

HYDE PARK

Got something to share with fellow Democrats?
Now's the time and here's the place!
Submit contributions to wayne@looking4light.com.

Occasional Virtual Soap Box

November 19, 2021

DeSantis is fully vaxxed.

but

DeSantis pooh-poohs vaxing.

Why?

COVID Vaccines

**Earn Big Pharma \$20/ dose
Earn Ron DeSantis \$100/ dose**

Regeneron

**Earns Big Pharma \$2000/ dose
Earns Ron DeSantis**

\$BIG DONATIONS!

Wayne's blog: <https://looking4light.com/scarab/>. Back issues of *Hyde Park* can be found there.

Note

The content of this newsletter has not been approved by the Volusia County D.E.C. Each item is the responsibility of its author. Questions and comments are welcome. Direct them to wayne@looking4light.com.

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Editorial

Give 'em an inch, and they'll take a mile!

Wayne Dickson

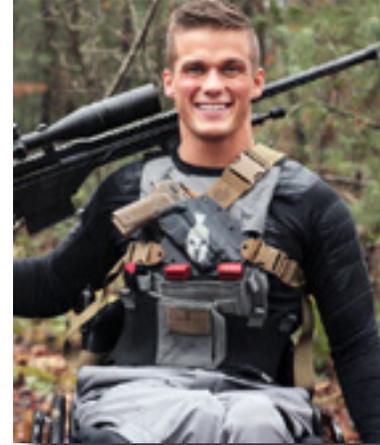
Anyone who's ever reared a child, taught school, or trained an animal has had to learn quickly the necessity of setting boundaries and enforcing them—consistently and continually. And all of us who've had to put up with Donald Trump for the past six years know that the same rules apply in politics, in law, and in government.

Another rule that's becoming increasingly more firmly hammered home is that of the necessity for speedy, fair, and consistent justice. A phrase that wasn't invented but was made infamous during the O.J. Simpson trial was "rush to judgment." A second phrase (or sentence) was made famous a few years earlier by Martin Luther King Jr.: "Justice delayed is justice denied." The golden mean between the two is justice delivered with due haste and without undue delay.

Closing on 4000 actions, Donald Trump is by far the most litigious president in *U.S.* history. He has won or settled to his own advantage many cases simply by dragging them through the courts until his opponents have either run out of money or lost the will to continue. Remember how long it took to get Don McGahn before a congressional committee? Remember how long the "Fraudit" dragged on in Arizona?

Donald Trump goes by rules like this: "If I don't like you or if you have something I want to take away from you, I'll hit you. Then I'll complain about how unfair it was you forced me to hit you. If you hit me, then I'll hit you twice as hard." His sycophants are taking it even further.

At a **rally** in *Franklin, N.C.*, Madison Cawthorne had this to say:



The *Second Amendment* is not for hunting or target shooting but rather for fighting tyranny. He advises the crowd to begin stockpiling ammunition for what he says is likely American-versus-American "bloodshed" over unfavorable election results.

And, of course, we're all familiar with Paul goes hours anime style cartoon hey Richie pictures himself murdering Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.



Not long after the notorious phone call in which Donald Trump urged *Georgia Secretary of State* Brad Raffensperger to commit fraud by “finding” just enough votes to help him win the electoral college contest in *Georgia*, Raffensperger made to follow and comment to Trump:

What you don't have the ability to do, and you need to step up and say this, is stop inspiring people to commit potential acts of violence. Someone's going to get hurt. Someone's going to get shot. Someone's going to get killed.

The same should be said to Cawthorne, Gosar, Marjorie Taylor-Green, and other republican elected officials. Their vicious talk and increasingly aggressive behavior continues to gather momentum as it rolls downhill. We've seen it manifested already right here in *Volusia County* in local board meetings.

An attempted violent overthrow of the government of the *United States* occurred on January 6th. As I write, it is now November 28th. Those who were

most responsible for the insurrection have thus far not been held accountable in court for their actions. They have treated *Congress* and the law with utter contempt. Indeed, members of *Congress* who participated in the insurrection have been allowed to lie about it and to do their best to block any investigation of their crimes.



They've been given an inch, and are now well on their way toward grabbing a mile and more. As Raffensperger said, “Someone's going to get hurt. Someone's going to get shot. Someone's going to get killed.” And not just “someone.” American democracy itself will die. We must not give up. We must make our keyboards, our telephones, and our presence felt.



