

"FLORIDA THIS WEEK"

MARCH 14, 2008

DISCLAIMER:

THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTS AN UNEDITED VERSION OF REALTIME CAPTIONING WHICH SHOULD NEITHER BE RELIED UPON FOR COMPLETE ACCURACY NOR USED AS A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT. BECAUSE THIS DOCUMENT HAS NOT BEEN EDITED, THERE MAY BE ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, AND/OR WORDS THAT DID NOT TRANSLATE CORRECTLY.

>> THE FOLLOWING IS A SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF WEDU, TAMPA, ST. PETERSBURG, SARASOTA.

>>> COMING UP NEXT, FLORIDA DEMOCRATS ARE AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER OVER WHETHER TO HOLD THE SECOND PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

TAMPA'S MAYOR DELIVERS HER STATE OF THE CITY MESSAGE, AND THE CITY IS FACING BUDGET CUTS AND LAYOFFS.

ADMIRAL FALLON RESIGNS FROM CENTRAL COMMAND.

AND THE RAYS SAY THERE'S ENOUGH PARKING IN DOWNTOWN

ST. PETERSBURG FOR THEIR NEW PROPOSED STADIUM SITE.

POLITICAL INSIGHTS NEXT ON "FLORIDA THIS WEEK."

¶¶

>> FROM THE WEDU STUDIOS, THIS IS "FLORIDA THIS WEEK."

AND NOW, MODERATOR ROB LOREI.

>> WELCOME BACK.

THIS WEEK IS FUND-RAISING WEEK AT WEDU.

AND DURING THIS IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO

SPONSOR THIS PROGRAM BY DONATING ONLINE WHERE A "FLORIDA

THIS WEEK" 15-OUNCE MUG IS OUR THANK-YOU GIFT WHEN YOU
DONATE \$75 OR MORE.

JUST VISIT WEDU.ORG AND CLICK THE "FLORIDA THIS WEEK" BUTTON
AND LOOK FOR OUR MUG AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.

THANK YOU.

THIS WEEK, OUR PANELISTS ARE, JOE BROWN IS A COLUMNIST AND
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER AT THE "THE TAMPA TRIBUNE."

DR. JUDITHANNE SCOURFIELD-MCLAUCHLAN IS AN ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT AT USF ST. PETERSBURG.

CHRIS GRIFFIN IS AN ATTORNEY AND A DEMOCRAT.

AND CHRIS HART IS A FORMER HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COMMISSIONER
AND A REPUBLICAN.

THANKS FOR COMING.

GOOD TO SEE YOU.

>> GOOD TO SEE YOU.

>> WELL, FLORIDA'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY CHAIR KAREN THURMAN IS
URGING THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AND PARTY LEADERS TO
CONSIDER A COMBINED VOTE BY MAIL AND IN PERSON VOTE AS A WAY
TO REDO THE JANUARY 29th PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

THE IDEA WOULD BE TO MAIL POSTAGE-PAID BALLOTS TO ALL
REGISTERED DEMOCRATIC VOTERS.

IT WOULD ALSO SET UP 50 REGIONAL VOTING OFFICES TO HELP
VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND OTHER COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATE IN AN
ELECTION JUNE 3rd.

JUDITHANNE, LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS.

YOU HAVE FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE ON MAIL-IN VOTING.

TELL US WHAT YOU DID AND WHAT THE PITFALLS ARE IF WE DO IT
HERE IN FLORIDA.

>> I WAS THE STATE DIRECTOR IN OREGON FOR THE COORDINATED
CAMPAIGN IN 2000, WHICH WAS THE FIRST TIME THERE WAS A 100%
VOTE BY MAIL PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN THIS COUNTRY.

THE WAY IT WORKS IS 18 DAYS BEFORE THE OFFICIAL ELECTION
DAY, BALLOTS ARE MAILED OUT TO EVERY VOTER.

ONE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OREGON AND THE PROPOSAL BY THE
FLORIDA DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS THAT IN OREGON, LIKE FLORIDA
ABSENTEE BALLOTS, THE BALLOTS DON'T COME POSTAGE PAID.

VOTERS DO NEED TO PUT THE POSTAGE ON THEM.

IT'S MUCH MORE INTENSE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK FROM A CAMPAIGN
PERSPECTIVE TO ACTUALLY GET THE VOTERS TO FILL IN THOSE
BALLOTS AND MAIL THEM BACK IN.

