse of a single word changed the course of modern history. Follow the story of tireless researchers who trace the origins of the anti-gay movement among Christians to a grave mistranslation of the Bible.

Screenings are **FREE** Admission
Registration is required at WSLR.org/film

+Fogartyville
community media & arts center
WEST ENTRANCE

525 Kumquat Court, Sarasota
wslr.org or 941-894-6469

Celebrating Environmental Leadership

BY MARY ANNE BOWIE

WSLR and Generating Earth Connections are partnering with the Unitarian Universalist Green Team to celebrate area organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship. Invitations have gone out to over 85 area environmental organizations to gather at the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church on Fruitville Road to enjoy a complimentary vegetarian luncheon and program. The goal is to bring together people seeking sustainable solutions and working for a greener tomorrow to foster connection, communication, and collaboration. A full list of invitees can be seen here - https://wslr.org/environmental_luncheon/. If you know of additional environmental organizations that are operating in the area, please send information to BowieFAICP@gmail.com and put Environmental Leaders in the Subject line, so they can be invited.

In addition to gratitude, the program's theme will be accountability. Jane Grandbouche, co-founder of Generating Earth Connections, will facilitate the Panel and all-group inquiry. Featured on the panel will be: Tracie Troxler, Suncoast Community Compost; Christine Johnson, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast; a

representative from Suncoast Waterkeeper and the Multicultural Health Institute; and Charles Reith, Suncoast Urban Re-foresters.

"Partnerships have been the key to environmental effectiveness," Mary Anne Bowie, of the UU Green Team, said "and our hope is to foster further collaboration in the region." Bowie noted that one example is Massachusetts Audubon providing environmental education on over 40,000 acres; this is a partnership goal that could be mimicked in our region.

Organizers are excited to have this first ever Sarasota event be part of the global Humanity Day! celebration that will be held simultaneously and virtually. The goal of Humanity Day! is to create a paradigm shift so that each of us understands that the time is now to realize we are all connected to each other and to nature; and that working in harmony, the earth and humanity will flourish for us and for generations to come. More information about Humanity Day! is at www.IAMHumanity.net. It will also be the topic of the UU Forum at 9:15 AM on **October 22, 2023**, at 3975 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, FL 34232. All are welcome to attend the Forum on **October 22, 2023**. The 'Celebrating Environment Leadership' Luncheon is by invitation only.

THE NEWTOWN NATION PRESENTS

Big Mama's Collard Greens Fest

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023
NOON – 6 P.M.

ROBERT L. TAYLOR COMMUNITY COMPLEX
1845 John Rivers Street (34th Street), Sarasota, FL 34234

Opinion: Follow the Money to A Better Sarasota

BY CATHY ANTUNES

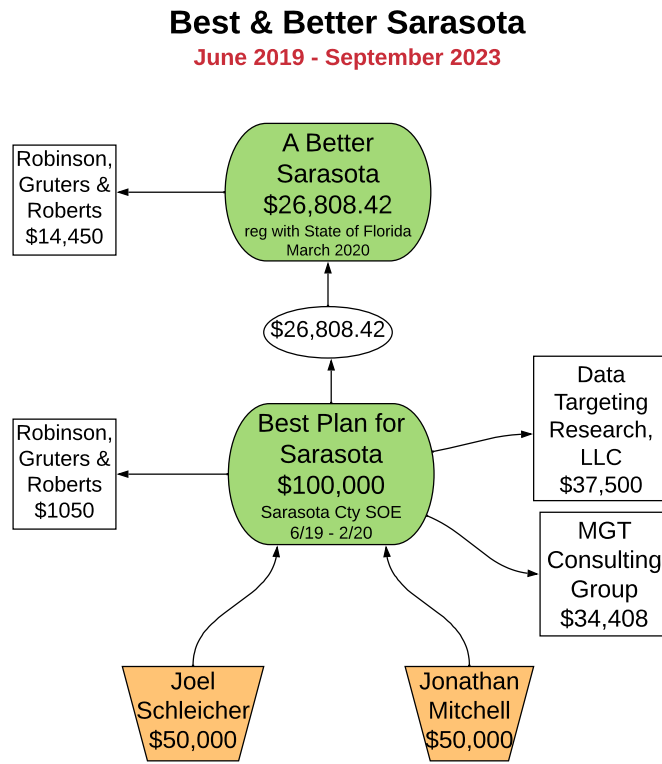
When a Political Committee is formed in Florida, the state requires organizing documents be filed which name the Treasurer, the Chairperson, and the Registered Agent. Sometimes the same person serves all three roles. The State also requires a description of the area, scope and jurisdiction of the Committee. The paperwork for a Florida political committee called "A Better Sarasota" says its area, scope and jurisdiction is "to support or oppose candidates for statewide multi-county, legislative or local office and other activities not prohibited by Chapter 106 Florida Statutes". It's a strange description, because since its inception in March 2020 this political committee's financial records show zero spending to support a candidate. "A Better Sarasota" has done little else but send a monthly check to Robinson, Gruters and Roberts, CPA, an accounting firm in Venice, FL.

