

# SOLIVITA Democratic Club Beacon

July/August 2015  
Polk County  
Poinciana, Florida

Ellis Moose, president & editor — [President@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:President@SolivitaDemocrats.org) Gail Miller, webmaster — [Webmaster@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Webmaster@SolivitaDemocrats.org)



Polk Commission Watch

## Poinciana management battle rages on

A war is taking place between factions of the resident-elected board members & board members installed by AV Homes. The former has voted to fire First Service Residential, the company under contract to manage the day-to-day activities of Poinciana, while the latter is trying to remove the board's leaders. *See more on this important story on page 2.*



### President's Letter

**Our July meeting at The Palms was well attended with three dozen picnickers turning out to share in the spread.** After a brief business update we showed the latest video produced by our Webmaster Gail Miller and narrated by Joe Clark. The four minute film depicts the damage that unlabeled meat can have on our health. Check it out for yourself on our Website at [SolivitaDemocrats.org](http://SolivitaDemocrats.org). You'll be glad you did.

**Andy Crossfield, former president of the Lakeland Democratic Club and author of "The Premise"** entertained the crowd with his wit and insights into the writing of his first novel. He graced us with a free copy that we raffled off to benefit our club. He also laid down the challenge to a rematch of last summer's Blue Bowl event. Last year Solivita club **crushed** the other participating clubs and caucuses and brought home the winners' medals.

In fact, our own bowling event this past Spring was such a hit that Ilene Malpero was encouraged to set up another outing this Fall. The bowling fund-raiser will be on Monday, Sept. 28 at noon at Cypress Lanes on Dundee Rd. in Dundee. The cost is \$10/person and includes 2 games, shoes & of course, a ball. Thirty percent of the profits go to our club.

A new progressive caucus is being formed in central Florida. Two organizational meetings of the Four Corners Progressive Democratic Caucus have been held and an application has been filed to the state caucus for certification. Thirteen folks from Polk County are on the roles already. Maybe you should join too! Contact me for more info: 863-852-7291.

Meanwhile in Polk County, we elected 32 delegates to represent us at the Florida Democratic State Convention October 31 through September 1 at the Disney Yacht and Beach Club. Included are seven members of our club: Lynn Dell, Michelle Green, Ilene Malpero, Marti Kara, Leonard Guminski, Rochelle Quinn, George and Alice Floss, and me.

**Ellis**

**Wednesday  
Sept. 9th  
STARLITE  
BALLROOM**  
Doors open 5:30 PM  
"Lunch" at 6:00 PM  
Meeting at  
7:00 PM

**Learn about our local  
schools and what you can  
do to help make  
them better.**

Lunch choices on page 3.  
\$15/members \$17 non-members  
See [www.SolivitaDemocrats.org](http://www.SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
for tickets & more information.



### July Speaker: Author of "The Premise" Andy Crossfield

Past president of the Lakeland Democratic Club and DEC member spoke at our July meeting about his new novel and his observations of the political scene. His book was purchased by numerous members and is available on Amazon.com.

# COMING EVENTS

Wednesday,  
Sept. 9th  
6pm to 8pm

## BACK TO SCHOOL The Starlite Ballroom

Choose one of the following box lunches:

1. **TURKEY AND SWISS** — lettuce and tomato on bread
2. **THE ITALIAN HOAGIE** — ham, salami, pepperoni, provolone, lettuce, tomato, shaved onion and Italian dressing
3. **FARMER'S SALAD** — grilled chicken breast, tomato, carrots, beets, cucumber, smoked almonds, cranberry and feta cheese with red wine dressing
4. **CLASSIC GREEK SALAD** —crispy romaine, feta cheese, olive, tomato, garbanzo bean, onion and pepperoncini pepper with Greek dressing.

