

## Officers

President: Kerri Tonkin  
1st VP: Ashley Winstel  
2nd VP: Amira Fox  
Treasurer: Chris Wappes  
Asst. Treas: Roz Lesser  
Recording Sec: Ruth Rodrigues  
Corresponding Sec: Marilyn Kostik

## Committee Chairs

Americanism: Germaine Hyatt  
Book Chat/MELP: Cheryl Harris  
Caring for America: Ashley Winstel  
Fundraising: Kerri Tonkin  
Legislative: Lori Fayhee  
Membership/Hospitality: Peg Love/Joan Clark  
Museum: Kerri Tonkin/Mary Snyder  
Newsletter: Mary Snyder  
Outreach: Mary Snyder  
Publicity: Gail Langner  
Reservations: Ashley Winstel/Mary Ann Hansen  
Social Media: Mary Snyder

## Non-Committee Positions

Past President: Doris Cortese  
Chaplain: Terri Lee  
Photographer: John Fernandez

# THE MAHOUT

## The Keeper and Driver of the Elephant

JANUARY 2020

*Strong Women for a Strong America*



**David Bedein**

Community Organizer, Writer,  
Investigative Journalist

David Bedein was born on August 31, 1950. Currently he resides in Jerusalem. He is a community organizer, a writer, and an investigative journalist. In 1987, Bedein established the Israel Resource News Agency, with offices at the Beit Agron Int'l Press Center in Jerusalem. He serves as Director of The Center for Near East Policy Research.

Bedein has also reported for news outlets such as CNN Radio, Makor Rishon, Philadelphia Inquirer, Jerusalem Post, and the Jewish World Review. For four years, Bedein was the Middle East correspondent for The Bulletin, writing 1,062 articles until the newspaper ceased operation in 2010. Bedein has covered attempts at Middle East negotiations centering Israel—in many major cities of the world.

Bedein was active in the Israeli peace movement for over for 17 years. In the 1980s, Bedein went to Ethiopia as part of a delegation to investigate the impact of the famine on the Ethiopian Jewish community.

Recently, David Bedein's organization has developed Btselem Watch, with its own website whose purpose is to introduce professional criticism and feedback to leading organizations which are described as human rights groups that operate in the political domain.

The UNRWA Reform Initiative (U.R.I or The United Nations Relief and Works Agency) was launched by The Center for Near East Policy Research, which has been conducting news investigations and producing films since 1987. Their current project focuses on policy change at UNRWA, The United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

He is very interesting and will speak to us and allow us to participate in conversation with him. This is a rare opportunity for LRWF.



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next."*  
Abraham Lincoln

## JOIN US!

The next meeting of LRWF is January 13th in the Marina at Pinchers in Fort Myers at 2360 West First Street.

Our speaker will be David Bedein, community organizer, writer, and investigative journalist. He is being brought to us from Jerusalem via skype. Kevin Ruane has generously sponsored bringing Mr. Bedein to us.

We will again have a lovely buffet. It will be a salad buffet with a choice of two proteins.

*Social hour begins at 11:15 AM  
with lunch following.*

Reservation Deadline is Thursday,  
January 9th at noon.

For reservations call or text  
Ashley Winstel at 602-708-8663 or  
email [acwinstel@gmail.com](mailto:acwinstel@gmail.com)

To make a reservation online go to  
[https://leerepublicanwomen.com/  
product-category/register/](https://leerepublicanwomen.com/product-category/register/)

*Happy  
New Year!*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Beautiful Ladies and Gents,

Happy New Year! I hope you and your loved ones had a Christmas season that was full of laughter, love, joy and peace. Wow 2020, the start of a new decade, and it looks full of promise. From our club's perspective we have a wonderful year of very interesting speakers and candidate forums lined up for you to keep you and your family informed politically.

The campaigns will be starting up now in full swing, and I encourage all of you to get involved, always keeping in mind that whomever wins the primary we must all get behind and support in the end. We do not want to have our county turn blue. On the federal side we must show unwavering support for our President and choose our next Representative from District 19 carefully. We need a representative that actually represents the voters of SW Florida views and stays true to those principles while in DC.