Sarasota residents are likely to recognize this accounting firms' name partners, Eric Robinson and Joe Gruters. Both are former chairs of the Sarasota Republican party. Robinson also ran unopposed for School Board in 2016 and served one term. Gruters has represented Sarasota in the State House and Senate. Both are CPAs, and both apparently believe that writing a check to their own firm every month (and sending in a monthly political committee financial report to the state elections office) warrants a \$350 - \$500 payment from the political committee. That's pretty lucrative work if you can get it.

To fully appreciate the absurdity of this outlandish political committee honey pot for Robinson Gruters

Roberts CPAs, it's helpful to view the political committee's expenditures and contributions.

A Better Sarasota has received only one contribution - \$26,808.42 - all from the political committee "Best Plan for Sarasota".



© The Detail, Cathy Antunes

"Best Plan for Sarasota" had only two contributions: \$50,000 each from Joel Schleicher and Jonathan Mitchell. Mr. Schleicher made headlines in April 2021 when, as Sarasota's

appointed member of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) board, he voted to deny a \$1.5 million SWFWMD grant for a wetlands redevelopment project at Bobby Jones golf course (which sounds like a bad plan for Sarasota).

Mr. Mitchell's push to build a food court in Paul Thorpe Park (also known as Pineapple Park) galvanized community opposition. Schleicher and Mitchell's collective \$100,000 political committee "Best Plan for Sarasota" paid over \$70,000 for research and consulting, and about \$1000 to Robinson, Gruters, Roberts CPAs for accounting.

Back to "A Better Sarasota" and its \$26,808.42 budget all from one source - "Best Plan for Sarasota". Mr. Robinson serves as the treasurer of "A Better Sarasota", with Mr. Schleicher serving as the Chairman and Registered agent. This political committee has paid \$200 to the vendor "Webelect" for financial software and \$133.50 to "Deluxe" for checking supplies. Thirty-eight accounting fee payments, in the amounts of \$350, \$400, or \$500, have been paid to Robinson Gruters Roberts CPAs. What determines a \$350, \$400 or \$500 fee? Who knows?

"A Better Sarasota" has funded exactly zero candidate advocacy, and has funded Robinson Gruters Roberts CPAs to the tune of \$14,450. It appears "A Better Sarasota" is really functioning as a vehicle to line the pockets of political cronies. Definitely a bad plan for Sarasota.

Opinion: An Invitation to the (Mayor's Ball)

BY CATHY ANTUNUES

Erik Arroyo's Sarasota City Foundation hosted "The Mayor's Ball" last year on October 15, 2022. If you didn't get an invitation, don't feel bad. Apparently neither did City Commissioners Liz Alpert and Jen Ahearn-Koch. But, our then-Mayor Erik Arroyo did invite fellow Commissioners Hagen Brody and Kyle Battie, as well as supporters and some developer friends who would have important decisions coming in front of the City Commission. Hey, who cares about blatant conflicts of interest and betrayal of the public trust among friends?

Arroyo chose to go public with his foundation at the City Commission meeting two days after his "Mayor's Ball" took place, and nearly one year after he incorporated the non-profit Sarasota City Foundation. During his comments, Arroyo suggested to the Commissioners he excluded from his soiree (Alpert and Ahearn-Koch) that they would have had a great time if they had been there, and he would have cracked a few jokes about them, too! He proudly announced that his event raised over \$130,000. During his remarks Arroyo praised his friends who donate funds for City projects and expressed the frustration he felt when City staff advised him of the need for a budget amendment to use an unrestricted grant to buy gift cards for the police. It was this frustration, he explained ("It's such a process!") that inspired him to create the Sarasota City Foundation. Arroyo insisted that his foundation was separate from the City, and that he was able to decide how the money raised would be spent. Commissioner Alpert raised concerns that people would think the foundation was City sponsored, and that the Commission should talk about it.