**\$15/Members**

**\$17/Non-members**

CHILDREN AND SENIORS  
LIVING IN POVERTY RELY ON  
FOOD PANTRIES

PLEASE BRING A DONATION OF  
NON-PERISHABLE FOOD FOR  
THE SOFFEES AND  
DO UNTO OTHERS  
FOOD PANTRIES

### Polk Commission Watch

## Poinciana Meeting Questions Remain: An Update

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, by Tom Palmer, Lakeland Ledger

Poinciana residents may be hearing more about Section 720.303 of Florida Statutes. This is the one that covers the conduct of homeowner association boards. According to the latest news from Poinciana, both sides – resident-elected board members & board members installed by AV Homes – are claiming the other side has met and taken action improperly

The first strike came August 17 when the Executive Committee, which was established by 1999 resolution of the APV board, met and voted to terminate First Service Residential's contract, hire former APV assistant manager Val Ramos to take over as community manager and approved a two-year contract for the law firm that had been hired on a 90-day interim basis.



The next day APV board members representing the other faction – the other board members say they were not notified or invited to attend – called an emergency meeting and voted to overturn FSR's dismissal and to change the board's leadership. This is subject to formal ratification at an Aug. 31 full board meeting.

In the meantime, one group changed the locks at the APV office and then another group changed the locks, locking the first group out. FSR officials called the first meeting an action by a "rogue" group of board members. Ramos claimed the second meeting violated state law and the Executive Committee doesn't recognize the other group's action. The Executive Committee meeting was held Sunday at the county park in Village 7 and its backers say notice was posted 48 hours in advance. The emergency meeting was reportedly held inside the locked APV office. No notice was posted as far as I know. Meanwhile, the latest feasibility report aimed at justifying a request for legislation to allow a referendum to allow Poinciana's residents to decide whether to form a city is expected to be out by the end of the month.

How the two sides have acted recently will probably be part of the incorporation debate.

## Hospitality Committee

**Thank you, Eileen Bertuglia, Kate Kohout, and Ilene Malpero,** for volunteering to assist with this committee. If you haven't been attending our regularly scheduled meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, you've missed good conversation, great discussion topics and good times with like-minded Solivita Democrats.

**There is still time to rejoin us so don't miss out on our future plans:**

August	<i>No meeting. Enjoy our Summer Recess!</i>
September 9	You and Educating Florida/Back to School Lunch Box \$
October 7	American History/Halloween Snacks
November 13	Meeting Moved to Tuesday/1st Annual Dance Bash \$
December 9	Annual Year in Review meeting/Holiday Cookie Exchange

**Patricia O'Beirne,**  
Hospitality Committee Chair

**Save the Date!**  
**SDC Membership  
 Appreciation  
 Day!**

**Sunday, Oct. 11  
 at The Palms**

**Music, Dancing & Fun!**

**You can help the  
 struggle for clean air  
 in Polk County —  
 Sign the petition**

**Lakeland has one of the last  
 dirty coal burning power  
 plants in Florida.** Burning  
 coal is a dirty, outdated form of  
 generating electricity and the  
 C.D. McIntosh Unit 3 is harmful to  
 our air, water, and public health  
 and is increasingly expensive to  
 run.

In the coming years, the cost  
 of coal will keep going up but  
 municipalities across Florida can  
 chart a homegrown course that  
 invests in our communities while  
 saving our families money.

Lakeland is making great steps  
 to transition to the new clean  
 energy economy by investing in  
 solar power, and now we have  
 the opportunity to lead the way  
 to real energy independence in  
 Florida.

We encourage you to adopt  
 the business case in Lakeland  
 Electric's Strategic Resource plan  
 that will end reliance on burning  
 coal at C.D. McIntosh plant.  
 Sign the petition to the City  
 Commission to invest in clean  
 energy and let's stop burning  
 coal in Florida!

