

## Election 2016: The Register's endorsements for both Primary and General Election

Complete coverage for east HILLSBOROUGH (Plant City, Brandon, Tampa), west POLK (Lakeland / Winter Haven), & parts of ORANGE Cty (Orlando) - with some surprises

Wednesday, 24 August 2016 (LAKELAND, Fla.) ; Updated: Thursday, 25 August 2016, at 05:54pm (EST)

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### U.S. Senator (Florida)

One of Florida's senate seats, held by incumbent, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), is up for grabs.

The Democratic Primary (Tue. Aug. 30, 2016) features 5 candidates: Roque "Rocky" DeLaFuenta; Orlando Congressman, Alan Grayson; Pam Keith; Reginald Luster; and, Port St. Lucie Congressman, Patrick Murphy. All 5 candidates seem to be moderate to liberal, but otherwise patriotic and intelligent. Luster's website, for example, calls on increased HigherEd grants (good), but it is short-sighted in its promise that he would "Increase U.S. Department of Education funding to purchase high interest rate, private sector student loans." This, of course, would distort the Free Market, inducing college to jack up tuition to match increased borrowing abilities of cash-strapped students. DeLaFuenta is vague on HigherEd issues, and Keith does not address them in her website, as of the date of publication. Grayson is mired in a bitter divorce settlement, but he is well-known for his "Co-sponsoring legislation to return bankruptcy rights to Americans struggling with student loan debt." **The Register endorses Alan Grayson for the Democratic nomination for Florida Senator.**



The Libertarian Party of Florida holds a primary (Tue. Aug. 30, 2016) for 2 candidates: criminal defense lawyer, Augustus Invictus, 33, and Paul Stanton, 31, a U.S. Army veteran and information technology specialist. Both candidates seem to support the 2nd amendment, oppose foreign military intervention, and both oppose the so-called U.S. Government's "war on drugs," and thus, both candidates appear to be genuine Libertarians, in that regard. While [St. Peter's Blog](#) lists Stanton ahead "22-12 percent, with 65.8 percent undecided" in the primary, Invictus has the support of well-known Libertarian advocate, Raquel Okayay, according to [his official website](#) and [Audio Visual Network News](#) related to refusal to debate and refusal to denounce alleged threats by Charles Peralo, a Stanton supporter. **Okayay's concerns appear to be genuine, as she has a good reputation within the Libertarian community, if a tie-breaker is needed. However, The Register withholds formal endorsement in this primary, due to lack of additional information.**

The Republican Primary (Tue. Aug. 30, 2016) features 4 candidates: Manatee County land developer and businessman, Carlos Beruff; Dr. Ernie Rivera, an ordained minister with a Doctor in Ministry in Leadership (in progress); Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), the incumbent senator; and, Officer Dwight Mark Anthony Young, a former Detention Deputy with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, until having quit to run for Senate. All 4 candidates appear to be genuine Conservatives, with Sen. Rubio getting an impressive 77% Scorecard by [Conservative Review](#), known for its difficult standards in gauging conservative actions, votes, and stances taken by elected officials. However, with all due respect to the senator, he scores the lowest of the 4 candidates by *The Register's* review. While all 4 seem to be pro-life, pro-2nd-Amendment, and fiscal conservatives, there is a large amount of daylight between them on other key economic issues. Rubio, for example, has refused steadfastly to cosponsor legislation like H.R.449, which would return bankruptcy to college loans, offering a "Conservative Free Market" check against predatory lending, and resultant tuition inflation that occurs when lenders/colleges knows students have deep pockets to borrow. Beruff's campaign office was polite when *The Register* inquired, but never returned our press inquiry regarding either the bankruptcy issue (curative) or a proposal to reduce loan limits in the 1st place (preventative, and with the aim to get "smaller government," until the government is out of lending or guaranteeing loans with tax dollars, necessary to prevent another crash of the U.S. Dollar). Rivera was not available to speak with *The Register*, and his website's HigherEd section linked to the official GOP website, which, while better than average, nonetheless was OK with allowing college loans to continue. To Rivera's credit, however, both he, and Dr. Moses, who was manning his campaign office when *The Register* called, both seemed to be genuine moral and fiscal conservatives, and Moses, a Th.D. in theology, took time to make an excellent effort to inform this writer. Ofcr. Young, himself, was able to clarify *The Register's* questions, and assured this writer that he supported allowing college borrowers the same defenses afforded all other borrowers. Young, a Jamaican-American, has done well in integrating into America's culture, and supports "legal" immigration, but opposed "illegal" immigration, rightly opposing others who "jump ahead" of others who were in line earlier to become American Citizens. **The Register endorses Dwight Mark Anthony Young for the Republican nomination for Florida Senator, but we give honourable mention to Dr. Ernesto J. "Ernie" Rivera for his excellent track-record in life as a genuine**

### U.S. President: Editorial - by Gordon Wayne Watts, Editor-in-Chief



*The Register*, as all know, is a strongly right-leaning Conservative online newspaper, but journalism requires strict discipline to avoid bias (or even the appearance of bias), and genuine motives to "Be Fair" to all parties. To that end, our endorsements will take a turn for the weird **and likely anger all readers** (both Donald Trump supporters and Hillary Clinton supporters -as well as surely angering all of the so-called "3rd-party" voters, who are fed up with both Democrats & Republicans, who continue to ignore most voters' and our 'Common Sense' requests).

If we've angered all readers (yes, we probably will anger both you and your "political enemies" -which could be fun to watch while they read our Editorial, in wide-eyed disbelief!), then perhaps this is a sign that we are unbiased -and maybe even close to correct, so here goes nothing...

### Hillary R. Clinton / Sen. Timothy M. "Tim" Kaine (DEM)

First off, the most 'Liberal' candidate is unarguably former Sec. of State, Hillary Clinton, but she has done many good things, which, to be fair, we will outline at the offset: Clinton, who was brought up as a Methodist, once said that she thought that "abortion is wrong." [sources: "[Hillary Clinton's Moral Conflicts on Abortion](#)," by Myriam Renaud, *The Atlantic*, Aug 6, 2016 ; "[Hillary Once Thought Abortion Was Wrong](#)," by Ben Blackwell, CP Op-Ed Contributor, *The Christian Post*, August 4, 2015[6:46 am] She even opposed China's "forced abortion" & Romania's "forced pregnancy" policies, according to *OnTheIssues*, which quotes her as saying: "I went to China in 1995 and spoke out against the Chinese government's one child policy, which led to forced abortions and forced sterilization because I believed that we needed to bear witness against what was an intrusive, abusive, dehumanizing effort to dictate how women and men would proceed with respect to the children they wished to have. [line-break] And then shortly after that, I was in Romania and there I met women who had been subjected to the Communist regime of the 1970s and '80s where they were essentially forced to bear as many children as possible for the good of the state. And where abortion was criminalized and women were literally forced to have physical exams and followed by the secret police and so many children were abandoned and left to the orphanages that, unfortunately, led to an AIDS epidemic. [source: "[Hillary Clinton on Abortion](#)," citing the Source: 2008 Democratic Compassion Forum at Messiah College, dated: April 13, 2008]

Clinton was also once pro-Marriage, and *The Washington Post* quoted her as follows: 'Clinton said in January 2000 that marriage does not include gay unions: "Marriage has got historic, religious and moral content that goes back to the beginning of time and I think a marriage is as a marriage has always been, between a man and a woman." She said she would have voted for the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, but again said she supported partnership benefits for same-sex couples. Gay groups expressed disappointment in her position.' [sources: "[How Hillary Clinton evolved on gay marriage](#)," By Rachel Weiner, *The Washington Post*, March 18, 2013 ; [Hillary Clinton's Gay-Marriage Problem: Until 2013, she held a position that lots of Democratic voters now regard as deeply wrongheaded](#)," by Conor Friedersdorf, *The Atlantic*, June 13, 2014 ; and, "[Hillary Clinton on Abortion](#)," which lists her as "Previously opposed; now supports" on "Gay marriage," in the "Issues where Jeb Bush disagrees with Hillary" subheader]

While "Gay groups expressed disappointment in her position," I do not: Hillary Clinton was correct on both points. First, marriage has historically been defined as 1-man & 1-woman for over 6,000 years. Secondly, Clinton said that "she supported partnership benefits for same-sex couples." She is correct again: While I do not support the Government giving formal 'approval' of any nontraditional marriage (plural marriages in polygamy, child-marriage, Same-Sex marriage, or, even [that guy who wants to marry his own computer!](#)), nonetheless, I feel that a person should be able to have "partnership benefits for same-sex couples," and, for that matter, any person, gay or straight: In fact, when the government gives 'benefits' or 'perks' to straight couples, this encourages men &

Conservative, whose Puerto Rican heritage and high morals are positive assets.

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### U.S. House of Representatives (Florida)

There are other races for Congress in the lower chamber (the House, as opposed to the senate) in central Florida.