SO IT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF CAMPAIGN THAN THE CANDIDATES ARE
USED TO.

>> DID THE VOTE IN 2000 IN OREGON COME OFF WITHOUT A HITCH?

OR HOW MANY PROBLEMS WOULD YOU SAY WERE REPORTED?

WAS IT SOMETHING THAT THE PUBLIC SUPPORTED BASED ON THEIR
EXPERIENCE?

>> PEOPLE -- THERE WAS LIMITED EXPERIENCE WITH VOTE BY MAIL
IN OREGON PRIOR TO THE 2000 GENERAL ELECTION.

IT WAS USED IN A FEW SPECIAL ELECTIONS, SPECIAL ELECTION FOR

U.S. SENATE, FOR EXAMPLE, PRIOR TO THAT.

I THINK VOTERS FELT VERY COMFORTABLE WITH THE WAY THE ELECTION OFFICIALS HAD RUN THE ELECTION.

ONE THING THAT WAS SURPRISING TO US ON ELECTION NIGHT WAS THAT THE ELECTION OFFICIALS DURING THE CAMPAIGN SAID THIS IS GOING TO BE GREAT, 8:00 ON ELECTION NIGHT, WE'LL PUSH A BUTTON.

WE'LL KNOW THE RESULTS.

NOW, THOSE OF YOU IN FLORIDA --

[LAUGHTER]

>> DIDN'T HAPPEN THAT WAY.

>> IT DIDN'T.

THOSE OF YOU HERE WERE A LITTLE BIT MORE PREOCCUPIED WITH THE RECOUNT EFFORT HERE.

BUT OUT IN OREGON, WE WERE ACTUALLY YELLOW UNTIL AFTER THANKSGIVING BECAUSE IT WAS SO CLOSE, AND BALLOTS WERE CONTINUING TO BE PROCESSED BY THE COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICES.

>> SO THAT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE PROBLEMS, THAT IS THE COUNTING PROCESS TAKES A LONG TIME.

>> IT CAN TAKE A LONG TIME TO VERIFY.

>> CHRIS, DO YOU THINK THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE SOME SORT OF REVOTE?

AND IF WE HAVE A REVOTE, WILL IT BE THIS COMBINATION OF MAIL-IN AND WALK-IN?

>> I DON'T THINK WE'LL HAVE -- AND THIS IS SORT OF A PERFECT

STORM OF PROBLEMS.

YOU'VE GOT POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

YOU'VE GOT LEGAL PROBLEMS, AND YOU HAVE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS.

I'M ASSUMING THAT IN OREGON IN 2000 THAT THAT WAS THE
OFFICIAL STATE PROCESS FOR THE VOTE.

HERE, IT IS NOT.

MAIL-IN VOTING IS NOT THE PROCESS THAT WE USE, OBVIOUSLY.
AND SO HAVING THIS JERRY-RIGGED PARTY APPARATUS OF PUTTING
TOGETHER THE VOTE, I THINK IS BOTH IMPRACTICAL AND, PERHAPS,
DANGEROUS IN TERMS OF OPENING UP A PANDORA'S BOX OF IS IT A
LEGITIMATE ELECTION?

I GO BACK TO -- AND I'LL START BY SAYING I'M AN ARDENT
HILLARY CLINTON SUPPORTER.

IF WE GET ANY VOTES FOR HER, IT'S A GOOD THING FOR MY
CANDIDATE.

BUT I AGREE WITH CHAIRMAN DEAN, RULES ARE RULES.

THESE WERE THE RULES GOING IN.

I THINK IF YOU TRY TO COME IN THE BACK DOOR WITH ESSENTIALLY
AN AFTER-THE-FACT ELECTION, THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION WILL
ALWAYS BE QUESTIONED AND QUESTIONABLE.

I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA.

>> SO QUESTION MAY BE IN THE COURTS, THAT SOMEBODY WHO FELT
THAT THEY DIDN'T GET THE OUTCOME THEY WANTED MAY TAKE THE
DECISION TO COURT?

>> OR THAT, DESPITE THE PARTY RULES, KEEP IN MIND, THAT THAT

JANUARY PRIMARY WAS PUT ON THE SCHEDULE BY THE FLORIDA
LEGISLATURE.

THAT IS THE OFFICIAL ELECTION.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THE PARTY DOES WITH THE RESULTS.