Feature

Don't let them get away with (mis-)framing!

Wayne Dickson



President Joe Biden's signature legislative and economic priorities—the already-passed American Rescue Plan and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and the Build Back Better Act, which passed in the U.S. House of Representatives this morning—will help curb America's decades long affordability crisis without adding to inflation, leading to much-needed and stronger inflation-adjusted income growth now and for years to come.

But higher prices are only one side of families' budgets. The other side is their income, from wages and other sources. In fact, disposable incomes are up this year and are rising faster than inflation. Wages for low-wage workers have been consistently outpacing inflation—a welcome and much-needed change for workers who have long been undervalued and underpaid and who usually are the last ones to see real gains in a recovery.

Inflation is actually a “thing,” of course. I remember penny postcards, nickel phone calls, 15¢ hamburgers, and adding 25¢-50¢ worth of gas to my car. For my first full-time college teaching job I was paid \$5000 per year. Seeing gas prices of \$5 or more per gallon, people naturally get scared.

A useful way of thinking about this, seems to me, is comparing it to electrical power. Money flowing through an economic system is comparable to power flowing through an

electrical grid. A surge in inflation is like a surge in electrical power.

One common cause of power surges is brownouts (sudden lowering of voltage levels) or blackouts (total loss of power), followed by a sudden brief jump in voltage levels when the flow of power is restored. Another is lightning strikes, which introduce huge jumps in both the amount and the voltage of power flowing through the system. Those of us who live in *Central Florida* are painfully aware of these phenomena! And we are equally aware that,

shortly after a surge, normal levels of power flow and voltage return.



Think of an economic recession as like a brownout, depression as like a near total blackout. As the economy begins to recover, the usual pressures on pricing flow back with a sudden surge. At one end factories fire up; goods are introduced and sent down the supply chains; the chains themselves are restored and even enhanced. The basic laws of supply, demand, and greed play themselves out.

But right now the American people are running around like Chicken Little, screaming, “Inflation! Inflation! The sky is falling!” Why are they behaving that way? Two reasons: *Republicans* and corporate media. Both profit from the public’s being afraid.

When the people lose confidence, they turn toward the major party opposite that of the president who’s in office. Polls say that *Americans* right now trust *Republicans* to manage the economy better than *Democrats*. The irony of this will not have escaped you, I’m sure.

Remember: The cause of the inflation we’re experiencing is that the economy has rapidly grown stronger following the recession. What caused the recession? The COVID pandemic. What caused the COVID disaster in the U.S.? Bungled response to COVID by a *Republican* president, *Republicans* in Congress, and –in *Florida* –a *Republican* governor. And what’s causing the resurgence in our economy following that bungling? A *Democratic* President and *Democrats* in Congress. In other words, the people trust those who *caused* the problem more than they do those who are *solving* the problem.



Why are the people reacting so stupidly? Partly it’s the “usual suspects” – continual lies by *Republican* politicians, *Faux Non-News*, hate-talk radio, etc. And partly it’s the corporate media. The *cliché* of the print media was that “If it bleeds, it leads.” Bad news is placed under big headlines above the fold on the front page. Good news is placed far back from the front page.

Whistle blowers and leaked documents have proven that the algorithm *Facebook* employs to generate clicks is designed to feed users a steady stream of stories that will make them feel

fear, anxiety, anger, and hatred. The corporate media use the same type of implicit algorithm to determine which stories they will cover, how they will frame those stories, and for how long they will keep running those stories.

For example, the Afghanistan government was weak and corrupt from the get-go. But what was the immediate cause of its fall? *Republicans* Trump and Pompeo had the *Pakistanis* release thousands of *Taliban* leaders from prison. Subsequently, they negotiated with those *Taliban* leaders to set a date for *American* with

drawl from *Afghanistan*. *Democrat* Biden then faced a much stronger *Taliban*; a treaty setting a date for our withdrawal; and an *Afghan* government that sold out and then bugged out, carrying suitcases full of ill-gotten cash.

So whom did (and do) the media blame for the chaos amidst which the *U.S.* was forced to manage the staggeringly complex logistical challenge of its withdrawal? (A challenge which it met, by the way.) Biden, of course! And so it has continued.



An annoying, but—in retrospect—amusing coincidence!