The Tue. Aug. 30, 2016 primary for U.S. Representative (Dist. 9) will feature 4 democrats: Kissimmee businesswoman & college instructor, Valleri Crabtree; Dr. Dena Grayson (the wife of Rep. Alan Grayson, D-FL-9th, who just recently concluded a lengthy and ugly divorce to Lolita Grayson); anti-gov-Rick-Scott grassroots activist, Susannah Randolph; and Fla. State Senator, Darren Soto. All 4 seem to be intelligent and well-intentioned, but Dr. Grayson seems to have the slight edge on intangible, but real, abilities to actually fix the problems for the middle-class. The "coat-tails" effect works in her favour, as we have already endorsed her husband, Rep. Alan Grayson, who is a solid advocate for the middle-class and college student. Moreover, [Heavy.com](#) reports that: "[Alan] Grayson Was Married to His First Wife for 25 Years; the Couple Had 5 Children Together." This obvious integrity on his part only helps the coat-tails effect for his new wife. While they are both surely not as Conservative as we would like, nonetheless, **The Register endorses Dr. Dena Grayson for the Democratic nomination in this primary.**

This primary also features 2 Republicans: St. Cloud FL businessman, Wayne Liebnitzky; and, Kissimmee FL, vice-mayor, Wanda Y. Rentas. The campaign websites of both candidates seem vague regarding Higher Education, and this is troubling, as Higher Education is the "backbone of America." (America presently has a "broken back," by this definition.) Both candidates seem to be genuine Conservatives and responsible neighbours; however, this writer, when attending the recent "Puerto Rican" political hobnob (hosted by the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Polk County), saw Rentas in attendance (and Democratic primary opponent, Soto, discussed above), but Liebnitzky was absent. This writer also spoke with Rentas, and while we did not have a chance to go into great detail, she seemed amenable to responsible economic policies in higher education. **The Register endorses Wanda Rentas for the Republican nomination in this primary, which is slated for Tue. Aug. 30, 2016, the same day as the above.**

### U.S. Representative (Dist. 12)

Rep. Gus Michael Bilirakis (R-FL-12th), the incumbent Republican congressman; and, criminal defense attorney, Robert Matthew Tager, are the only 2 candidates in this race, slated to be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, in the GENERAL ELECTION, since, in the Primary Race, both candidates "Qualified" and also were "Unopposed" in the Primary. - Atty. Tager opposes H.R.25, the Fair Tax bill, which Bilirakis supports: This is troubling (since the Fair Tax would simplify the tax system, since the government would have to police only large retailers, and not every citizen), but Tager seems genuine in his attempt to see both sides of the bill: "Some how this just does not seem fairer. Not to mention, I see no tax on the purchase of investments and none on the sale so this is a freebie for the super rich...Anyone who reads this different and interprets it differently, let me know." Source: ["Tagerforcongress" on FACEBOOK post](#) This writer is not an expert on the Fair Tax, but one rebuttal to this argument has been that Big Business already gets tax breaks, and so this would do little, if anything, to give the rich additional breaks. Also, neither candidate is clear on HigherEd economic policy. Republicans are traditionally more reluctant to support bankruptcy for college loans (which is bad, since Bankruptcy is a 'Conservative Free Market' check against predatory lending), but Democrats are typically more willing to allow huge College Loan Limits to increase (which is dangerous, as this induces skyrocketing tuition inflation). **The Register withholds endorsement of either candidate pending further investigation of both the Fair Tax and the HigherEd issues. NOTE: This race will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, in the GENERAL ELECTION, since, in the Primary Race, both candidates "Qualified" and also were "Unopposed" in the Primary.**



Atty. Robert M. Tager      Rep. Gus Bilirakis

**UPDATE** on Wed. 24 Aug. 2016 - Mr. Tager provided *The Register* with a detailed answer to clarify his views on the "Fair Tax" matter, yesterday, and I'm just now updating this news item. [Click here](#) to see his reply, corrected only for spelling, format, etc., and with minimal editorial comments to define terms. He has said he needs more time to study the HigherEd matter. Rep. Bilirakis' office was good enough to take our questions, but they have not replied as of press time. ~Editor, Gordon W. Watts

### U.S. Representative (Dist. 13)

This race features 2 Republicans [Mark Bircher and incumbent Congressman, Rep. David W. Jolly (R-FL-13th)] in a primary, held Tue. Aug. 30, 2016. The winner will face former Gov. Charlie Crist, the Democratic nominee, in the general election on Tue. Nov. 8, 2016.

### U.S. Representative (Dist. 14)

This race had no primary challenges, and thus, incumbent Congresswoman, Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL-14th) will face Republican challenger, Christine Quinn, the Democratic nominee, in the general election on Tue. Nov. 8, 2016.

### U.S. Representative (Dist. 15)

In District 15, there this writer lives, Lutz businessman, Jim Lange, a Democrat, is challenging incumbent Republican Congressman, Rep. Dennis A. Ross (R-FL-15th). Since neither drew primary challengers, they both get a first-round "bye" and sit out the primaries. They are on the general election ballot, scheduled for Tue. Nov. 8, 2016. Both are fairly conservative on key issues, with Lange being vehemently opposed to partial birth abortion, even if a bit less opposed to abortion as a legal right. Lange, an expert consultant in the private sector, is also fiscally conservative, and supports the aforementioned



women to marry for purely financial reasons, so, let's do like Clinton suggests here, but let's expand it to \*all\* people, and give \*everyone\* a tax-break. (We are over-taxed, and this would be an appropriate solution to "protect gays," while making sure to not put the Government's 'stamp of approval' on any behaviour that is less than ideal, be it being obese, committing adultery & cheating on your spouse, or any non-historic definition of marriage).

### Clinton shines

Perhaps, Clinton's most impressive accomplishment was a legislative proposal that she advanced when she introduced [S.3255 - Student Borrower Bill of Rights Act of 2006](#), in the 109th Congress (2005-2006), while she was the junior Senator from New York (Sen. Chuck Schumer was the senior Senator). While far from perfect, Clinton's bill was a huge step in the "right direction," as it required the Dept. of Education to vigorously enforce lender verification certificates for borrowers seeking to consolidate loans, limits, on the basis of a borrower's income, monthly payments, additional notice regarding actual interest rates, and (probably, most-importantly) would have amended federal bankruptcy law to discharge certain educational benefit overpayments, repayments, and student loan debt. (What exactly would constitute "student loan debt" is unclear to me: Does this include all student debt, or only private loans? However, something is better than nothing.)

**Hillary Clinton stood tall with honour, as she defended students who were victimised by Predatory Lending.** In fact, my good friend, Alan M. Collinge, founder of [StudentLoanJustice.org](#), was a key player who participated in a Clinton conference call with other experts, in advocating reform on this head. However, every since then, things have gone downhill.

Clinton takes money from (and associates with) foreign interests that persecute women and gays (which should outrage 'Liberals'), and she has "flip-flopped" on abortion and so-called 'Gay Marriage', now supporting both abortion and Same-Sex Marriage (which should outrage 'Conservatives', such as myself), but if she defended the weak, powerless, and helpless "Debt Slaves," perhaps she could retain some respect. However, Clinton - once an ardent supporter of reform in the highly-profitable Predatory Lending system of Higher Ed loans - has now abandoned weak & helpless College Students: **Clinton has "talked a good game," yes, but Word: She has not so much as done a thing to actually "help" college students (whether in the Senate or elsewhere - and if you disagree, then show me where I'm wrong).** While she is now offering "Free College," I doubt that she is being genuine. I admit that Bernie Sanders' claims that we once had free and/or very-low-cost college are correct, and a good argument: The "Liberals" are right on this point, but we frankly can not afford Free College at this time, since taxpayers guarantee these toxic, predatory loans. Some level of Loan Forgiveness is owed to victims, due to the damages suffered from illegal Predatory Lending schemes & resultant overpayments. Therefore, Loan Forgiveness (or, at the very least, a restoration of bankruptcy rights) -- and then a quick end to the 'College Loan' program -- would probably be more appropriate, and we could go back to low-cost college, DEBT FREE, like we had before the Government "forced" loans onto unsuspecting students.)

Clinton has abandoned college students -- and I suspect that she was "bought off" by the Big Banks (legally, that is: By Campaign Contributions) - in the same manner that access to the 'Clinton Foundation' was "bought off" by foreign interests, seeking favours & access. **Now that I've angered Liberals, I will surely do the same with my right-wing Conservative colleagues, so here goes nothing...**

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### Darrell L. Castle / Dr. Scott N. Bradley (CPF)

Next up - beyond all shadow of doubt - the most 'Conservative' ticket is unarguably Atty. Darrell L. Castle, and his running mate, Dr. Scott N. Bradley (CPF), representing the Constitution Party. (The 'CPF' denotation on Florida ballots stands for 'Constitution Party of Florida'.)