THAT'S THE OFFICIAL ELECTION.

I THINK THERE WOULD BE A LAWSUIT IN THE WAITING FOR, THIS IS
NOT AN OFFICIAL ELECTION AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT BE
COUNTED.

THOSE ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS I THINK WOULD COME UP.

>> ANOTHER ARGUMENT THAT JANUARY 29th WAS WHAT SOME CALL A
ROGUE ELECTION, THAT WASN'T IN KEEPING WITH THE PARTY RULES,
AND WHATEVER THE PARTY COMES UP WITH AND AGREES TO THE FDP
AND DNC WOULD BE THE OFFICIAL ELECTION.

>> JOE, A SURVEY PUT OUT THIS WEEK BY THE DEMOCRATS SAYS
THAT SOME MAJORITY, 59% OF THE MAJORITY OF DEMOCRATS ARE
CONCERNED ABOUT THIS AND WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDO
THE VOTE.

IS THAT CHANGING THE RULES IN MIDSTREAM AS CHRIS JUST
SUGGESTED?

>> ABSOLUTELY.

WE OUGHT TO HAVE THE ELECTION.

WE ALREADY DID VOTE.

THAT'S SAYING WE WANT TO VOTE AGAIN.

NO.

I MEAN, NO.

WE HAD THE ELECTION HERE.

OKAY?

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS, EVERYBODY, VOTING MACHINES, THE
WHOLE THING.

NOT A THIRD-WORLD COUNTRY WHERE YOU DO IT OVER AGAIN BECAUSE
YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESULTS.

>> JUDITHANNE SAID THAT SOME PEOPLE CONSIDER IT A ROGUE
ELECTION BECAUSE IT WAS OUTSIDE --

>> WHO WROTE IT?

IT WASN'T US.

IT WAS THE DEMOCRATS THEMSELVES.

AND YOU GOT ALL THESE LAWSUIT THREATS.

WHERE WERE THESE FOLKS BEFOREHAND?

THESE FOLKS THAT LAUNCH THE LAWSUITS, LIKE AL SHARPTON
THREATENED TO SUE, WHERE WAS HE BACK IN NOVEMBER, DECEMBER?

>> HIS LAWSUIT IS TO NOT DO THE DO-OVER.

>> I KNOW.

OKAY.

BUT WHERE WERE THEY?

ALL THESE FOLKS SCREAMING ABOUT VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT,
WHICH IS WHAT THIS IS, WHERE WERE THEY BACK THEN WHEN HOWARD
DEAN FIRST MADE THIS?

>> SAID THE FLORIDA DELEGATION WOULD NOT BE SEATED.

>> TOO LATE NOW.

>> QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS KEEP COMING UP ON THIS PROGRAM THAT

WE'VE DEALT WITH IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS.

THERE'S BEEN A QUESTION WHETHER OR NOT THE DEMOCRATS CAN EVEN PULL OFF A PRIMARY ELECTION, A SECOND ONE.

HERE IS WHAT SOME OF OUR VIEWERS SAID LAST WEEK ABOUT THIS TOPIC.

>> IT IS CURIOUS THAT WITH ALL THE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FLORIDA DEMOCRATIC DELEGATES NOT COUNTING BECAUSE THE STATE VIOLATED THE NATIONAL DNC RULE THAT IS EARLY VOTING, NOTHING HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE FLORIDA REPUBLICAN LEGISLATURE ADDING THAT JANUARY DATE TO THE VOTING MACHINE REFORM BILL. THE DEMOCRATS WANTED THE REFORM BILL, SO THEY VOTED FOR IT. THUS, IT IS DISINGENUOUS FOR GOVERNOR CRIST TO SAY DNC CHAIR DEAN WAS SUBVERTING THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.

NEITHER DEAN NOR THE DEMOCRATS NOR THE VOTERS CAUSED THIS CRISIS.

IT WAS THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE.

>> WELL, I'M NOT OFFICIALLY ANY MINORITY, BUT MY VOTE SHOULD COUNT JUST AS MUCH AS ANYBODY ELSE.

THEY RAVE ABOUT PEOPLE BEING DISENFRANCHISED.

A VOTE IS A VOTE.

I CAST MINE IN SINCERITY, AND I EXPECT IT TO BE HONORED.

AND I DON'T EXPECT PARTY PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO DENY ME MY CHOICES.