Arroyo's December 3, 2021 registration of the "Sarasota City Foundation, INC" as a Florida Not For Profit Corporation makes it clear the foundation was decidedly not separate from the City. The address

Arroyo used to incorporate his foundation was the address of City Hall - 1565 1st Street, Sarasota, FL. Apparently the City Commission, City Attorney, City Manager or City Auditor and Clerk were never asked by Arroyo if he could use the City Hall address for his foundation. Arroyo listed himself as the President of the Sarasota City Foundation, Sailesh Atluru as the Vice-President, and Patrick McArdle as the Treasurer.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigated Arroyo's foundation in the course of looking into potential improper influence at City Hall related to the "One Park" development project. FDLE found at least one of the One Park developers (Kim Githler) donated \$10,000 to Arroyo's foundation, and that Arroyo failed to file required paperwork to solicit donations for his foundation. Ms. Githler shared with FDLE that Jonathan Mitchell also donated \$10,000 to the foundation, and Mitchell and his wife were invited by Githler to attend the Ball.

In all, one hundred tickets to the Mayor's Ball were sold, at \$200 apiece, raising \$20,000. Did the City Commissioners Arroyo invited - Commissioner Battie and Commissioner Brody - pay for their tickets? Comping tickets to fellow City Commissioners would violate the City's policy against gifts. The FDLE report does not raise or address this question.

The initial reason for the investigation - a One Park developer offering a job to a planning commissioner - was found to be unsubstantiated. The FDLE investigation did find, however, that Arroyo's Sarasota City Foundation was soliciting donations without being properly registered with the state agency that oversees charitable solicitation.

SCF tax returns reveal interesting changes in contributions and legal fees. Inexplicably, the \$130,000 that Arroyo claimed to have raised at the

Mayor's Ball did not materialize on the foundation tax return. The initial 5/9/23 draft 990 tax return for Sarasota City Foundation listed over \$44,611 in contributions, along with \$8,850 in legal fees. Subsequently, in June 2023, FDLE educated founder Arroyo about the need to register the charity with the state in order to legally solicit contributions and Arroyo filed the required registration with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Perhaps there was other education offered by FDLE as well. The 990 tax return submitted to the IRS by the Sarasota City Foundation, dated 6/14/23, listed \$35,611 in contributions, with only \$330 in legal fees. The large drop in donations could be explained, in large part, by the \$8,220 drop in legal fees. It appears there's an attorney out there who was aiming to claim a \$8,220 tax deduction in legal services provided to the Sarasota City Foundation, and for some reason decided against it. Who could that attorney be? Is there another explanation for the \$8,220 drop in donations and legal fees?

Former Sarasota Mayor Erik Arroyo's "Mayor's Ball" may be the best example of why City voters consistently reject the idea of an elected mayor. If just one year serving as mayor results in the office-holder illegally soliciting donations for a foundation improperly incorporated by said mayor using the City Hall address, with only your political pals invited to fete you - what would four years in office produce?



Erik Arroyo

Opinion: Climate Crisis in Florida

BY WILLIAM (COTY) KELLER

Some Floridians are shocked by recent events – offshore waters the same temperature as a hot spa, increasing numbers and severity of life and property-threatening storms, more sunny day flooding, long periods without sufficient rainfall, and forest fires raging all over the world. Others view these happenings as harbingers of a more frightening future.

Naturalist David Attenborough’s timeline if bold action is not taken immediately (A Life on Our Planet):

- **2030** – Rainforest lost, arctic is ice-free in summer, accelerating climate change
- **2040** – Frozen soils thaw, releasing methane, accelerating climate change
- **2050** - Ocean heats to the point of all coral reefs dying, fish populations crash
- **2080** - Durable food production crashes from soil degradation, pollinating insects disappear, weather becomes unpredictable
- **2100** - 4 degrees C warmer, large parts of earth uninhabitable, 6th massive extinction underway, millions homeless, Holocene Garden of Eden is lost

As early as 2018, the United Nations warned that without immediate bold action, by 2030 the world would be facing a severe economic and humanitarian crisis. Five years later, that statement seems more than reasonable. Anyone without their head in the sand can see, as Josh Olive writes in Waterline, we are all endangered NOW. Our descendants’ world is likely doomed if we continue the present path.

Anthropologist Jane Goodall makes an important statement: “How bizarre that we, the most intelligent of all species, should be destroying our only home.” In Florida, where there have been no recent efforts to mitigate climate change (Mitigate is “a human intervention to reduce heat-trapping emissions or remove carbon already in the atmosphere”), despite the exceptional risks we face, it seems very bizarre indeed. How can it be? The answer lies in an examination of the causes and the motivation of our elected leaders and the response of our citizens.