The [Constitution Party](#) has a VERY 'conservative' [key issues](#) platform and set of [principles](#):

They are pro-life, support 1-man & 1-woman as the definition of marriage, pro-2nd Amendment, against governmental intrusion via 'Common Core,' and adamantly opposed to amnesty for illegal aliens, and proclaim that "The Constitution Party opposes any extension of amnesty to illegal aliens," and that "The Constitution Party calls for the use of U.S. troops to protect the states against invasion." Their official website quotes the current presidential nominee in a past statement, as follows:

"The Constitution Party has always been the only national political party to stand firmly against the proposals for a "Pathway to Citizenship/Comprehensive Immigration Reform/Amnesty" that come out of Washington. While many of these schemes by all shades of Republicans and Democrats seek to address the out of control situation of

Conservative solutions to the higher education Bubble mess, including bankruptcy for college loans. Lange is also very concerned with excess spending in our budget, which makes him a tough challenger for Ross, in POLK County's District 15, a 'Red State' right-leaning Conservative district. Ross, while he has espoused support for bankruptcy options for college loans (curative) and reducing obscene college loan limits (preventative), has yet to act upon these beliefs by introducing or cosponsoring bills to this effect. Both candidates appear very Conservative to this writer on many key issues. Both men are truly men of integrity with excellent listening skills, genuine integrity, and decent respect for all persons, whether poor or rich, straight or gay, and either would be responsive to their constituents; but, in a 1-position race, only 1 person can win the office: While Lange is not as 'Conservative' as this writer would like him, he is close enough to Ross that the higher-ed issue will be a referendum (read: tie-breaker) as to which way this writer will vote come November, and regarding editorial endorsements whereof. See the front-page news of *The Register* for further details on this issue.

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**State Attorney (Cir. 10)**

Brian Haas, a Republican candidate for this partisan office, to replace POLK County, State Attorney, Jerry Hill, who is retiring, ran unopposed, and is considered "automatically elected" by Florida State Election Law.

**State Attorney (Cir. 13)**

State Atty. Mark Ober, the Republican incumbent in this race, will face Andrew Warren, the Democratic challenger in the November general election, as neither drew primary challengers.

**Public Defender (Cir. 10)**

Public Defender, Rex Dimming, the Republican incumbent in this race, will face Democratic challenger, Flora "Tonya" Stewart, in the November general election.

**Public Defender (Cir. 13)**

State Atty. Julianne M. Holt, the incumbent Democrat, was unchallenged in her bid for reelection as 13th Circuit Public Defender.

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**Fla. State Senator (Dist. 10)**

The Aug. 30, 2016 primary for this race features 4 Democratic challengers, Edwin "Ed" Narain; Betty Reed; Augie Ribeiro; and, Darryl Ervin Rouson. The winner of that race will face John "Mr. Manners" Houman, the Republican candidate, in November.

**Fla. State Senator (Districts 20, 21, and 26)**

Republicans, Tom Lee, Bill Galvano, and Denise Grimsley all ran unopposed in these races, respectively, and are considered automatically elected to office.

**Fla. State Senator (Dist. 22)**

Republican incumbent, Sen. Kelli Stargel, will face Democratic challenger, Debra S. Wright, in the November election, and both will sit out the primaries next week, as neither drew a primary challenger. This writer has known Senator Stargel for years, since he lives in her Senatorial district, and was also a constituent when she was in the State House of Representatives. This writer also got to speak with Ms. Wright at the recent "Puerto Rican" political hobnob (hosted by the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Polk County), and Wright was kind enough to confirm that she was not only totally pro-life but also totally pro-marriage. (I.e., while we most certainly don't hate gays, many of us are against so-called 'Gay Marriage'.) I add this to clarify a popular misconception: Many Democrats are, indeed, very, very Conservative, and this is important for them to share with voters, especially in the right-leaning Polk County region of Central Florida. While Wright felt that she could be more responsive to constituents, she said that she agreed with some of the legislative acts that Stargel had done. This writer found both of them to have excellent communication skills and willingness to listen and act. **Both candidates seem qualified to represent Polk County in the Fla. State Senate, and so *The Register* will withhold formal endorsement in this race.**



**NOTE:** *The Register* is not providing details or endorsements in all races, as a practical matter of limited time/money/energy resources, for the sake of brevity. The reader is encouraged to study the candidates and issues in your races, and obtain "Sample Ballots" from your polling place to aid you in so-doing. ~Editor, Gordon W. Watts

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**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 39)**

Incumbent Republican, Rep. Neil Combee, will face Democratic challenger, Victor Sims, in the general election in November, as neither drew a primary challenger.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 40)**

Republican incumbent, Rep. Colleen Burton, will face Democratic challenger, Dr. Shandale Terrell, in the November election, and both will sit out the primaries next week, as neither drew a primary challenger. This writer has known Representative Burton for years, since he lives in her state house district, and is, therefore, a constituent. This writer got to speak with Dr. Terrell, who has a Doctoral Degree in



illegal immigration, all fail to address the Rule of Law. [line-break] They [Republicans and Democrats] ignore the fact that illegal immigration is just that: illegal. "It is somewhat analogous to redefining laws against breaking and entering so that those engaging in such conduct would no longer be treated as criminals", noted Darrell Castle, Constitution Party 2008 Vice Presidential Candidate."

They also state in their [Foreign Policy](#) policy statement, that they oppose not only "UNCONSTITUTIONAL, UNDECLARED WARS," but also "steadfastly oppose American participation in any form of world government organization, including any world court under United Nations auspices." - This is about as Conservative as you can get, right? Wrong...

However, where the Constitution Party stands truly shines is in its [Higher Education policy](#), which states, in part, the following: "All teaching is related to basic assumptions about God and man. Education as a whole, therefore, cannot be separated from religious faith. The law of our Creator assigns the authority and responsibility of educating children to their parents. **Education should be free from all federal government subsidies, including vouchers, tax incentives, and loans**, except with respect to veterans." [Emphasis added in bold-face for clarity; not in original] They state this axiom in their introduction:

"Since the Constitution grants the Federal Government no authority over Education, the 10th Amendment applies:

*"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."* [Line-break and italics are in original, and copied verbatim in this small, Fair Use, quote]

Since the Constitution Party opposes any use of Federal tax dollars for Higher Ed loans, in the first place, their method, if used, would have prevented the Higher Ed Debt Bubble that we presently see -and is similar to the Mortgage Crisis of 2008-2009, except that the housing bubble was mitigated - slowed down - by borrowers who could file bankruptcy, and thus serve as a 'Conservative Free Market' check/balance against runaway Predatory Lending. This "check" was not present in the Higher Ed mess.

This is, on paper, a "perfect" platform, with absolutely no flaws, in my mind, so I will be voting "Constitution Party," this November, right? Not so quick...

QUESTION: "Why not?" -- ANSWER: The short answer is the "vote for a 3rd-party" argument, but that does not do the reader justice. The actual TRUTH is very strange: This qualifies as "TRUTH is *stranger* than FICTION," so here goes nothing...

In the 2008 presidential election, I was disgusted with both Sen. Barack Obama (DEM) and Sen. John McCain (REP), as both appeared to be tax-and-spend liberals, and so I was going to vote for Dr. Chuck Baldwin, for who was the Constitution Party candidate for president that year. My father told me that "a vote for a 3rd party is a wasted vote." (Not, not even a vote for the opposing candidate, just a wasted vote.) Also, my cousin, Jason Lee Mattiar, of Plant City, Fla., who was born in 1987, had just begun plans to vote in his 1st Presidential Election. While he considers himself a 'Democrat,' he is pro-life, like me, and urged me to vote for McCain, as no 3rd party "had a chance" of winning. But, I was determined to vote for Dr. Baldwin (whose running mate, that year, was Mr. Castle, the current presidential nominee). However, things just got real: While I was at home, minding my own business, my cousin, Jason, called me on my cell phone. Just as it was ringing, one of my other cell phones (one without "minutes" or any "plan") started going crazy, and "ringing." This freaked me out, and I was very angry at both Jason and my crazy cell phone. (I had "extra" cell phones, which I used to tell time, store my contacts, or, even, in case I needed to dial 911, which is possible from phones, regardless of whether they're on a plan or not.) After I inspected the "non-working" cell phone to see why it was even "able" to ring, it appeared (but I am still not sure) that an alarm had somehow been set, and then gone off. This was bizarre, since I did not even know how to set the alarm on that old "backup" phone, nor do I even remember doing anything with it, other than occasionally looking at it for the time, day, & date. So, why is this all even relevant?...