**The petition can be signed at  
[SC.org/Lakeland](http://SC.org/Lakeland)**

**As you spend time with friends and family this summer,  
 you know what's coming: the conversation you can't  
 avoid with your conservative Uncle.**

He'll usually corner you about the latest conspiracy theory invented by Rush Limbaugh, but this holiday might just be different after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage and upheld Obamacare last week, your conservative Uncle will probably be reeling in grief. How you discuss health care and marriage equality with him will depend on which of the 5 stages of grief he's experiencing. As always, we're here to help.

**Stage 1: ANGER**

Many Republican Presidential candidates find themselves in this stage [Source: ThinkProgress], so it won't be surprising if your conservative Uncle is here as well. He may claim that the Court didn't have this authority and that the Justices should be elected. Our advice: remind him about the three branches of government, checks and balances, and the need for one branch to be independent and free from politics. If that doesn't work, show him this Schoolhouse Rock video that breaks it down simply.

**Stage 2: DENIAL**

This is the stage that can be most difficult to break through, if he genuinely believes the Court's ruling won't stick. Your conservative Uncle may have fallen under the spell of the Fox News bubble ---> the more information he digests, the less informed he becomes [Source: Business Insider]. Our advice: let him know that regardless of what he thinks, this is happening. And the polls are already in -- large majorities support both of last week's Supreme Court decisions [Source: CNN]. Suggest that he change the channel to anything but Fox News, where he'll discover that marriage equality and affordable health care are here to stay!

**Stage 3: BARGAINING**

Once he's accepted that these rulings have taken effect, your conservative Uncle may think states can revolt, or there may be some other solution to get rid of the rulings. Our advice: remind him that Obamacare has been law since 2010, and three fourths of the country were already living in states where same-sex marriage was legal before last week, the few who are trying to resist are quickly coming to terms with the fact that the Supreme Court has ruled [Source: Washington Post].

**Stage 4: DEPRESSION**

Your conservative Uncle may seem in despair. He may claim not to recognize this country, or that faith and family aren't what they used to be. Our advice: tell him he sounds an awful lot like the people who weren't comfortable with interracial marriage forty years ago. Or less than a hundred years ago, when women were gaining the right to vote. Then remind him that our country's history is a timeline of our citizens gaining freedoms: from slavery to voter access, desegregation to civil rights, women's rights, and gay rights. And remind him that the members of nearly every major religious faith supports same-sex marriage, as well as taking care of their neighbors [Source: Public Religion Research Institute].

**Stage 5: ACCEPTANCE**

It's unlikely your Uncle has reached the acceptance stage, but if he has, congratulate him! He's joined the record high number of Americans who support same-sex marriage [Source: Gallup] and recognized that Obamacare is working "better than even many supporters realize." [Source: New York Times]. Our advice: celebrate and enjoy with the newest progressive in your family! Remember, the first step is recognizing which stage of grief your conservative Uncle is experiencing. Then engage in conversation accordingly.



**Polk County DEC Year-Round Office has Grown!**

**Haines City Headquarters Inside the OK Arcade**

651 E. Main St, Suite 10-C  
 Haines City, FL 33844  
 Office hours: 10AM to 2PM,  
 Tuesdays through Saturdays  
 PolkCountyDemocrats@Gmail.com

**To volunteer, contact:  
 Ruth Ann Eaddy  
 Office: 863-668-7199  
 Mobile 863-294-7256**

**Polk County DEC Officials:**

- Ellis Moose, III**, Chair  
863-852-7294
- Dina Friedman**, Vice Chair  
863-422-8082
- Ruth Ann Eaddy**,  
State Committee Woman  
863-439-3554
- Paul Anderson**,  
State Committeeman  
863-965-8241
- Catherine Reddick**,  
Treasurer 863-439-1317
- Shawn Kinsey**, Secretary  
863-651-1402
- David Jones**, Sgt. at Arms  
863-679-7501

**Redistricting litigation persists in key states despite court ruling.**

By STEVEN SHEPARD 6/30/15 8:26 PM EDT.