*Kerri Tonkin, LRWF President*

I wanted to use this letter to draw attention to the latest tricks the democrats are using within the social media world. They are buying up sites and domains using the Trump campaigns slogans. I posted an article on our Lee Republican Women Facebook page about this. Another lousy thing being done is groups are creating Political Action Committee PAC's using President Trump's slogans and collecting money that does not go to the Presidents campaign. I am going to ask our campaign representative Missi Lastra for a sanctioned list of true campaign addresses you are safe donating to. The Republican National Committee should also have a sanctioned list. I personally get dozens of emails and texts daily asking for money from every politician and political group in the Republican party and who knows what's real or not so I delete them. I will compile a list and have handouts at the meetings. Even our blast outs are not safe, if our media chair Mary puts Republican in the title google will not blast out! This is a war folks. It's bad enough that our nation's newspapers... NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, CNBC, CNN and FOX are all either slanted left or just plain liberal and publishing fake news. We now have active assaults within social media too. A person really has to search to find any news or printed media that will give our President or any republican a fair story. It is very troubling to me what the "news" agencies do not report and what they decide we are to know or not know. Two "currently" safe media would be OAN news program and The Epoch Times.

All of this brings me back to our meetings and our own Outreach Facebook page, which to date has also been blocked a few times. On our Outreach site the administrators, which are Mary Snyder and myself, are trying to post articles that have either come straight from the White House team as true stories or others we have personally read and trust the authors. Having said that, since we have a Public Facebook page, please report anything that is posted by anyone other than an administrator if you think it is "fake news" so we can immediately remove it. And if you post to our Public Facebook page, please fact check what you are publishing.

Going forward we will try to have updated news in our newsletter and at our meetings. We can give our members straight talk regarding the issues and at the end of the meeting should any of you have questions I will try and answer them or get you the answer if I can't answer it.

How many times do we hear that this election is the most important election ever? Well I personally feel that after 2016 this election of 2020 is a true fight against the swamp of DC where the swamp thinks they know more than we the people and the man we elected to represent us, President Trump. We have been doing things their way for over 50 years and nothing changed ever in my life time, and now in three years our President has accomplished more than the last Republican presidents since Reagan and maybe even before him. We must stay involved and informed and we pledge to help you all do that. I look forward to seeing you on January 13th for our luncheon and bring your questions.

Blessings,

Kerri Tonkin  
LRWF President





## A Word from our Sheriff

*Carmine Marceno*



*Carmine Marceno, Lee Co. Sheriff*

I am, and will always be, a staunch supporter of all sober driving efforts. Far too many of us have lost friends, family members and/or loved ones to an impaired-driving incident. With the holidays upon us, I made certain to attend the “Mothers Against Drunk Driving” event held at JetBlue Park in Fort Myers. Members of local law enforcement agencies stood before victims’ families, members of the media and elected officials, discussing the perils of driving while impaired.

I spoke, as well, and indicated that, on average, 32 Americans lose their lives, on a daily basis, as a result of impaired-driving incidents during the holiday season. In 2016, more than 1,000,000 drivers were arrested, in the United States, for impaired driving. These numbers are unacceptable to me.

The “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” campaign began on December 13th and I promise to allocate additional resources, here in Lee County, to remove impaired drivers from our roadways.

Through our social media platforms, I am notifying motorists of my commitment to the “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” campaign and making it crystal clear that I have zero-tolerance for impaired driving.

Sadly, many holiday seasons begin in a festive and cheerful mood, but end with life altering, tragic events. I will do everything, within the authority of my office, to make drivers think twice before driving impaired here in Lee County.



Ladies of LRWF,

*There is a change of day for the new year. We will be meeting on the **third Wednesday of the month** instead of the first Wednesday.* We will not meet in January, but will resume on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. We will continue to meet at Mel’s Diner south on US 41 from 1:00-3:00. We are reading Nikki Haley’s book, *With All Due Respect*.

She is married to her husband Michael who is an entrepreneur and combat veteran with the South Carolina, Army National Guard. They have two children. The author served as Governor of South Carolina from 2011-2017 and US Ambassador to the UN from 2017-2019.