ANSWER: Since the phone was not "able" to ring, any 'ringing' of it (phone call, text, alarm, etc.) was impossible - hence, a miracle. Now, the task becomes: If God Almighty is trying to send me "a message," what, precisely, is that message? Well, since both my father and my cousin, whom I trust, said that I would waste my vote on a 3rd-party candidate, then the miracle, if it was one, would only be God "pointing to" someone (or some thing). The only proximal person/place was Jason, as his call and the "angel call" both came in within seconds of one another. So, I inferred the "message from God" to mean: *Listen to your cousin, Jason.* That I did, and I am still, to this day. Attorney Castle, and Dr. Bradley, with all due respect, unless you have a chance of winning (or, unless I get additional Divine directives to the contrary), I can not waste my vote on your candidacy, but I wish you all the best. OK, I surely angered all my 3rd-party friends (who think we must vote 3rd-party, simply to 'send a message' that Democrats & Republicans must not have a monopoly on

Education, at the recent "Puerto Rican" political hobnob (hosted by the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Polk County), and he was kind enough to confirm that he was not only totally pro-life but also totally pro-marriage. (I.e., while we most certainly don't hate gays, many of us are against so-called 'Gay Marriage'.) However, unlike Ms. Wright, Dr. Terrell informed me that he reluctantly supported the so-called "Gay Marriage" ruling which the Supreme Court recently handed down, even though Dr. Terrell was adamantly against the moral concept of 'Gay Marriage,' itself. When I asked him why he supported so-called 'Gay Marriage,' even against his moral beliefs, Terrell he said that he felt that, in this political climate, this was the only way to prevent gays from being mistreated. While I would have taken a different route (one that did not formally offer Government endorsement of gay marriage), nonetheless, I whole-heartedly agree that we must fight tooth-and-nail to prevent gays (and, for that matter, anyone) from mistreatment, bias, or hatred. I add this to clarify a popular misconception: Many Democrats are, indeed, very, very Conservative, and this is important for them to share with voters, especially in the right-leaning Polk County region of Central Florida. This writer found both Burton and Terrell to have excellent communication skills and willingness to listen and act. **Both candidates seem qualified to represent Polk County in the Fla. State House, and so *The Register* will withhold formal endorsement in this race.**

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 41)**

Bob Doyel faces Nicolas Garcia in the Democratic Primary for this race. Charles Davis faces Sam Killebrew in the Republican Primary for this race. The winner of each primary will face off in the November general election.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 42)**

Mike LaRosa (REP) and Benny Valentin (DEM) were both 'Unopposed' in their primaries, and they will sit it out until they face off, in the November general election.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 56)**

Rep. Ben Albritton, the Republican incumbent, will face David C. Poulin, the Democratic challenger, in the November general election, as they both were unopposed in the Primaries.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 57)**

Jake Raburn (REP), the incumbent, was unopposed and is considered automatically reelected.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 58)**

Republican incumbent, Rep. Daniel D. Raulerson, representing Plant City, FLA, in the state house, will face Democratic challenger, Jose N. Vazquez-Figueroa, in the November general election, as neither drew primary challengers.

**Fla. State Representative (Dist. 59)**

Rep. Ross Spano, the Republican incumbent, who had no primary challenger, will face the winner of the Democratic primary race between Democrats, Rena Frazier and Naze Sahebzamani.

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**(Fla. State) Supreme Court Justice**

Florida State Supreme Court Justices, Charles T. Canady; Jorge Labarga; and, Ricky L. Polston, will be up for a "retention" vote in this nonpartisan race, as will numerous state appellate court judges, in the 5 State Appellate Courts.

**County Judge Group 4 (Cir. 10)**

Incumbent Judge, Mary Catherine Green; and, Polk Attorney, L. Mark Kaylor, were set to face off in this race, but Kaylor dropped out, making Green the automatic winner. You will receive the following notice if you try to vote: "NOTICE: A candidate in the race for the office of County Judge Group 4 has withdrawn. A vote cast in this race will not change the outcome."

**County Judge Group 8 (Cir. 10)**

Long-time, incumbent Judge, Susan Lee Barber-Flood faces former assistant state attorney, Carson Bassett, who currently is a Geico (insurance company) lawyer, in the civil litigation division. This may prove to be the most interesting race of the election. *The Ledger* had [previously reported](#) that "The Florida Supreme Court has ruled that Polk County Judge Susan Barber Flood should receive a public reprimand for her relationship with her courtroom bailiff, James "Bubba" Maxcy III." [source: 'Court: Publicly Reprimand Polk County's Judge Susan Barber Flood: Justices call Flood's "inappropriate relationship" with bailiff "unacceptable";' By John Chambliss, *THE LEDGER*, Published: Thursday, November 6, 2014 at 11:26 p.m.]



Atty. Carson Bassett      Judge Susan Lee Barber-Flood

While a close friendship (in this case, a romantic relationship) with an employee -over whom the judge exercises supervisory authority- is clearly inappropriate, nonetheless: it would not be a "Federal Matter" (or preclude her from serving) if the judge avoided ruling on any case where the employee was in court. And, while "bias" is a legitimate complaint, it was a one-time offense; therefore, so long as judge removed herself from being his boss (one of them would have to 'transfer' or quit), and if she then apologised (which she did in her Supreme Court review), we don't see why she should be fired or forced to step down.

However, *The Ledger* went on to report that "Maxcy retired from his job with the Polk County Sheriff's Office

elections), and I surely angered my Constitutional right-wing colleagues. Good progress! Moving on...

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**Dr. Jill Stein / Mr. Ajamu Baraka (GRE)**

My good friend, [Alan Collinge](#) supports Dr. Jill Stein, of the GREEN PARTY, as an 'Interest' on [his Facebook page](#), and has said that "@RanaFeroohar @FT @rooseveltnst @Demos\_Org Honestly, @DrJillStein is the only candidate even close to understanding #StudentLoans crises." [source: <https://twitter.com/alanslj/status/760082847449354241>]

In all fairness, she does better than both Hillary Clinton and even business expert, Donald Trump - combined. She supports:

"Abolishing ALL student loan debt (and free college tuition)" [source: [http://www.jill2016.com/fb\\_ad\\_student\\_loans](http://www.jill2016.com/fb_ad_student_loans)]

But is this really so good? Well, while there is a good 'historical' argument (America had free college in its past, and the best in the world, to boot), and a good 'comparative' argument (Germany, and other advanced nations have free college), we can't afford it right now. But the "bigger" problem is her means of achieving this:

"Our campaign is the only one that will cancel student debt by creating quantitative easing packages." [source: [http://www.jill2016.com/jill\\_talks\\_with\\_connecticut\\_newspaper](http://www.jill2016.com/jill_talks_with_connecticut_newspaper)]

Did you catch that? "Quantitative Easing" is simply printing up more U.S. Dollars to pay for any new toys. While Dr. Jill Stein's proposed "bailout" of all higher-ed debt would probably be a much better investment than continual "bailing out" of "loser" banks (that keep filing bankruptcy, and begging for more corporate handouts, bailouts, etc.), or "endless wars," Stein's plain is very, very stupid: Endless printing of money devalues the dollar. (Think: If the Fed printed a Million Dollars for ever American, then a Million Dollars would not be worth much, now would it?)

Besides, while she is to be admired for protecting the environment and animals, she does not care to follow the Hippocratic Oath she took as a doctor, to "do no harm" to unborn babies, nor does she respect the 6,000-years-plus+ of history on the definition of family and marriage. One CAN be "pro-marriage" without hating gays. (In fact, almost ALL right-wingers do NOT hate gays.) I think that I will share this new find (about the Constitution Party as an alternative to the Green Party for Higher Ed solutions) with my good friend, Mr. Alan Michael Collinge, and see what he thinks. (It's not 'rocket science,' but, for what it's worth, Collinge is, indeed, a 'Rocket Scientist,' at least, according to his deep education - which put him deep into debt. Alan is, all joking aside, very smart, and a dedicated warrior in the fight against Debt Slavery.) **Dr. Stein, and her running mate, are nice people, but they aren't getting my vote, this cycle.**

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**Gov. Gary Johnson / Gov. William Floyd "Bill" Weld (LPF)**

Next "up to bat" are Gov. Gary Johnson and Gov. William Weld of the LIBERTARIAN PARTY. While the Libertarian Party is a "3rd-party," this party actually "has a chance" of winning in the general election, as it is "inching up" in the polls. - And, as I self-identify & lean VERY STRONGLY 'Libertarian,' this is a "match made in heaven," right? Let's take a look-see...

While they cherish the 9th and 10th Amendments, of the U.S. Constitution, regarding "States' Rights" and "personal liberty," nonetheless, a closer look is needed:

[Their platform](#) clearly states, in point 1.5, that: "Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration." Oh, really?

First off, this contradicts 'Conservative' gut feeling: How would they like it if "States' Rights" were used to make them a slave - or, more to the point, to "abort" them or their loved ones? Would *they* like it? Of course not. (And, rightly so!)

However, this even contradicts their own platform, which, at [1.9 Self-Defense](#), clearly states that: "The only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights—life, liberty, and justly acquired property—against aggression. This right inheres in the individual, who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group."

Did you catch that? Their own platform says that self-defense or "defense of individual rights," such as "life," are OK. Since Gov. Johnson has told the press repeatedly that he is "personally" pro-life, he should accept the biological and legal truth, namely that the unborn baby's life begins at

in November 2013, citing a medical condition," and that "[Circuit Judge Beth] Harlan [who was accused of approving false time cards for her judicial assistant, Alisha Rupp, who had reported the romantic relationship between Barber and Maxcy] retired March 26 in exchange for prosecutors dropping criminal charges against her."