Problems are solved by a determination of, and then elimination of, the root causes. The technical cause of the climate crisis is the earth’s carbon cycle

out of balance by human emissions, deforestation, and poor farming/soil management practices. Instead of a normal amount of 150 to 300 parts per million of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, we have over 400 ppm. The greenhouse effect, instead of keeping our planet temperate and safe, is overheating things.

Understanding the technical cause is not enough. We must recognize and overcome another underlying root cause: Many rich people and corporations do not want to stop the use of fossil fuels, halt the destruction of forests, or manage soils/farming in a sustainable way. The top 10% are responsible for over 50 percent of emissions. Corporations in the US enjoy the same constitutional rights as individuals. Money, in the form of political donations, is treated as free speech. The result is the wealthy and corporations have been successful in influencing (buying) political policies that prevent keeping fossil fuels in the ground and stifles sound agricultural and soil management practices. In Florida this has played out consistently for the past decade.

- Our former governor did not allow the use of the term “climate change.”
- The present governor pitches for climate resilience (adapting to sea level rise in particular) but will not discuss causes and therefore dismisses any action to mitigate. He hurt Floridians and the climate by refusing federal money for energy-efficiency.
- The state legislature has not passed any bill to mitigate.
- Charlotte and other counties have agreed to join the regional SW Florida Regional Climate Compact. Sadly, this agreement has not recognized the need to slow or reverse global warming. Instead, this compact aims only to adapt to the changing climate by becoming more resilient. County staff are discouraged from discussing the cause of global warming.

In Florida, we got what we voted for: office holders who value the demands of rich donors and corporations over the best interests of the people.

Our office holders have played the misinformed economy card, falsely claiming that transitioning to zero emission energy would hurt the economy. Science, including real economics, tells us the opposite is true. Zero emission energy is becoming the most cost-effective way to power our grids and move our vehicles. Continued use of fossil fuel

leads to economic ruin. As Robert Rubin, Former Secretary of the US Treasury said, “We do not face a choice between protecting our environment or protecting our economy. We face a choice between protecting our economy by protecting our environment—or allowing environmental havoc to create economic havoc.”

Florida’s current leadership must be replaced so we can do the right thing and mitigate the climate. This is not a partisan pitch. One doesn’t have to be a Democrat to enact good climate policy. Our state has had several climate champions from the Republican party in years past: Carlos Curbello of Miami helped create the Climate Solutions Caucus in congress. Francis Rooney of SW Florida advocated for a price on carbon, a free-market solution to reducing carbon emissions. These two Republican representatives served the public interest instead of special interests.

Floridians who want real action on warming and sea level rise should consider supporting candidates, from either party, who pledge to enact climate saving policies. This includes:

- Amending the US Constitution to eliminate corporate personhood and money as free speech.
- Federal incentives for zero emission energy and conservation measures- in the home, business, and on the farm.
- State regulation of electric utilities to promote conservation and establish a goal of 100% zero emission energy by 2030, with a 25% carveout for rooftop solar.
- Local governments enact zero energy building codes, all electric public transit, eco-friendly housing, commercial and business planning.

Scientists and experts agree these policies are the solutions. Florida’s citizens should consider becoming climate voters to make them happen. Unless new civic minded leaders are put in office, the carnage will continue, our lifestyles and economy will degrade, and life as we know it will not exist for our descendants. Let’s act like an intelligent species and stop destroying our only home.

William "Coty" Keller is an ecologist, working to conserve and restore the natural relationships among living things and the environment. He lives and works in Port Charlotte, Florida and Freeport, New York. <https://ecopapak.org/>

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Help Celebrate WSLR Founders

As many of you know by now, WSLR founders Dave Beaton and Arlene Sweeting will be stepping down from their leadership roles with the organization next year. Dave and Arlene have poured their hearts and souls into WSLR and Fogartyville for 20 years and will leave a strong legacy. WSLR will be celebrating their contributions to our community in a number of ways and want everyone to have a chance to acknowledge and celebrate the contributions that Dave and Arlene have made to the community.