The Supreme Court may have knocked out the best-known challenge to existing congressional districts in a number of states, but maps still remain in flux for 2016 in three important, large battleground states: Florida, North Carolina and Virginia. Continued redistricting litigation — spearheaded mostly by Democrats, who were in the legislative minority in the three states after the 2010 Census, and their allies — involves 51 of the nation’s 435 congressional districts and could allow Democrats to make a dent in the GOP’s near-historic House majority in next year’s elections.

The high court’s recent decision on Monday actually bolsters Democrats’ case in Florida, where voters in 2010 approved amendments to the state constitution that prohibit legislators from considering partisan composition and incumbent protection when drawing new districts. Had the Arizona Legislature succeeded in convincing the court that cutting the Legislature out of the redistricting process was unconstitutional, opponents of the Florida Fair Districts amendments could have sued to have the restrictions on the Legislature there regarding congressional districts struck down as well. Florida’s GOP-controlled Legislature was already forced to redraw the map last summer, after groups sued under the Fair Districts amendments. The new map, which made slight tweaks to the districts represented by Democrat Corrine Brown and Republican Daniel Webster, was passed last August — too late for the 2014 elections — and is scheduled to take effect next year. But the same groups who sued to overturn the first map are challenging the tweaked version, too — arguing the Legislature’s changes don’t go far enough. The state Supreme Court heard the case in March and is expected to release a decision soon.

**Contact your elected officials and media at:**

<b>Sen. Bill Nelson</b> United States Senate 716 Senate Hart Office Building Washington DC, 20510	<b>Sen. Marco Rubio</b> United States Senate 317 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510	<b>Cong. Alan Grayson</b> Campaign Office 8419 Oak Park Road Orlando, FL 32819
<b>State Rep. John Wood</b> District Office: 702 East Main Street Haines City, FL 33844-4226	<b>State Sen. Kelli Stargel</b> 902 S. Florida Avenue Suite 101 Lakeland, FL 33803	<b>Gov. Rick Scott</b> The Capitol 400 S. Monroe St. Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001
<b>The Orlando Sentinel</b> Editorial Dept. 633 N. Orange Avenue Orlando, FL 32801	<b>The Lakeland Ledger</b> Editorial Dept. P.O. Box 408 Lakeland, FL 33802	<b>SDC Beacon</b> c/o Ellis Moose 217 Sorrento Road Poinciana, FK 34759-4065

**While snail mail maybe more effective, you may wish to email your thoughts. Here are their emails:**

Bill Nelson	<a href="http://billnelson.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm">http://billnelson.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm</a>
Marco Rubio	<a href="http://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-senator-rubio?p=Contact">http://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-senator-rubio?p=Contact</a>
Alan Grayson	<a href="https://grayson.house.gov/contact/email-me">https://grayson.house.gov/contact/email-me</a>
John Wood	<a href="http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/emailrepresentative.aspx?MemberId=4453&amp;SessionId=73">http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/emailrepresentative.aspx?MemberId=4453&amp;SessionId=73</a>
Kelli Stargel	<a href="mailto:stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov">stargel.kelli.web@flsenate.gov</a>
Orlando Sentinel	<a href="http://www.orlandosentinel.com/letters">www.orlandosentinel.com/letters</a>
Lakeland Ledger	<a href="mailto:voice@theledger.com">voice@theledger.com</a>
The Beacon	<a href="http://Beacon™SolivitaDemocrats.org">Beacon™SolivitaDemocrats.org</a>

# FYI

## Active Registered Voters MAY 2013 VS. MAY 2015

Pct 411:	5/2013	6/2015
Dem	1350	1537
Rep	1531	1682
Other	246	244
Unknown	842	1052
Total	3969	4515

Pct 420:	5/2013	6/2015
Dem	388	375
Rep	269	269
Other	34	36
Unknown	224	243
Total	915	923

Polk County:	5/2013	6/2015
Dem	141,567	138,177
Rep	132,027	130,537
Other	11,290	11,475
Unknown	71,528	83,589
Total	357,471	367,778