It gets worse: *The Ledger* also [reported that](#) "A complaint filed with the Florida Elections Commission states that county judge candidate Carson Bassett violated state statutes when his wife attended a fundraiser for State Attorney candidate Brian Haas in April," in what some called a disguised attempt to evade Florida Statute 105.071, which prohibits partisan political activities from judicial candidates, but Brock Mikosky, Bassett's campaign manager disputed this, claiming that Carson wasn't even a "filed candidate" for this position when the invitation went out and that "He had nothing to do with the formation of the host committee or the distribution of the invitation." [source: 'Complaint filed against Polk judge candidate with the state elections commission,' By John Chambliss, *The Ledger*, Published: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 at 9:59 p.m.] Nothing sustentative ever came of this, and the campaign progresses: *The Ledger* just [reported that](#): "The Florida Elections Commission has rejected a complaint that county judge candidate Carson Bassett violated state statutes when his wife attended a fundraiser for state attorney candidate Brian Haas in April." [source: 'Election 2016: County Judge — Complaint against Bassett rejected: Elections Commission says it does not have jurisdiction over judge's races,' By John Chambliss, *The Ledger*, Published: Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 9:26 p.m.]

To further complicate matters, "A prominent Lakeland lawyer [Ron Clark, a founding partner of Clark, Campbell, Lancaster & Munson] has sent a letter to some circuit and county judges in Bartow asking them to contribute money to the campaign of Carson Bassett, a candidate for county judge," according to *The Ledger*: "[Lakeland lawyer mistakenly sends letter asking for campaign donations to judges](#)," By John Chambliss, *The Ledger*, Published: Friday, August 5, 2016 at 10:33 p.m. This was a mistake on the part of Clark, and all parties admitted that Bassett had nothing to do with this: Clark reported that he instructed an assistant to send "the letter to 1,000 friends whose addresses he has saved for events he may hold, such as barbecues," but which should not have included judges, who are not allowed to participate in political events or give endorsements, such as to Bassett's candidacy.

But the alleged misconduct didn't stop there: While the final investigation did not prove any sexual relationship had occurred, as some accusers had alleged, nonetheless, Judge Susan Barber-Flood almost certainly lied to investigators about alleged conversations with four (4) other judges:

"Several circuit judges recalled speaking to Flood because they were concerned about her behavior, investigators wrote, but Flood denied any judge had come to her with concerns. [line-break] "Either Judge Flood is being dishonest or four circuit judges conspired to concoct a story that they were each concerned about Flood's behavior — something that is just not believable," the report states.' [source: "[State Attorney Criticizes Polk Judges After Investigation](#)," By JASON GEARY, *THE LEDGER*, Published: Friday, September 13, 2013 at 10:17 p.m.

Barber-Flood also took a peek into confidential files, an action that may constitute a violation of State Laws and/or professional codes of conduct:

"Flood was unaware she was being video-recorded in her interview, and the report states she was recorded getting up during a break and looking at the "confidential case files" of an investigator who had been questioning her," *The Ledger* reports. "It has often been said that character is what we do when we think no one is looking. ... The judge's actions speak volumes about her character and it exemplifies how she handled the issues surrounding the investigation," the report states. [line-break] "She ignorantly thought that as a judge, she was free to do what she wanted, when she wanted and believed that others should not be concerned with her conduct and actions. She seemed unconcerned and indifferent about the respectability of her behavior." *Ibid*.

These allegations were backed up by Tampa Bay's WFTS-TV-28, *ABC Action News*: "At one point during the interview with investigators, Judge Flood is caught on camera looking at confidential documents when the others leave the room. [line-break] "She ignorantly thought that as a judge, she was free to do what she wanted, when she wanted and believed that others should not be concerned with her conduct and actions," [POLK COUNTY, State Attorney, Jerry] Hill wrote.' [source: "[Polk judge arrested, while another is accused of 'inappropriate behavior' with bailiff: Judge Susan Flood admits to kissing bailiff](#)," by Ryan Raiche, *ABC Action News (WFTS-TV-28)*, POSTED: 7:37 PM, Sep 16, 2013; UPDATED: 4:24 PM, Mar 4, 2015. Copyright 2013 Scripps Media, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed -except as permitted by FAIR USE, for research, commentary, etc.]

In all seriousness, this writer thinks both candidates are probably qualified to be a judge, and, indeed, the 'experience' argument is bandied about by some to support Barber-Flood's candidacy for reelection in a rare challenge to her seat. However, some critics have a point being concerned about this argument: Should we have left Pres. Nixon in office (during the infamous 'Watergate' scandal) due to his "experience?" - Oh, really?

Lastly, when I (political writer, Gordon Watts) got a chance to interview both candidates at the recent "Puerto Rican" political hobnob (hosted by the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Polk County), I asked Bassett why I should vote for him, and he informed me that Barber peeked at confidential files, apparently not enough to get her arrested, but certainly enough to raise the ire of State Atty., Jerry Hill, whom I've almost never known to go after the 'Establishment' types (as is sitting-judge, Susan Barber). However, I had not had the benefit of seeing the *ABC* or *Ledger* news reports. When I asked Barber about the allegation that Bassett made regarding her peeking into the files, she informed me that I was misinformed. Later investigation found that she had tried to deceive me with her answer. Granted, it is possible she may have misunderstood me - but I did *not* misunderstand her: she could have as easily admitted the truth. That she did not.



Am I making too much hay over being lied to once? I don't know, but how would you like to be lied to? She was on shaky ground after calling four (4) sitting judges liars, and this after the courthouse affair (which I think has been overblown by nosy outsiders - a

conception, when the sperm and egg unite. Thus, 1.9 supports the use of Governmental (or private) force to defend an unborn child's life, and thus contradicts, annuls, and abrogates section 1.5. (*Let me remind the reader that the Constitution Party statement, quoted above, says in relevant part: "who may agree to be aided by any other individual or group," which - of course - would include the Government, key word 'any' to be clear.*)

Also, while I agree with 1.4's statement that "Sexual orientation, preference, gender, or gender identity should have no impact on the government's treatment of individuals," meaning I do NOT support mistreatment of gays - or anyone - nonetheless, taken to its extreme, The Libertarian Party's position would mandate that the government allow (and thus, tacitly and implicitly support) plural marriage (polygamy), child-marriage, so-called Gay Marriage, and even [that guy](#) who [wants to marry his own computer!](#) Oh, really?..

Does this mean that the Libertarian Party is OK with Muslims and Mormons (and other groups) having men be able to marry, say, ten (10) wives? This, if taken to its logical end, is bizarre. I like Govs. Johnson and Weld, and they would be better than most other candidates (especially regarding fiscal restraint, avoiding endless wars, etc.). - Also, this book ([Libertarians Working For You show, on ending college subsidies with Anton Chamberlin](#)) suggests that they are almost as good as the Constitution Party on the higher-ed debt issue, and implying that their 'Education' section applies not just to Public Ed, but also to Higher Ed (college) debt matters, where it says: "Education is best provided by the free market..." (*Note to self: Include this little fact when speaking with my friend, Alan, and expert in this area, and see what he says about it.*) **But, for the reasons mentioned above, Gov. Johnson, and the Libertarian Party, are most assuredly not getting my vote this election cycle.**

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**Mr. Donald John Trump / Gov. Michael R. "Mike" Pence (REP)**

That is 4 down, and 1 to go... and this just leaves "one man standing," but should I really vote for Donald Trump, who has a good number of controversial controversies swirling around him at any one time?..

Well, for one thing, Trump has not clarified precisely how he would eliminate runaway college tuition? Does he support bankruptcy options for college students (as his companies were able to do, even if not himself, personally)? Does he support caps on Student Loan limits, and eventual elimination of the predatory and misguided College Loan "debt slavery" system, as Mr. Castle (and the Constitution Party) would? All this, I do not know... But, I shall try and take a guess.

First off, let's call it the 'Jason Rule' (see above)... by the Jason Rule, I've proven that God Almighty, Himself, opposes me voting in a 3rd-party race for president (*unless they have a chance of winning and are the best choice*). - At this time, no 3rd-party has a snowball's chance in Hades of winning the presidential race. - Also, excepting the Constitution Party, which is VERY low in the polls, no 3rd-party is really the 'best' choice, even assuming *arguendo* that they did have a "fair chance" at winning. - So, this eliminates all parties/candidates, excepting Trump and Clinton. I've already shown Clinton to be a traitor to the middle-class with regard to her abandonment of the College Debt matter. (Translation: SHE wants to be able to qualify for bankruptcy if *she* needs it, but the 99%, the poor student, can just 'go to hell' as far as she's concerned.) Also, recent revelations show that both Clinton and the Democratic Party are not good at protecting American secrets from hackers (be they accidental errors where Russian hackers get in, due to technological weaknesses, or be they unforced "careless" errors, such as Hillary Clinton using an unsecured, private email server). - Trump, Pence, and the republican party, by contrast, have *had* no such breaches of security. (But, to be fair, Republicans, as a whole, also do not care for student borrower rights to bankruptcy, as the U.S. Constitution's 'uniformity clause,' requires, in Art.I, Sec.8., Cl.4, which states, in relevant part: "To establish...**uniform** Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States." [Emphasis added in bold, for clarity; not in original]) -- *Would Trump be any different?*

Moreover, most people who have known Trump personally, for years, such as [Lynn Patton](#), a middle-aged African American executive, who had very difficult times, recalls how Mr. Trump, and his family, stood by her, and [has not changed her story](#) on Trump's character - or his genuine desire to help both minorities, gays, and national security. Also, NY Mayor, [Rudy Giuliani](#), who has known Trump for years, when Trump rebuilt many sections of New York, speaks well of him. By contrast, many people (longtime Clinton friend, Dick Morris, comes to mind) who have known the Clintons for years, do not speak well of Hillary Clinton.