Since 2005, WSLR has opened the airwaves to community voices, provided a platform for musicians and artists to express themselves, and has been a catalyst for bringing people together to make positive change. Today, our vision and mission has never been more important or critical. The world around us is changing. We face the existential threat of climate change that is becoming more and more real every year. We are confronted by efforts to silence voices of dissent and deny the fullness of our history. We must see these changing times as an opportunity to strengthen our resolve and ensure that the WSLR will continue to lead, serve and support our community, especially when it is in need, for many years to come. WSLR's commitment to you, no matter what the future holds, is to continue to provide a voice and space for community and to always beat the drum for justice.

There are several ways to show your appreciation for Dave and Arlene.

1. Rooted in Community: Celebrating Our Past & Building Our Future

- Saturday, April 27, 6-10pm
A committee has been formed to produce an event to honor Dave and Arlene's contributions. Volunteers are needed to help plan and implement the event. If you are interested in volunteering, please email info@wslr.org or reach out to staff at the office. We are also looking for sponsors to support the event - there are 3 sponsorship levels - Champion - \$5000; Catalyst - \$2500; and Partner - \$1000. Contact Jesse at jesse@wslr.org if you are interested in sponsorship.

2. Purchase an ad in the **Rooted in Community Program**. You can purchase an ad in the



WSLR Founders Arlene Sweeting and David Beaton. Photo Credit: Brendan Goff

program to support the event and leave a special message for Dave and Arlene. Ad rates: \$300/full page; \$150/ ½ page; \$75 / ¼ page.

3. Community Organization Membership

- If you are a nonprofit organization that has benefited from your partnership with WSLR+Fogartyville and you'd like to strengthen that relationship, WSLR is starting a new Membership Program only for nonprofits. It will include tickets to our annual Rooted in Community Celebration and a marketing package to help amplify the message of the nonprofit.

4. Founders Fund

- To honor Dave and Arlene, WSLR is establishing The Beat Goes On Founders Fund. The name comes from a radio show Dave and Arlene started during covid to help keep the community stay informed and connected. The Founders Fund is a separate fund-raising effort from WSLR's Membership Support program

which supports operating expenses and programs that are funded through the annual budget. The Founders Fund will be a quasi-endowment fund to be used for the future benefit of the organization or in the case of an emergency. You can donate to the Founders Fund online or send a check via postal mail to WSLR, P.O. Box 2540, Sarasota, FL 34230. Be sure to make checks out to WSLR and put "Founders Fund" in the memo line. All donations to the Founders Fund will be acknowledged in the Rooted in Community Program.

5. Many Voices, One Community Celebration

- Saturday, March 30 - Our Spring Open House will also provide an opportunity for the community to share appreciation for Dave and Arlene's contributions to our community.

6. Become a Member

during our Fall Membership Drive; October 4 – 10th.

Creative Nexus: Empowering BIPOC and Queer Artists in a Communal Art Space

BY YOLEIDY ROSARIO-HERNANDEZ

In the heart of our city, where spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Queer artists to gather, share experiences, and find support are scarce, there shines a beacon of hope—a visionary arts organization dedicated to cultivating a thriving community of creators. Mosaic Movements is more than an organization; it's a catalyst for change, a place where BIPOC artists come to connect, learn, and flourish. At its core, Mosaic Movements is on a mission to break down barriers and provide a haven where artists not only express themselves but also grow, making it an invaluable force in our creative landscape.

The lack of racial diversity in the arts sector is a deeper problem that requires examination and action. Mosaic Movements is committed to addressing this issue head-on by establishing initiatives to increase the representation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) working in the arts.



Creative Nexus, Mosaic Movement's latest endeavor, will be a curated space designed to center and strengthen ties between BIPOC artists and LGBTQ artists. It's a place to share resources, improve access to the arts, and cultivate a network of BIPOC and Queer artists who collaborate seamlessly across artistic mediums in an interdisciplinary fashion.

Creative Nexus isn't just an event; it's a nurturing space for the artistic spirit of BIPOC and Queer artists. It's a hub for building allyship and a platform that offers artistic development opportunities, fostering exchanges to help artists grow within their creative and collaborative practices. At Creative Nexus, BIPOC and LGBTQ artists from all artistic disciplines are invited and welcomed to participate in an immersive artistic experience.

Join us for the launch and help fuel the growth and vitality of our artistic community. Save the date for **Saturday, October 21**, from 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM, as we gather at Fogartyville Media & Arts Center. Reserve your spot now by RSVPing at: <https://www.mosaicmovements.org/event-details-registration/creative-nexus-a-dynamic-artists-collective-meet-greet>

Come, be a part of this vibrant communal art space where you and your creativity finds its home.

Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez is the founder and director of Mosaic Movements.