>> I DON'T THINK WE NEED TO DO A REDO, BECAUSE WE DID A FAIR AND FREE ELECTION WITH ALL OF THE CANDIDATES WHO WERE ON OUR

BALLOT.

AND NONE OF THEM CAMPAIGNED HERE.

SO IT WAS, YOU KNOW, A FAIR PLAYING FIELD.

WE HAVE C-SPAN.

WE HAVE THE INTERNET.

WE MADE AN INFORMED DECISION.

AND I HOPE THAT THE RULES COMMITTEE WILL JUST ISSUE US A PARDON, AND THAT IN THE FUTURE, YOU KNOW, WE WILL LEARN FROM THIS AS A PARTY.

WE WILL DEVELOP A FAIR SYSTEM OF ROTATING REGIONAL PRIMARIES AND SEAT THE FLORIDA AND MICHIGAN DELEGATES.

>> WELL, THERE'S A MIX OF OPINIONS THERE.

GO BACK TO THE FIRST ONE, CHRIS, THAT IT WAS THE REPUBLICANS THAT CAUSED THIS MESS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

YOU'RE A REPUBLICAN, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THAT VIEWER?

>> THEY HAD A 100% VOTE OF THE LEGISLATURE FOR IT.

THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE NOW THAT WANT TO HAVE SELECTIVE MEMORY.

BUT, SEE, ADDING TO THIS IS WHY WOULD ALL THOSE OTHER DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES AGREE NOT TO CAMPAIGN IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA?

ANYONE THAT KNEW THE NAME RECOGNITION OF HILLARY CLINTON WAS STUPID TO ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN.

NOW SHE'S CLAIMED THE STATE OF FLORIDA, AND SHE WOULD RIGHTLY SO BASED ON THAT.

BUT HERE WE GO.

YOU'VE GOT A VOTE THAT DIDN'T COUNT, BUT IT DID COUNT OR
DIDN'T IT COUNT?

AND NOW YOU HAVE PEOPLE SAYING I WANT IT.

WELL, IF I WAS BARACK OBAMA, I WOULDN'T WANT A VOTE TO COUNT
AND RIGHTLY SO.

>> ULTIMATELY, FOR OUR PARTY, FOR MY PARTY, THIS REQUIRES A
POLITICAL SOLUTION IN TERMS OF THE CANDIDATES ULTIMATELY
REACHING SOME TYPE OF AN AGREEMENT, NOT FOR A REDO, NOT FOR
A REVOTE, BUT FOR SOME WAY TO SEAT THE DELEGATION, BECAUSE
FOR OUR PARTY IT TAKES US INTO THE GENERAL ELECTION, AND WE
DON'T WANT TO BE DISABLED WHEN WE GET THERE.

>> SO POLITICAL DECISION MEANING INVOLVING THE CANDIDATES,
BARACK OBAMA AND HILLARY CLINTON AND HOWARD DEAN COMING TO
SOME SORT OF CONSENSUS?

>> I THINK YOU'LL HAVE A PRESUMPTIVE NOMINEE SOON AFTER THE
PUERTO RICO PRIMARY IN JUNE.

AND I THINK THE SUPERDELEGATES ARE GOING TO START BREAKING
PUBLICLY --

>> JOE, YOU ARE LAUGHING.

>> NO, BECAUSE, THE WAY THINGS ARE RIGHT NOW, PUERTO RICO'S
DELEGATES WILL COUNT BUT FLORIDA'S WON'T.

>> BECAUSE THEY WERE IN JUNE AND WE WERE IN JANUARY.

>> JUDITHANNE ONE LAST THING --

>> THE CUBAN AMERICANS WILL LOVE THAT ONE.

>> ONE LAST THING BEFORE WE GO.

THAT IS FLORIDA VOTERS HAVE EXPRESSED SOME ANGER, THOUGH, AT THEIR DELEGATION NOT BEING SEATED.

AND IF THIS THING IS STILL UP IN THE AIR AND THE FLORIDA DELEGATION BECOMES A HOT POTATO, WHETHER OR NOT TO SEAT IT AT THE CONVENTION IN JULY, YOU THINK WE'RE HEADED THAT WAY? DO YOU THINK THAT'S WHERE WE ARE HEADED?

>> THAT WOULD REALLY BE A DISASTER FOR THE PARTY TO HAVE IT GO THAT FAR AND FOR A STATE LIKE FLORIDA NOT TO COUNT.