The book is a revealing, dramatic and deeply personal significant events of our time. Nikki is widely admired for her forthright manner, her sensitive approach to tragic events and her confident representation of America’s interest to the United Nations during times of crisis and consequence. She offers first-hand perspective on major national and international matters, as well as a behind-the-scenes account of her tenure in the Trump administration. This book reveals a woman who can hold her own, and better, in domestic and international power politics. She is unafraid to take a principled stand even when it’s unpopular.

Read the book and join us for lunch on February 19, at Mel’s for a great discussion. Please let me know if you plan to attend, so we may plan accordingly.

Happy reading,

Cheryl Harris

LRWF Book Chat Chair

239-225-7390

[timcherylharris@aol.com](mailto:timcherylharris@aol.com)





# Outreach Unlimited...

*With Mary Snyder*

**We now have 242 members on our Facebook group page...**

*It is vital that we continue to ask good Republican people to join our Facebook group. The more people that we have, the more we will put **good conservative information in the hands of the masses.***

**Share, share and then share again.**

**If you are a member of LRWF and you are not a member of our Facebook Group page...JOIN TODAY! CLICK HERE TO JOIN!**

Also, use our new website at <https://www.leerepublicanwomen.com/> to entice people to join our club and help us re-elect President Trump. [You can sign them up online.](#)

**APATHY WILL NOT GET PRESIDENT TRUMP RE-ELECTED!  
I NEED WORKERS!**

Please email me at [LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com](mailto:LeeRepublicanWomenFederated@gmail.com)  
or call me at 239-910-4634.

[https://twitter.com/  
LRWF2020](https://twitter.com/LRWF2020)



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## IT'S BEEN A GREAT YEAR FOR THE PRESIDENT

It's tough to pick only 10 accomplishments from such an extraordinary year, but here are just a few of the biggest things President Donald J. Trump has gotten done for the American people in 2019:

1. The Trump Boom is going strong. The unemployment rate recently hit its lowest mark in 50 years. All told, since President Trump's election, our economy has added more than 7 million jobs—over half a million in manufacturing alone.
2. The stock market keeps breaking records: The Dow Jones and S&P 500 hit record closes again on Friday.
3. The working class is thriving, as are previously forgotten communities. Wages are now rising the fastest for low-income workers, and poverty rates for African Americans and Hispanic Americans have reached all-time lows.
4. Accountable government is back. Since taking office, President Trump has rolled back nearly 8 regulations for every new one, saving American taxpayers more than \$50 billion in the process—with bigger savings still to come.
5. Better trade deals are putting America back in the driver's seat. Congress approved President Trump's USMCA this month—a huge win for U.S. workers, farmers, and manufacturers that will create 176,000 new jobs.
6. Trade with China in particular is about to get a whole lot fairer. As part of a historic "phase 1" deal, Beijing has agreed to structural reforms in its trade practices and to make substantial purchases of American agricultural products.
7. Securing the border is paying off and making our country safer. President Trump struck new agreements with Mexico and Central American countries this year to help stop the flood of illegal immigration. Thanks to this swift action, border apprehensions fell by more than 70 percent from May to November.
8. On health care, President Trump is fighting to give our patients the best system on Earth. While Democrats try to take away choice, the President's focus on affordability led to the largest year-over-year drop in drug prices ever recorded.
9. American interests are taking center stage abroad. In just one example: After years of **not paying** their fair share, NATO Allies will have increased defense spending by \$130 billion by the end of next year.
10. Our great military took out the world's top terrorist in October. (Meet Conan, the hero dog who helped them do it!) Our troops are now getting the support they deserve. President Trump recently signed the National Defense Authorization Act for the 2020 fiscal year, which includes the biggest pay raise for our military in a decade.

