

EDITORIAL

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ESTABLISHED IN 1924
Andrew Koppers | Assistant managing editor
Frank Grandinette | Operations Director



R. Bruce Anderson
Columnist
Lakeland Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

The American Revolution lives ... and lives

The fourth of July is nearly upon us, with all that entails — this column goes to press on “between” dates, with the fourth falling between, so my thought is to hit you up now as opposed to after the fact.

Warning: This is going to be a very sappy column, reflecting directly my sometimes difficult, loving, critical but heartfelt and definitely permanent romance with this country, and all that’s in it.

When the founders declared independence from Britain, they were angry — the Declaration of Independence was an angry rant, a political, social and philosophical manifesto, proclaiming they had been cruelly betrayed by a dilettante, deceiving sovereign. If you’ve not read it, do. The philosophical stuff comes up front, calm and to the point:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...”

A sly smack to the autocrat, that “created equal” stuff, and more to the point, the “deriving their... powers from the consent of the governed.” Not the stuff monarchs want to hear at all.

But then: “[W]hensoever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends” (they wrote), “it is the right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government...”

BOOM. Message sent. What follows is the dirt. The section starts with “when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism...” and the “long train” is then provided in a detailed list, with the sense that they can’t be corrected, and that there’s no going back.

Gutsy for a bunch of gentlemen farmers writing from a place with few roads, no army, and little more than grit and smarts to push them through it, addressing arguably the most powerful man in the world, along with all his henchmen, armies, navies, and gold to back it all up.

Chancy stuff, and a pretty risky venture. Riskier, in some ways, once we’d actually won and had to create from scratch the first true representative republic.

An “attitude of gratitude” seems to be sometimes lacking these days, not only for what the founders did, but what they allowed us to become. The journey of this nation has been one of constant argument, amendment, false steps, corrective action, making it work. Change has always been the rule, here, and change is sometimes caused by protest and complaint. But *whining* is simply un-American, and a disloyalty to our political roots. If something needs to be rectified, fix it. Work to repair it, resolve it, make it work.

We live in a nation with one of the highest standards of living in the world. We have, and have kept, a representative democratic republic in which the opinions of both the majority and the minority are considered.

We dispute, debate, disagree and sometimes are furious with one another, and yet here we are. Americans together, in Union, united in part by our heartfelt right to disagree and survive the process. We overwhelmingly out-class every other nation on earth in our ability to defend these rights against



JOHN DEERING/CREATORS SYNDICATE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Florida's right to privacy

Florida's Constitution defines a right to privacy as: “Every natural person has the right to be let alone and free from governmental intrusion into the person's private life except as otherwise provided herein.”

That seems clear. The clause identifies who deserves privacy and it defines the offending organization. Paraphrasing the clause could read: “People in Florida should be free from governmental intrusion.”

The idea was put into effect by a federal court's reversal of a Florida law banning medical care for transgender people, maintaining that the state “cannot flatly deny transgender individuals safe and effective medical treatment” when the purpose of that denial “is not to support the patient's transgender identity.”

In other words, the Florida legislature cannot intrude upon a person's natural life just because they don't like that nature. As the deciding judge stated, “gender identity is real.”

It was a powerful decision, a step toward making life a bit better for all of Florida's transgender population.

I only wish the same would happen with reproductive rights, where an equally unethical intrusion is occurring in the natural lives of women in Florida.

But we can help turn things around in November — please vote “yes” on Amendment 4.

Ben Graffam, Lakeland

Trump's flip-flop backs RINO Laurel Lee

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Gordon Wayne Watts, Plant City

More can be done for immigrants caught in broken system



Your Turn
Nanci Palacios
Guest columnist

At Faith in Florida, we advocate for justice, compassion and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their background or immigration status.

Our state, known for its diversity and hospitality, has long been a melting pot of cultures, faiths and traditions. Amid this rich tapestry, there is a pressing need for commonsense immigration reform to maintain family units and provide peace of mind to hard-working Florida residents.

I am glad that President Biden is taking steps to address the plight of spouses of citizens who are

illies and fully integrated themselves into our communities. Providing them with additional stability to remain together and in the communities they call home provides meaningful comfort to many Florida families.

I encourage the Biden Administration to address the urgent needs of individuals from countries experiencing conflict, natural disasters or other humanitarian crises by extending and expanding the Temporary Protected Status program to countries like Haiti, Guatemala, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali. TPS is a vital lifeline for those who cannot safely return to their homelands.

As Floridians, we can understand the devastating impact of hurricanes and other natural disasters firsthand. We must extend the same empathy and solidarity to our neighbors from other nations who seek refuge and protection on our shores.

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Andrew Kupperts | Assistant managing editor

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LETTERS | Opinion *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

Voice of the People (June 30, 2024): Vote for Florida's right to privacy

Lakeland Ledger

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Voice of the People (June 23, 2023): US Supreme Court has lost its integrity

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