SO I THINK THAT WHILE MANY ARE HOPING TO SEE MORE LEADERSHIP FROM CHAIRMAN DEAN, THAT THERE IS GOING TO BE A SOLUTION, I'M SURE.

I JUST HEARD RECENTLY THAT ANOTHER SOLUTION HAS BEEN PUT FORTH ON THE TABLE THAT PERHAPS THE FLORIDA DELEGATION WOULD COUNT FOR HALF.

SEATING ALL OF THEM BUT HAVING THEIR VOTE COUNT AS HALF.

SO I THINK WE'RE GOING --

[LAUGHTER]

>> MY CANDIDATE STILL DOES WELL.

>> THAT'S SORT OF THE REPUBLICAN SOLUTION.

THAT'S WHAT THE REPUBLICANS DID.

>> LIKE THE REPUBLICANS, BUT THEY WOULD -- COMING OUT, EXACTLY.

SO WE MAY SEE SOME OTHER -- THERE'S NO EASY ANSWER, BUT I THINK SOME COMPROMISE IS GOING TO HAVE TO BE REACHED BY

JUNE, CERTAINLY.

>> APPLY THAT LOGIC IN MICHIGAN, BARACK OBAMA WAS NOT EVEN ON THE BALLOT YET.

SO HOW IS THAT FAIR?

YOU'LL HAVE TO DO THE SAME IN BOTH STATES.

>>> IN HER ANNUAL STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, TAMPA MAYOR PAM IORIO SAID THIS WEEK THAT THE STATE OF THE CITY IS GOOD.

AT THE SAME TIME, SHE ADMITTED THAT THERE IS FRICTION BETWEEN HER AND CITY COUNCIL.

AND DECLINING PROPERTY TAX REVENUE IS FORCING BUDGET CUTS AND LAYOFFS.

COUNCIL MEMBERS HAVE GENERALLY OPPOSED HER PLANS TO PRIVATIZE SOME CITY SERVICES AND LAYOFF 100 CITY WORKERS. IORIO ALSO MADE A STRONG PITCH FOR A REGIONAL LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM.

>> AND THE ONLY KEY TO OUR TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS AND TO MAKE SOMETHING REALLY CONGESTION-PROOF IS ONE DAY HAVING A RAIL SYSTEM.

>> CHRIS, A LOT IS BEING MADE QUIETLY AROUND THE CITY THAT YOU'VE GOT A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY, EVEN THOUGH THESE ARE NONPARTISAN RACES, BUT YOU'VE GOT A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY ON THE TAMPA CITY COUNCIL.

YOU HAVE A DEMOCRATIC MAYOR, AND THERE IS FRICTION BETWEEN THOSE.

AND THE DEMOCRATIC CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS DON'T LIKE HER IDEA

OF PRIVATIZATION.

YOU'RE A FORMER HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COMMISSIONER.

YOU'VE HAD SOME EXPERIENCE CLOSE TO THIS.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT?

WHY DO YOU THINK THERE IS THAT TENSION BETWEEN THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL?

>> WELL, YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE SOMETHING TO WATCH WHEN YOU'RE NOT WATCHING THE COUNTY COMMISSION.

[LAUGHTER]

SO THEY DON'T WANT TO BE LEFT OUT.

BUT IN REALITY, THIS TYPE OF FRICTION WENT ON WHEN WE DIDN'T HAVE A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM.

IT JUST WASN'T RECOGNIZED THAT WAY.

NOW THAT WE HAVE A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, WE CAN COMPARE AND CONTRAST THOSE.

SO THOSE TYPE OF FRICTIONS WENT ON EVEN WHEN DICK GRECO WAS A CITY COUNCIL MEMBER AND OTHER PEOPLE WERE IN OFFICE.

HERE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A 760 MILLION-DOLLAR BUDGET.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A SHORTFALL OF ABOUT 17 MILLION.

THAT IS JUST A LITTLE OVER 2% OF THE ENTIRE BUDGET.

IF YOU CAN'T FIND 5% ON ANY GIVEN DAY OF A CORPORATION, OF A PUBLIC CORPORATION THAT BIG AND FORGET THE EXACT NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, WHETHER 8,000 OR APPROXIMATELY THAT NUMBER, WELL, THEN YOU HAVEN'T TAKEN A LOOK AT HOW YOU'RE ORGANIZED AND HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES OR SAVE COSTS.