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## *My Opinion* *By Mary Snyder*

### AN EXPLANATION TO THOSE WHO DON'T FOLLOW THE NEWS

My granddaughter called me a couple of weeks ago and said, "Grandma, I just heard that President Trump broke the law. Is that true?" I told her that it wasn't true, but instead of trying to explain it in a couple of words on the phone... I told her that I would write her a letter to explain it to her. I know I am probably writing to people who are more knowledgeable than me, but perhaps you can pass this on to someone who doesn't follow the news. So...here's the letter!

When Donald Trump ran for the Presidency in 2016, he promised that he would drain the swamp. What that means is that he was going to expose all of the illegal activity in government and expose the people who are responsible for this illegal activity. It was at that time that the liberals went from **loving** this man to **hating** him. Why? Because they were going to be exposed. Donald Trump promised that he would. Think about what is in the swamp...gators, snakes, and all sorts of poisonous creatures that when threatened will strike out with their venom.

It was also at this time that the liberals (aka Democrats) began their plot to sabotage Donald Trump's election by spying on his campaign, and doing all that they could to hurt him. Nevertheless, they weren't too concerned because they were sure that Hillary would win the election. In addition, they had what they called an "insurance policy" in case something went wrong and he won the election. This "insurance policy" would take him down!

Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the House, when asked recently why she was in such a hurry to impeach the President, she said "We're not in a hurry...we've been trying to do this for 2 1/2 years. Prior to that slip of the tongue, she was telling everyone that she would never allow impeachment unless they had something so bad on Donald Trump that they had bi-partisan support for the impeachment. Both the Democrats and the Republicans had to be in agreement with it. When they took the vote to impeach Donald Trump, not one Republican voted for it. What happened to bi-partisanism.

Since the election, the Democrats have tried and tried to find something that he did wrong. They spent 2 1/2 years having a Mueller investigation to prove that he had colluded with the Russians. The Mueller investigation started in 2017. After 2 1/2 years and millions of our tax payer dollars being spent, Mueller came out with his report that did NOT show Russian collusion at all. The Democrats were waiting for this report, but it absolutely did not prove their case. Then...they decided they needed to get rid of him quickly because all kinds of investigations were being done on many in congress and they were getting very nervous about being found out and **locked up**. So, they began the process of trying to come up with something else, if Russian collusion was not going to work. They tried to accuse President Trump of quid quo pro (getting something by promising something). Many people didn't understand what quid quo pro meant, so they decided not to use those words anymore and said he was guilty of bribery. That didn't work, so Representative Schiff shifted to words like "extortion," or "shake-down and then "solicitation."

They were truly grabbing at straws and lying every inch of the way. Finally, the Democrats settled on "abuse of power" and "obstruction of justice." That is what President Trump was impeached for, and that is why the Democrats and media say that he broke the law.

To examine this further, they said he committed abuse of power because he asked the Ukrainian President to investigate what is obviously an appearance of criminal activity by Joe Biden's son. Since Joe Biden could be running against Trump in the next election, they called this abuse of power. There is only one problem with this. It "assumes" that President Trump was doing it for the purpose of helping him win against Biden in the next election. In reality, the law states that the President "must" make sure that there is no corruption before giving money to any country. He did what the law stated that he must do.

Then they said that he committed obstruction of justice because he refused to answer subpoenas by claiming his executive privilege as it is given to him in the Constitution. Congress objected to that and instead of taking it to the Supreme Court which is what they legally should have done, they claimed that he was obstructing justice. In reality, he was following the Constitution.

They continually say that all of the witnesses agreed with the Democrats, but when pushed to answer questions by Republicans, they all admitted that they witnessed nothing that Trump was accused of and the only witness that did witness anything testified that President Trump told him that he wanted nothing from the Ukrainian president. In other words, all of the witnesses ended up proving that the Democrats were lying and fishing for a false verdict. Unfortunately, since there are more Democrats than Republicans in the House, the Democrats won the impeachment vote even though their claims were never proven.

Many of President Trump's House hearings were held in secret with many of the House members shut out and not allowed to participate. The President was not given the opportunity to have his lawyers participate nor were Republican witnesses allowed to be called...and they still couldn't prove wrong doing and impeached him anyway.

To make things worse, the media is in bed with the Democrats. The political swamp and the media are one. The crookedness and lies go both ways. If you want to see a video that shows this, [CLICK HERE](#).