Just as I was finishing this article, we suffered a momentary power outage followed of course! by a power surge. The ground fault interruptor I had installed in the circuit to which my computer is connected popped, and the surge protector into which my computer and cable modem and router and on and on as blitzed.

With Jewel's help, I replaced the surge protector, got everything plugged in correctly, and reset the GFI. Took us about 30 minutes. As I said, a good story...but definitely annoying!



Apologies to my lawyer friends...

Thanks to a combination of neuropathy, osteoarthritis, and a wound self-inflicted with a table saw, I've pretty much lost the ability to touch-type. Instead, I use a lot of dictation. When I dictated the next-to-last line on the next page, my software turned "law school" into "lost school."

Feature

Polling: Right direction or wrong direction?

Wayne Dickson

Here's one of the dumbest questions pollsters ever came up with:

Is our country headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- Right
- Wrong

What makes this question so dumb is that it provides almost no useful information. They might as well have phrased it this way:

How do you feel right now?

- Contented
- Discontented

A more useful approach would be to ask questions like these:

Is our country becoming more conservative or more liberal?

- More conservative
- More liberal

Is this movement in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- Right direction
- Wrong direction

Is our country becoming more democratic (small d) or less?

- More democratic
- Less democratic

Is this movement in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- Right direction
- Wrong direction

Which of the following is the best overall definition of Critical Race Theory?

- A. It teaches students that White Americans have always mistreated non-White Americans.
- B. It applies sophisticated concepts and techniques derived from Philosophy and the Social Sciences to the analysis of how race and ethnicity have affected our society.
- C. It teaches students to criticize White people.
- D. It teaches students that Black people should replace White people in our society.

For each of the following levels, is Critical Race Theory normally taught in our public schools?

- Grades 1-5: Yes/No
- Grades 6-8: Yes/No
- Grades 9-12: Yes/No
- College: Yes/No
- Law school: Yes/No
- Graduate school: Yes/No

Feature

Cynical Big Pharma advertising.

Wayne Dickson

Do you recognize this woman?



One of the fetures included in the *Build Back Better* bill would allow the federal government to control price gouging by Big Pharma. One of the ways they're fighting this provision is by manipulating the strings on their puppet Krysten Sinema. Another is by manipulating the strings on the public through cynical TV ads like the one featuring Dorothy from Georgia. Ironically, they run this particular ad time after time on the "liberal" cable network MSNBC.

Are you old enough to remember when O.J. Simpson was featured in a series of ads endorsing *Florida* orange juice? He had been a great football player, a mediocre actor, a lousy businessman, and a colossal jerk as a human being. What qualified him for the gig was his initials. He was called "Juice" by fellow football players, but—believe me—that had nothing to do with oranges! He is, in fact, allergic to oranges.

Michael Jordan was featured in a series of ads endorsing *Hanes* underwear. What qualified him as an authority on underwear? He was a great professional basketball player and later a failure as a professional baseball player. But he had great machismo, so I guess that was enough.

What about Dorothy? What qualifies her as an authority on pharmaceutical pricing? She has a disease and takes drugs for it. Besides, what's called for here is

not a celebrity name or face, but someone who sounds and looks like regular folks.

While I was doing research for this article, I ran across this video blog post by a fellow named Egberto Williams. You could jump to the post by clicking on the image below. He speaks on the topic more effectively and with greater authorities that I could. So I'll just introduce him with my two cents' worth and let you hear the rest from the man himself:

Big Pharma have always lobbied politicians (deducting the cost as an expense of doing business) and "motivated" them with quasi-bribes (i.e., "donations"). That's bad. They've always wined, dined, and provided junkets to physicians. That's bad. A couple of decades back they begin advertising directly to consumers (tax deductibly, of course). That's arguably worse.

Now they're getting consumers to lobby politicians for them. Lobby them for what? Lobby politicians to allow big Pharma to price gouge the suckers who are doing the lobbying on their behalf.

What qualifies the woman to speak so authoritatively about drug pricing? She has a disease. A sucker herself, she's accepting payment from her victimizers to help turn other people into suckers.

Incidentally, as you note, this is a very sophisticatedly slick ad. One feature of its slick professionalism is that the video was over-lighted and thus blown out and desaturated. In other words, it's the product of accomplished professionals pretending to be "just plain folks" amateurs.