### Websites of interest:

#### POLITICS:

- www.FlaDems.com
- www.FISenate.gov/topics/ppaca
- www.PolkDemocrats.org
- www.BarackObama.com
- www.Democrats.org
- www.ProgressFlorida.org
- www.DemocraticGovernors.org

#### MEDIA:

- www.BestOfTheLeft.com
- www.NPR.org
- www.Snopes.com
- www.FactCheck.org
- www.PolitiFact.com

## Zombies against Medicare

BY PAUL KRUGMAN | @New York Times - More at <http://nyti.ms/1HU5ty5>

Medicare just turned 50 this month, and it has been a very good half-century. Before the program went into effect, Ronald Reagan warned that it would destroy American freedom; it didn't, as far as anyone can tell. What it did do was provide a huge improvement in financial security for seniors and their families, and in many cases it has literally been a lifesaver as well.

But the right has never abandoned its dream of killing the program. So it's really no surprise that Jeb Bush recently declared that while he wants to let those already on Medicare keep their benefits, "We need to figure out a way to phase out this program for others."

What is somewhat surprising, however, is the argument he chose to use, which might have sounded plausible five years ago, but now looks completely out of touch. In this, as in other spheres, Mr. Bush often seems like a Rip Van Winkle who slept through everything that has happened since he left the governor's office — after all, he's still boasting about Florida's housing-bubble boom.

The real reason conservatives want to do away with Medicare has always been political: It's the very idea of the government providing a universal safety net that they hate, and they hate it even more when such programs are successful. But when they make their case to the public they usually shy away from making their real case, and have even, incredibly, sometimes posed as the program's defenders against liberals and their death panels.

## Rent barely affordable for record number of people across America

BY BUSINESS RECORD STAFF | @BusinessRecord

A record number of people are struggling to write out their rent checks each month, according to a new study from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, Forbes reported. The study looked for "cost-burdened" renters, those households that spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent.

More than a quarter of renters were considered severely cost-burdened, forking over more than half their income for rent. The study found that 39.8 percent of renters spend 30 percent of their incomes on rent. This has increasingly become a struggle not just for lower-income individuals, but for the middle class. "Cost burdens are climbing the income ladder," write the authors of the report.

Nationally, 1 in 5 renting households making \$45,000 to \$75,000 a year are spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. In the country's 10 most expensive cities, nearly half of households in this income range are struggling to pay for housing, Forbes said. The number of empty rentals is part of what's driving rents up. The national rental vacancy rate, which fell to 7.6 percent in 2014, is at its lowest point in nearly two decades.

Rents rose at 3.2 percent last year, which is twice the pace of inflation, according to the report. The number of households paying more than 30 percent of their income to own a home has declined for three straight years to 39.6 million, or 25 percent of homeowners.



## Solivita Democratic Club Likes Your "Likes" of Our SDC Facebook Page

Thanks to the efforts of member Debbie Wellman, we have our own page on Facebook. Log on and search for **Solivita Democratic Club**. See you there! Remember to "like" us...



**Our 2015 Board Members:**

**Ellis Moose, President**  
**Newsletter Editor**  
**Chair, Polk County DEC**  
[President@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:President@SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
 863-852-7294

**Stan Dillard, Vice President**  
[SPDillardSr@juno.com](mailto:SPDillardSr@juno.com)  
 863-427-4480

**Rochelle Quinn, Treasurer**  
[RQuinn777@gmail.com](mailto:RQuinn777@gmail.com)  
 412-334-7042

**Deborah Wellman, Secretary**  
[SamSamHydle@hotmail.com](mailto:SamSamHydle@hotmail.com)  
 248-231-3812

**Marti Kara, Past President**  
[MHKara@verizon.net](mailto:MHKara@verizon.net)  
 407-417-1973

**Barbara Charles, Board Member,**  
**Precinct 420 Committeewoman**  
[DocBarb2006@yahoo.com](mailto:DocBarb2006@yahoo.com)  
 863 547-4111