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**TRUMP HAS BEEN IMPEACHED FOR TWO INVENTED CRIMES:**

1. ABUSE OF POWER, WHICH APPARENTLY MEANS DOING THINGS DEMOCRATS DON'T LIKE IN A MANNER THAT DEMOCRATS DON'T APPROVE.
2. OBSTRUCTION OF CONGRESS, WHICH BOILS DOWN TO NOT GIVING THE DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS WHAT THEY DEMAND WHEN THEY DEMAND IT.



*Herbert Clark Hoover*  
12th Republican President

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**Herbert Clark Hoover**

1874 - 1964

Herbert Clark Hoover was Iowa born (1874) and Oregon raised. He was active in politics having graduated from Stanford and found his calling to work in government after a very successful career as a mining engineer. President Woodward Wilson appointed him to his Cabinet in notable positions heading the Commission for Relief for Belgium after WWI and then head of the US Food Administration. In 1929 at the beginning of the Great Depression, as a Republican, he became the 31st President of the United States. This was after the huge stock market crash of 1929. He was one to tackle problems but these two great failures back to back made his administration the scapegoat for the errors of previous decisions and failures.

Though he spent his first 9 years living in Iowa, he was sent to Oregon to live with his maternal uncle as he was orphaned when his parents died. His mother who had been a seamstress and official minister of the Quaker belief and his father a blacksmith would not live to see their son reach adulthood and become the successful businessman he became as well as President of the United States.

Herbert Hoover married Lou Henry in Monterey California, an accomplished linguist of Chinese it was very helpful when they lived in Shanghai China while Hoover was working there on one of his engineering feats. They traveled extensively with his work and raised two sons.

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**Lee Republican Women Federated  
Welcome!**

GO TO  
[HTTPS://LEEREPUBLICANWOMEN.COM/](https://leerepublicanwomen.com/)

**Welcome to the  
Republican Party...  
The Party of Freedom!**





# Legislative UPDATE

By Lori Fayhee

The Florida Legislature recently completed seven weeks of Interim Committee Meetings, that began in September. More than 2,700 bills have been filed for consideration during the up-coming 2020 Florida Legislative Session which will convene on January 14, 2020.

This election cycle, all but one of our local State Representatives are terming out of office and we must be educated, involved, and supportive of the conservative candidates for these seats. Lee County has been blessed over the years to have had a powerful force of conservative Representatives

working for our community. Thank you Representatives Ray Rodrigues, Dane Eagle, and Heather Fitzenhagen, for your service and devotion!

Ray's District 76 has three Republican candidates running for this office: Adam Botana, Jason Maughn, and Jesse Purdon.

Dane's District 77 has two Republicans, Bryan Blackwell and Mike Giallombardo, running for this seat.

Heather's District 78 has three Republicans, Roger Lolly, Charles Lynch, and Jenna Persons, as candidates in this race.

At this point, Representatives Spencer Roach and Byron Donalds are running unopposed in Districts 79 and 80, respectively.

Gov. Ron DeSantis announced on Tuesday, December 10th, that he is directing Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran to require all high school seniors to take a civics exam. A civics test requirement, similar to the test required to become a citizen, is only one part of the plan to add more emphasis on civics education, DeSantis said. Last January, Governor DeSantis issued an executive order calling for a complete overhaul of Florida's education standards, which included eliminating Common Core State Standards.

## **Lee County School Board**

During the December 10th Lee County School District (LCSD) Board workshop, a Board Member (Democrat) questioned the possible transfer of \$800k in funds from the Operations budget to the Capital funds budget. Operations is supposed to pay for salaries. If the District is found to have used funds from the wrong budget to pay for school cleanup and remediation, then the district would have to take the money out of the Operations budget and put it back into the Capital budget. The same Board member also stated that the Board must update policy and procedures to enhance district accountability, which has not been done.

At the December 10 Action meeting, the Board voted to renew of the Contract for Professional Services with Lobbyist, Carole Green, of Capitol Strategies Consulting, Inc., to provide complete state legislative and governmental relations activities for the period of December 10, 2019 through June 20, 2021.