Furthermore, a Historically Black, Charlotte, NC church, just now endorsing Donald Trump, [and went on to say](#) that "Supporting Hillary is like being with an abusive ex, one that you already know left you broken and wounded. At this point, give the new guy a chance." (Quote: "Her past track record is a great indication that, I don't think she's fit to lead this country - and no other country.") [source: "[Historically black Charlotte church backs Donald Trump](#)," by: Jenna Deery, Elsa Gillis, *WSOCtv*,

mistake on her part, but not necessarily a disqualifying mistake). She made repeated mistakes, four (4) mistakes, by my last count (1.inappropriate relationship ; 2.calling four judges liars ; 3.peeking into confidential files ; and, lastly: 4.herself lying to my face: This sitting judge lied to my face when she said that I had been misinformed in response to my question about Bassett's comments to me that she peeked into a file. - I have my doubts, it's safe to say, about her qualifications.

Based on the foregoing, *The Register* endorses Carson Bassett for the 10th Judicial Circuit (Polk County), County Judge Group 8. But, as human as Judge Barber is, many of us might have 'peeked' into a file that had our name on it; and, so we should not be too harsh on her, in our thoughts, words, or deeds. "However, a line was crossed when she lied about 4 other sitting judges, and then lied to my face about about her curiosity to peek into the forbidden file." (Editor, Gordon W. Watts, speaking for himself)

**County Judge Group 3 (Cir. 13)**

In the 13th Judicial Circuit (Hillsborough County), another nonpartisan race to elect circuit judges, Robin Fernandez Fuson and Carl Hinson face off in the primary election.

**County Judge Group 24 (Cir. 13)**

In Group 24, another 13th Circuit judicial race, Isabel "Cissy" Boza-Sevelin; Gary Dolgin; Melissa Polo; and, Lanell Williams-Yulee compete for your vote this primary election.

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**Sheriff (Polk County)**

In the nonpartisan race for Sheriff in Polk County, Fla., Sheriff Grady Judd, the incumbent, faces, Michael Lashman, who qualified as a Write-In candidate. Both men have work experience in Law Enforcement.

**Sheriff (Hillsborough County)**

In the nonpartisan race for Sheriff in Hillsborough County, Fla., Sheriff David Gee, the incumbent, will apparently be reelected automatically: As of press time, his only potential opponent, Kevin S. Carrier, appears to have not qualified to run.

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**POLK County Commissioner District 3**

Bill Braswell and J.C. Martin, both Republicans, face each other in a Primary, which will be held on Tue. Aug. 30, 2016, but, unlike most other primary races this day, all voters will be allowed to vote: since no other parties put forth a candidate, this will be a "Universal Primary Contest," and open to all registered voters in this district. Due to a recent change in the Fla. State Constitution, Florida, which is normally a "closed-primary state," will allows all voters to participate in this primary. Both candidates are genuine Conservative Republicans and appear qualified, but J.C. Martin gets the nod, as there is an intangible outsider, anti-establishment quality. *The Register* endorses J.C. Martin for County Commissioner.

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**POLK School Board Member District 1**

Hunt Berryman, the incumbent; Dr. Franklin Edward "Mr. Ed" Shoemaker; and, Billy Townsend, a former *Ledger* assistant News Editor, are vying for this school board position. All 3 candidates seem qualified, but Townsend takes issue with the incumbent for alleged lack of oversight in the recent incidents related to former Superintendent, Kathryn LeRoy, which eventually resulted in her being replaced. Moreover, Townsend's campaign was recently seen with a huge banner sign on S. Fla. Avenue in south Lakeland, and then this writer discovered a small business card on his vehicle after a trip to the local southside Wal-Mart. While some may find this annoying, I (speaking only for myself) was impressed with the efforts that Townsend has put into his campaign. (And, he had a huge billboard to explain various tests that he claimed were excessive, in his speech at the Polk hobnob, discussed above.) Townsend has an intangible extra quality of effort & momentum, and would no doubt keep a watchful eye on the district (and has said he is OK with testing, so long as it is productive and not overdone), but Dr. Shoemaker, who has just recently completed his Ph.D in Psychology, and is a well-liked counselor, gets the nod: Ed has been a veteran of many political races, often running as an underdog or 3rd-party candidate. Not only has he, too, put in an impressive effort, but he has paid his dues, and gained much-needed experience for this often difficult job. *The Register* endorses Dr. Franklin Shoemaker, Ph.D. (aka Mr. Ed) for this school board position.



Hunt Berryman Dr. Ed Shoemaker Billy Townsend

Updated: Aug 8, 2016 - 9:56 AM]

In [Donald Trump Asks Black Voters "What The Hell Do You Have To Lose?" REACTION From A Black Guy](#), Anthony Brian Logan, who is Black, asks the same question that Donald Trump asks: "What The Hell Do You Have To Lose" by voting for Donald Trump, after Trump's claims that Democrats have repeatedly failed the African American community.

For further reading, here are selected Facebook notes, where you can, if you like, weigh in and share your opinion:

\* [NORTH CAROLINA: Historic Black church says "Supporting Hillary Clinton is like being with an abusive ex-spouse"](#)

\* [Pres. Obama's brother says he's voting for Trump in November](#) Pres. Obama's own brother, Malik Obama, is voting for Donald Trump - And Malik is a Muslim, so if a Muslim is not offended by the so-called anti-Muslim rhetoric from Mr. Trump, why should we be? Besides: Malik is the president's brother, and knows him, and still doesn't trust his brother's request to vote against Donald Trump.

\* [Trump has problems, but 10 reasons he'll probably get my vote...](#) (Actually, far more than 10, but at least 10)

Besides, Trump may be a bit nutty, but he is NOT dishonest (he tells the truth, even if he hurts your feelings), and, as a rich person who has financed much of his campaign, he is not likely to be "bought off" (in the same manner as the Clinton Foundation took 'donations' from numerous ill foreign interests, seeking access to Sec. of State Hillary Clinton).

CHILD: "Mommy, why is this happening?" (referencing Nazi shooting them dead?)

MOTHER: "I was too proud to vote for Trump." ... proud... pride... eh?..

PS: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." [[Proverbs 16:18 (KJV) Holy Bible]]

**ELECTION 2016**

Atty. Darrell L. Castle / Dr. Scott N. Bradley (CPF)  
 Sec. St. Hillary Rodham Clinton / Sen. Timothy Michael "Tim" Kaine (DEM)  
 Gov. Gary Johnson / Gov. William Floyd "Bill" Weld (LFP)  
 Dr. Jill Stein / Mr. Ajamu Baraka (GRE)  
 Mr. Donald John Trump / Gov. Michael R. "Mike" Pence (REP)

For the reasons outlined above, *The Register* endorses Donald Trump and Mike Pence, for President and Vice President, in the general election, which will be held on Tuesday, November 08, 2016.

Gordon Wayne Watts, Editor-in-Chief, *The Register*



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**POLK School Board Member District 2**



Rev. Ronnie L. Clark Incumbent, Lori Cunningham Dr. Tim James, superintendent at New Direction Academy Dundee, Fla. businessman Kevin J. Kitto

Church, in Winter Haven, Fla., gets our endorsement: Not only has Clark previously been a school board member, but he seems to have the most compelling case: He has his Bachelor of Science in Education from FAMU, and he is working on his Masters in Theology at Payne Theological Seminary. More-importantly, Clark, who spoke with this writer, has excellent speaking & listening skills, and a solid grasp on deep theological subjects. But the most impressive things was the fact that Clark didn't mind discussing subjects (such as theological issues) that were undoubtedly a bit off-topic. He also has an impressively good grasp on the predatory lending system that will face his Polk School students once they reach higher education. As stated earlier, all the candidates seemed motivated & talented, but there can be only one: *The Register* endorses Rev. Ronnie Clark for this school board position.

**POLK School Board Member District 4**



The POLK County, Fla., Dist. 4 School Board races features 4 qualified candidates: Sara Beth Reynolds; Rebekah Ricks; County Commissioner, Ed Smith; and, Becky Troutman. That seat is being vacated by Dick Mullenax, who is currently serving his second four-year term (which expires 11/14/16) and is unable to run again because of term limits. Reynolds is a recent graduate from U.F.'s College of Journalism and Communications, has participated in many civic activities related to public education, and seems motivated & sincere. Ricks is a homeschool teacher and founder of The Homeschool Connection, which provided a physical location for

teachers to tutor students. Troutman, a local businesswoman, is a school psychologist, and has public-ed experience, as a teacher and guidance counselor. Smith is a current Polk County Commissioner, and would not doubt try to "streamline government, create efficiencies and consolidate efforts without comprising service," in the school system, like tries to do in his current job. All 4 candidates are qualified, and a slight edge might go to Smith, who will have free time when his current job ends this November. However, Ricks' appearance as a higher-ed advocate is bolstered by her husband, whom this writer knows somewhat: Since he is known to be a genuine Conservative in all regards, the "coat tails" effect, here, effectively breaks the tie. This "non-traditional" means of breaking a tie is not without support from the actual record: Rebecca Ricks not only tutors students, but has also been a therapy aid to special needs children; has also done volunteer work for a local juvenile detention centre; and, with 15 years of experience as a teacher, Ricks has a solid Public Education record. All 4 candidates are solidly qualified, but the edge goes to Ricks: ***The Register endorses Rebekah Ricks for this school board position.***

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**Lake Region Lakes, Management District Seat 2**

L. Tracy Mercer and Mark Rimmel are competing for this nonpartisan position. [Note: Only voters who live in the Lake Region Lakes Management District can vote in this race.]