**Joe Clark, Board Member**  
**Publicity Committee Chair**  
[Joseph.Clark4@gmail.com](mailto:Joseph.Clark4@gmail.com)  
 419-320-2642

**Michelle Green, Bd. Member,**  
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[MGreen0701@gmail.com](mailto:MGreen0701@gmail.com)  
 215-720-5590

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**Ways and Means Chair**  
[iMalpero@gmail.com](mailto:iMalpero@gmail.com)  
 863-496-2116

**Gail Miller, Board Member**  
**Website Administrator**  
[Webmaster@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Webmaster@SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
 248-821-0766

**Pat O'Beirne, Board Member**  
**Hospitality Chair**  
[OBeirneP@yahoo.com](mailto:OBeirneP@yahoo.com)  
 863-547-4374

The Board of Directors meets each first Tuesday of the month at 1:00pm.

Contact any board member if you have an issue you would like to have the club consider. Your ideas are encouraged and welcome!

**Misinformed USA:  
 Why average Americans vote for Republicans**

From Examiner.com

One can only wonder why average working class Americans would vote for a party that is so obvious in their bias towards the wealthy. It would make sense that someone in the top 1 percent of the income bracket would vote for the Republican party since they have the wealthiest American's best interest at heart. You could even make the case that highly religious Christians would vote for Republicans even though, at times, they vote against their own best economic interests. So the question remains, while scratching your head, why do working class Americans vote for Republican candidates?

One Republican voter said he voted for Mitt Romney in 2012 because, "we need a business person to get our debt down." When asked where he got his news and information from, and after trying to deflect from the question, the answer finally came. "I don't pay attention too much, but when I do, I watch Fox." Fox News is the primary source for information for millions of Americans across the country and that's where the problem starts.

Whether it's Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity or other right wing ideologues, Fox News is a tunnel vision information outlet with only one particular agenda that is being pushed through. Millions of Americans watch Fox News, listen to the likes of Rush Limbaugh, Neal Boortz, Michael Savage and others while getting information from right wing think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute. With big businesses and billionaire allies, the truth and facts in American have gone from a clear right and wrong, black and white situation to muffled shades of gray. It's not to say that Fox News, the Cato Institute and others like them totally lie because that would be too difficult to pull off. What these think tanks do, is take a fact and twist it to fit their own personal agenda, leaving out key information that would contradict with the platform they're trying to create.

A perfect example in describing the way groups like the Cato Institute operate is a report that came out by alternet.org. In the early 2000s, the Cato Institute released a report that suggested that families receiving welfare were making between \$17,000 and \$25,000 a year, but the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities countered that claim. The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities showed that the average income for welfare recipients was below \$9,000 a year, which is nearly \$3,000 a year below the poverty line.

The misinformation also comes from another right wing think tank, the Heritage Foundation. In 2011, when Paul Ryan released the "Ryan" Republican budget, the Heritage Foundation claimed that unemployment would drop to 6.4% in 2012 and to 2.8% in 2022. A report released by the Washington Monthly pointed out that these claims were extremely exaggerated. The CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, showed the errors of the Heritage Foundation's report and the director of the Heritage Foundation's Center for Data Analysis, William Beach, was forced to walk backed the claims.

In 2009, the Heritage Foundation released ads attacking the Employee Free Choice Act, a bill that was brought to congress that would give all employees the right to form a union without fear of being fired from their current job. Since the Heritage Foundation is bought and paid for by million and billionaire conservatives, the idea of having workers unite with more power and freedom threatens their control at the top. The ads released painted a false picture about the Employee Free Choice Act, claiming that unions will bully workers into joining them with an attempt to take money from the employee. According to the Huffington Post, the Heritage Foundation "frame(s) the EFCA issue based on bald-faced lies. Business-financed 'think tanks' like Heritage propagandize workers against their own interests in psychologically sophisticated ways, framing their anti-union stance as 'common sense.'"