The Board also voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between LCSD and Lee Health. According to the Lee County School Board meeting documents, "The cooperative agreement with Lee Health Kids' Minds Matter is a multi-agency collaboration with the School District of Lee County. Access to mental health services is frequently facilitated through schools connecting parents to services provided through community mental health agencies. This agreement establishes the organizational relationships and responsibilities between the School District and Lee Health Kids' Minds Matter in providing school-based mental health navigators in selected elementary schools for families with indicated need for intensive peer mentoring and support via the mental health navigator. The mental health navigator is an individual who builds working relationships, solves problems, and supports families while they learn to self-navigate the system of care. Navigators reduce barriers that keep patients from getting timely treatment by identifying patient needs and assist them in accessing sources of emotional, financial, administrative, or cultural support. The mental health navigator will help families gain the skills, tools, and supports needed to eventually navigate systems of care on behalf of their child. This agreement defines information that may be shared between the two organizations while a student is receiving services with a signed release from the parent/guardian. The intent is to provide a more effective continuum of services and support for students with mental health needs."

One Board member stated that she was hopeful that Byron Donalds' HB2849 Comprehensive Health Plan Appropriations Project would help to pay for additional mental health services. For fiscal year 2020-2021 the nonrecurring sum of \$893,000 from the General Revenue Fund would be appropriated to the Department of Education to fund the Comprehensive Health Plan as described in Appropriations Project Request 565.

Be watchful. Lee County School Board only has until the March 2020 deadline to vote to put a millage increase referendum on the 2020 ballot.



## HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM MEMBERSHIP

We wholeheartedly welcome our new members:

Ita Neymotin  
2101 McGregor Blvd., Ste. 101  
Ft. Myers, 33901  
239-357-2980  
itaneymotin@gmail.com

Maryanne Preston  
11054 Wine Palm Road  
Ft. Myers, 33966  
239-851-6906  
maryanne@hiring-solutions.com

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!**

**THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR**  
**AND WE NEED EVERYONE ON BOARD!**

**Renew your membership at:**

<https://leerepublicanwomen.com/membership/>

*Please encourage friends to attend and become new members. We all need to support and work to re-elect our President. Lee County works to offset the votes from the predominantly Democrat counties.*

**See you at the next meeting to hear comedian David Bedein!**

Peg Love, Membership  
941-740-0228  
[peglove810@gmail.com](mailto:peglove810@gmail.com)

### **2020 LRWF Meeting Dates and Times**

January 13th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
February 10th, dinner, 5:30 PM  
March 9th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
April 13th, dinner, 5:30 PM  
May 11th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
June 8th, dinner, 5:30 PM  
July 13th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
August 10th, dinner, 5:30 PM  
September 14th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
October 12th, dinner, 5:30 PM  
November 9th, lunch, 11:30 AM  
December 14th, dinner, 5:30 PM

## OUR SPONSORS

*Click on Pictures to View Websites*



Amira Fox  
Florida State Attorney  
20th Judicial Circuit



Brian Hammon  
Lee County Commissioner



Cecil Pendergrass  
Lee County Commissioner



Spencer Roach  
Florida  
House of Representatives



Jenna Persons  
Candidate for Florida  
House of Representatives



Linda Doggett  
Lee County Clerk of Courts



Kevin Ruane  
Sanibel Mayor



Larry Hart  
Lee Co. Tax Collector



Randy Krise  
Krise Commercial Group



Angie Gartin  
"Momma Badger"  
Badger Business Solutions



## THE PAST MONTH IN PICTURES



Doris and Wally Cortese with their precious granddaughter. What a blessed family.



From left is Joan Clark and Chris Wappes, out club treasurer.



John Snyder, LRWF Associate Member and husband of this newsletter's editor... he is a very nice man!



*Eric Golub speaks to us with humor.*



*Our store...hats, mugs, jewelry, shirts and patriotic attire!  
Shop at our store and support LRWF!*



*Our auction of beautiful baskets of spirits and designer purses  
was a huge success!*