**"Constitutional Amendment:  
Article VII, Sections 3 And 4  
Article XII, Section 34"**

Yes  
No

Solar Devices or Renewable Energy Source Devices; Exemption From Certain Taxation and Assessment Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to exempt from ad valorem taxation the assessed value of solar or renewable energy source devices subject to tangible personal property tax, and to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to prohibit consideration of such devices in assessing the value of real property for ad valorem taxation purposes. This amendment takes effect January 1, 2018, and expires on December 31, 2037.

This would add a section to the Florida State Constitution to exempt taxation on the increased value that solar devices would add to personal property. (In other words, the tax assessor would have to treat the assessment as if the device did not exist.) This is good in 2 ways: First, it removes a penalty from those who would 'go solar' to protect the environment. Secondly, we are taxed way too much, as it is. ***The Register strongly recommends a 'Yes' vote on this popular proposed amendment.***

**REPUBLICAN State Committeewoman**

Debbie Hannifan; Linda DeLozier Ivell; and, Tonya A. Sharrett-Shoemaker are running for this partisan position. Only registered Republicans can vote in this race. All three (3) candidates seem very qualified and genuine Conservatives. Hannifan's online posts suggest that she is strongly supportive of Conservative and Republican candidates, and is, herself, a true-North conservative. This writer personally knows Ivell, a local realtor, and knows of her dedication and commitment to making sure we do our job down to the fine details. I do not know Sharrett-Shoemaker, but I do know her husband, Dr. Ed Shoemaker. While Shoemaker may lack a bit of experience in political matters, I trust that she is a genuine Conservative. This is yet another example of the "coat-tails" effect, reputation by association, where Shoemaker benefits from her husband's good name & reputation. Shoemaker also has public-ed experience as a school teacher, which suggests that the coat-tails-effect tie-breaker is not without justification. **While all 3 candidates are qualified, there can be only 1: NOTE: This race, and the one below, will both be on the Primary, not the general, election ballot. *The Register endorses Tonya A. Sharrett-Shoemaker for REPUBLICAN State Committeewoman.***

**REPUBLICAN State Committeeman**

J.C. Martin and Dr. Ed Shoemaker, both of whom are concurrently running for other positions (risky in the view of some, as it may be too much work) are also running for this partisan position. While both are certainly qualified, Dr. Shoemaker has the slight intangible edge in outsider, anti-establishment quality. The fact that his wife, Tonya, is also politically-involved, has a 'coat-tails' effect on his reputation, as well, giving him another slight, additional edge. ***The Register endorses Dr. Ed Shoemaker for REPUBLICAN State Committeewoman.***

**NOTE: In "Primary" day races in which there are 3 or more candidates seeking a nonpartisan position, the winner will be the person who gets a majority (at least 50% 'plus 1') of the vote. If no candidate receives the required "50% + 1 vote," a runoff election will be held on the General Election ballot. - Now, study the candidates, the issues, get plenty of sleep, and then go out and vote: Someone paid the price for this privilege. ~ Gordon Wayne Watts, Editor-in-Chief, *The Register***

\*\*\* [Click here](#) to jump back to the top of the page. \*\*\*

**ADDENDUMS:**

Below is Mr. Tager's response to my press inquiry about his views on the 'Fair Tax' and on the Higher-Ed issues discussed herein regarding his race for U.S. Representative (Dist. 12) against incumbent, Rep. Gus Bilirakis:

In a message dated 8/23/2016 11:41:54 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time, {Robert Tager} writes:

When do you need a response by? I appreciate your credentials and your openness on your conservative views. I am asking about when you need my response by because I would like to provide you with a full answer and why the rationale, that businesses already get all the tax breaks, is incorrect. I am not against the entire bill. I can see the benefits of a flat tax, one that is fair. Please let me know when you need my response.  
Thank you  
Tager

In an undated response by Facebook, he clarified as follows:

[Gordon Wayne Watts](#) I understood that was not *your* rebuttal, but rather the rebuttal of the supporters [of the fair tax]. Just because it cuts red tape, does not make it good. I can find a way to cut the red tape from the IRS, simplify the tax code, and make it so the government collects the revenues it needs. It is not hard but there must be courage enough by everyone else to stand up to the special interests.

And, he followed up with a "regular" email:

In a message dated 8/23/2016 1:47:34 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time, {Robert Tager} writes:

First let me say I do not oppose modifying our tax system, and I am not opposed to a flat tax. My objections to this bill are several. First, In response to the following , "This writer is not an expert on the Fair Tax, but one rebuttal to this argument has been that Big Business already gets tax breaks, and so this would do little, if anything, to give the rich additional breaks" I say this: The rebuttal fails because it presupposes that the Big Tax breaks given to "Big Business" and the "rich" are good for the economy, middle class, and the Country. If big tax breaks for Big Business and the Rich created jobs, as supply side economics, (a/k/a trickle down economics, voodoo economics), claims, [then] we would be a booming country right now. Look at where we are. Profits are at all time highs, Profit margins at all times high, CEO and Executive Salaries at all time highs, big business's are sitting on the largest pile of cash on hand as any time in history. Tax breaks are not needed for corporations to create jobs. They have plenty of cash. Interest rates are the lowest in history, and financing expansion is easily affordable. Financing is great because debt on company books has traditionally been seen as good and as a means of cash flow control, maximizing profits, as the interest is deductible, and they can keep their cash on hand to take advantage of new opportunities. Rather than borrow money, at no real expense, to expand and/or hire, Big Corporations with their activist Rich board members choose instead to borrow money for stock buyback. This does not create jobs, but it increases the Rich and Institutional Investors positions in companies without having to spend their own money. Anyway, the idea that by giving huge tax breaks, or allowing them to not pay any taxes at all or minimum taxes, is absurd and is one of the big drivers of our huge deficit. Aside from supply side economics, this position is fostered by the mistaken belief that taxes are punishment. If I hear one more time, "We should reward success and not punish it," I will puke. The reward from success is 1) the satisfaction of the accomplishment, and 2) the rewards wealth brings including multiple homes, homes on other continents, multiple cars, vacations, private jets, the best food, medical care, best education for children, ability to leave in death security for your family, the ability to allow money to work for them for income so they can pursue other interests, influence, and all the other things wealth brings. I am very successful and wealthy. I am alive, have great family, great kids, I love and am loved, and enjoy life, and I usually make enough to pay my bills and have some savings. I would argue that I am as successful as a billionaire that is miserable, but I still have to pay taxes. Tax avoidance or forgiveness is not a reward for success; it is the product of being rich and buying politicians. It is the product of bribery. So, the presumption that because they are now able to pay almost no taxes or minimal taxes because of their influence, does not mean this supply side economic nightmare should continue or survive a new tax plan.

**As to what I dislike** about the Fair Tax Plan I answer this way. It is not fair and is very, very dangerous. It eliminates Payroll tax, which means that social security and medicare is over. Now the plan that businesses report income and the amount for social security will be set aside from the consumption tax, is a joke. First hiccup in the economy, and consumption slows, social security will end, or the EPA and OSHA will end or other necessary programs, such as military spending will be affected. I can not help but wonder, if in 2008, when our economy tanked, if we were on such a plan, what would have happened? Tens of Millions lost their jobs, consumption shrank, and we crashed. Republican leadership voted against jobs bills which would have immediately kick-started the economy. On a flat tax, there would be no money for this in case of an emergency or unemployment extensions, and our deficit would explode. It also ends medicare. The Rich currently have to pay taxes on interest, capital gains, and dividends. This necessary income to the Government would end. I object to the Rich and Powerful, who make huge amounts of money from interest, dividends, and capital gains would pay ZERO taxes on that income, that currently they pay. There is no consumption tax on purchasing stocks, bonds, options, commodities, rental, and commercial real estate. The rich and powerful would be completely excluded from having to pay any taxes on their investment vehicles of choice. The only cost they would have would be the few dollars, (\$5.00 at E-Trade), and, for this, they get a \$10,000 credit. **Now lets look at what everyone will be taxed on.** Purchase of personal residence, (imagine 23% being added to the cost of a home). If they don't buy they, get to pay 23% tax on rent. There will be 23% tax on groceries, medicine, cars, gasoline, insurance (including health insurance), bus, taxi, trains, mass transit, plane tickets. Also electric, cable, water, gas, heating oil, propane, and all the necessities of life will be taxed at 23%. Imagine, each and every single thing that is bought day to day by the bottom 98% being taxed at 23%. We can barely make ends meet now, and now we are expected to pay 23% on top of everything. Who do you think this negatively effects more? Rich or Middle Class? This will also destroy the restaurant and entertainment industry. A meal at Chick Filet costs around \$20.00 now. After this, it will cost \$24.60. Oh, and lets not forget the extra taxes added to almost everything from Florida, and the extra penny here and penny there tax each county has. This 23% tax combined with Florida's 7% sale tax brings the actual tax to 30%, without including any of the other taxes. I also object to this plan because there are no caps in spending, so Congress can just keep spending, our rates just increase, and the rich only pay on what they buy. This is as regressive a tax as can be.

*[[Editor's Note: An EpiPen®, described below, is an auto-injector of epinephrine, used by people with certain medical condition, and, for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis, a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction, and, severe allergies, etc. – And, the 'CBO,' also mentioned below, is the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan Federal agency within the Legislative branch of the United States government that provides budget and economic information to Congress.]]*

The CBO has not scored this because the Republicans have not requested it be scored. Why don't you ask Bilirakis, who supports this to request his leadership have the CBO score it. Let's look at the business side. I will use the EpiPen as an example. It costs the company \$1.00 to make. They gouge us with a price tag of \$300.00. Currently they are supposed to pay tax on the profit, which considering nothing else would be taxable income of \$299.00. Even at a 10% tax rate, that is \$22.90 in taxes for the pen. Compare this with the consumption tax. [E.g., the Fair Tax] Under the consumption tax, the corporation would have to pay 23% on the \$1.00 of consumables purchased to make the pen. (This assumes the consumables cost that much.) That is \$0.23 per pen. Their profits are now \$299.77, and that is after taxes. They still will not create new jobs or new industry. Let's look at the consumer side. Lets see, a house with two school age children. One pen for each, (300 x 2) \$600.00 plus one pen for each to have at school, (300 x 2) another \$600 for a grand total of \$1,200.00. Now, let's add on the consumption tax. \$1,200.00 (Four pens) plus \$276.00 (23% tax equals \$1476.00 total. That extra \$276.00 in tax, keeps that family from saving, paying a bill, eating out, consuming. This family with two kids gets to pay an extra \$276.00 for the pens so their kids won't die from an allergic reaction, but meanwhile the rich pay nothing on their earnings, and the corporation that made the pens paid \$0.23 cents. Who does this tax plan benefit? Does it benefit the rich family, where an extra \$276.00 in taxes for medicine will not effect their life style, or the middle class, where this tax of \$276 is the equivalent of 27.6 hours of work at \$10.00?

It is just one more scam in a long line of scams, compliments of our congressman and the rest of the Party elites, who just do what they are told by their special interests rather than actually looking at the consequences. I am all for a simpler IRS code, and favor making it so small it can be billed by post card. But this is not the way to do it. This will destroy our economy, will destroy social security, medicare, the VA, and many of our necessary programs.

I hope this answered you, and if not, please feel free to ask any more questions. There are many other problems with this bill, but this is just a snapshot. I am curious to see what your thoughts are. Oh, I am also not a tax expert, but it is obvious what this bill does, who it benefits, who it harms, and some of the many consequences.

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*Editor's Note: Since Mr. Tager was kind enough to give The Register such a detailed answer, I owe him my analyses, thoughts, and feedback/suggestions as to what (if anything) should be done.*

\* 1) First off, he made a superb effort, and this is impressive in light of the fact that he is busy working as an attorney (to pay bills) and running a campaign (which deals with more than just one press inquiry).

\* 2) Secondly, while he is an avowed liberal in many areas, Atty. Tager is willing to listen to other views, and work with us Conservatives, such as his willingness to admit that the Tax Code needs to be greatly simplified. He admitted that he is not entirely against H.R.25, the 'Fair Tax' bill, and admitted he "can see the benefits of a flat tax," a similar, if distinct topic, but another preference of many Conservatives. [The "Fair Tax" is a tax on consumption aka spending, whereas a "Flat Tax" is a flat-rate Federal Income tax, with the aim to make the I.R.S. much less complicated.]

\* 3) Now, let's look at the merits of what he says:

a) He claims that it is false to assume that tax-breaks on Big Business & the rich are good things. While I am not a big fan of increasing taxes, he does make a good point. Even tho I am an avowed 'Conservative,' I do know for a fact that there is a widening wealth-gap, that is, the rich really are getting richer, and the poor really are getting poorer. So, is correct that a small increase in tax would not necessarily be deadly for the economy. However, my main beef (complaint) is not with the taxation, but rather with both spending excesses, as well as the protection the rich have. (They can repeatedly file for bankruptcy, get corporate welfare, aka bailouts, and then file for bankruptcy again, whereas the poor college student can not obtain bankruptcy discharge for an already-inflated principle cost of Tuition, not even counting interest & any late fees, except via "Undue Hardship," a nearly impossible standard.) I contend that if we reduce spending; reduce 'loan limits' for taxpayer-dollar-backed College Loans; and, finally, allow college borrowers to wield the 'Economic 2nd Amendment,' the sword of bankruptcy, a Conservative Free Market \*check\* against Predatory Lending, then -without a shadow of doubt- college tuition will drop to values that the Conservative Free Market



can sustain.

b) He says: "Tax avoidance or forgiveness is not a reward for success; it is the product of being rich and buying politicians." CORRECT, and the poor and unconnected College Student can not "buy" Loan Forgiveness, or even Bankruptcy rights that any drug-using Credit Card holder can enjoy! This is messed up.

c) He then voices this concern: "First hiccup in the economy, and consumption slows, social security will end, or the EPA and OSHA will end or other necessary programs, such as military spending will be affected." \*\* This seems to be a valid point, but I would ask, is it not possible that a "hiccup" in the economy would not likewise affect income? (Consumption, e.g., spending, and income are tied together, since one must earn income in order to spend it.) Since both spending and earnings may "fluctuate" in different ways, it makes sense to me to have a combination of these 2 forms of taxes; therefore, maybe a combination 'Fair Tax' and 'Flat Tax' would be simpler and require less Bureaucratic Red Tape?

d) Mr. Tager complains of 'added' taxation: "A meal at Chick Filet costs around \$20.00 now. After this, it will cost \$24.60," he says. Actually, I believe that H.R.25 has a sunset clause, in which it will "sunset" (cease to be law) if the 16th Amendment is not repealed to stop Income Tax. So, I respectfully dissent from Atty. Tager: The Fair Tax would \*replace\* (not supplement) the income tax. See also point 'c' just above: perhaps both Flat and Fair taxes could be used, but with each one being cut in half, so as to avoid overtaxing us. (Better yet, reduce spending, and be less greedy, all you rich, Establishment "fat cats" in both Democratic & Republican parties!)

e) Next, however, he raises a valid point about an illegal monopoly on the EpiPen, which is not unlike some prescription medications being sold at huge (obscene) profits, simply because the company holds a monopoly on the product. I have 2 things to say: First off, whether or not a company engages in an illegal monopoly (like U.S. Colleges are doing, in an unrelated higher-ed matter), what has this to do with the method or means of taxation? Secondly, last time I checked, U.S. Case Law held that a monopoly was quite illegal, and so this needs to be checked into.

f) Lastly, he is honest enough to admit that he's not a tax expert (and neither am I). I appreciate his honesty, humility, & proper respect. But, it is possible that the Fair Tax might possibly be rather 'neutral' on changing the tax rates of the super rich and/or Big Business. (Perhaps, we should consult Tax Experts -on both sides of the issue- to get to the bottom of these concerns: Do the 'Fair Tax' or 'Flat Tax' benefit the rich any extraordinary way)

g) Mr. Tager is quite intelligent, and I'm surprised he doesn't have many thoughts on the higher ed mess; however, I admit that it took Alan Collinge several tries before I could "get" the concept that removal of bankruptcy for college loans resulted in higher tuition. (It does, since lenders prey on the weak, helpless, & defenseless, and price-gouge college students just trying to better ourselves -just trying to avoid being a McD burger flipper for the rest of their life.) I am interested to see Mr. Tager's thoughts on my replies above; and, I also hope Mr. Bilirakis replies; as well, I hope my own Congressman, Rep. Dennis A. Ross (R-FL-15th), acts on his stated beliefs, as described in the other, related, news story in the links below:

\* "[A Polk Perspective: Fix our bankrupt policy on student debt.](#)" By Gordon Wayne Watts, Guest columnist, The Ledger, August 04, 2016 [Scanned image of print version: [PDF](#) \* [.jpg image](#) \* Screenshot: [PDF](#) \* [.png image](#) \* Cache: [.html webpage](#) \* [PDF](#)]

\* "[Republican Congressman breaks with party, admits college loans deserve bankruptcy.](#)" By Gordon Wayne Watts, The Register, Published: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 12:34 p.m., - UPDATED: Wednesday, July 27, 2016 at 07:41 a.m. (EST-EDT) \* [mirror 1 cache](#) \* [mirror 2 cache](#) \* [mirror 3 cache](#) \* [mirror 4 cache](#)

~Editor, Gordon W. Watts

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