THEN TO HAVE THE CITY COUNCIL ARGUE ABOUT 100 EMPLOYEES COMPARED TO THAT, I HAVE FRIENDS WHO HAVE HAD BUSINESSES THAT LOST MORE EMPLOYEES THAN THAT LAST YEAR, AND NOBODY CARED.

NOBODY IS TURNING AROUND TO THOSE SMALL BUSINESSES IN OUR COMMUNITY, WHICH IS THE BIGGEST PART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND SAYING, WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THEM?

SO YOU HAVE A CITY COUNCIL RAISING ISSUES LIKE THAT, I THINK THEY NEED TO GET A LIFE.

LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE.

ONE OF THE THINGS, THEY RECENTLY NIXED PRIVATIZING INSPECTION OF FIRE HYDRANTS.

WELL, THEY ARE NOT GETTING THEM DONE.

YES, IT WAS A 690 MILLION-DOLLAR CONTRACT.

BUT THEN THE QUESTION IS, WHAT IS THE CITY'S LIABILITY IF THEY GO TO THE FIRE HYDRANT BY YOUR HOUSE OR BUSINESS AND THERE'S NO WATER?

WHO DO YOU SUE?

I THINK I'D BE LOOKING AT CITY HALL, BECAUSE THE FIRE HYDRANTS DON'T WORK AND WE'RE PAYING OUR TAXES FOR PUBLIC SAFETY, THEN LET'S BE SURE -- I THINK IT WILL BE INCUMBENT UPON THE CITY TO SET ITS PRIORITIES.

>> CHRIS GRIFFIN, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT CHRIS' POINT WAS, THAT IS THAT IN ANY BUDGET OF THIS SIZE, YOU'LL FIND ENOUGH MONEY, \$17 MILLION TO CUT EASILY, AND THE CITY

COUNCIL SHOULDN'T BE ARGUING ABOUT LAYING OFF A HUNDRED WORKERS?

>> FINDING IT IS ONE THING.

FINDING IT EASILY IS ANOTHER THING.

AND, ACTUALLY, CHRIS AND I RAN INTO EACH OTHER ON THE STREET DOWNTOWN JUST YESTERDAY AND HAD A BIT OF THIS DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SHORTFALL IN REVENUE IN BOTH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS PUTTING SUCH A HIGH PRESSURE ON THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES.

WE'RE ENTERING INTO BOTH A PRIVATE INDUSTRY RECESSION, AND IF YOU WILL, A PUBLIC INDUSTRY RECESSION BECAUSE OF ALL THE THINGS, MORTGAGE CRISIS, OIL PRICES, SHORTFALL IN TAX REVENUES, AND FINDING 17 -- I AGREE WITH CHRIS.

YOU COULD FIND \$17 MILLION, BUT FOR EVERY ONE OF THOSE DOLLARS IN THAT 17 MILLION, SOMEBODY IS GOING TO GO WITHOUT A SERVICE THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED.

THAT'S WHERE THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS.

>> WATCH THE PRIORITIES IS TERRIBLY IMPORTANT.

I DON'T THINK THEY ARE CLEAR RIGHT NOW.

>> I'M SORRY.

WE HAVE TO MOVE ON.

>>> ADMIRAL WILLIAM FALLON, THE MAN WHO HEADED CENTRAL COMMAND AT MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE AND OVERSAW U.S. FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST ABRUPTLY RESIGNED THIS WEEK.

QUESTIONS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED SPECULATING THAT FALLON HAD

CLASHED WITH THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION ON PLANS TO ATTACK
IRAN.

YET THE WHITE HOUSE REJECTED CHARGES THAT IT WAS QUASHING
DISSENT.

IT'S HIGHLY UNUSUAL FOR A SENIOR COMMANDER TO RESIGN IN
WARTIME.

THE DAY AFTER THE RESIGNATION ANNOUNCEMENT, THE MILITARY
SAID MORE THAN 1100 JOBS AT TAMPA'S CENTRAL COMMAND WERE
BEING PHASED OUT.

CHRIS, DO YOU THINK THAT THIS IS A SIGN THAT THE U.S. IS
PLANNING TO ATTACK IRAN, THAT FALLON IS RESIGNING?

>> NOT AT ALL.

YOU HAVE TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE BIGGER PICTURE, WHO ACTUALLY
MAKES THOSE TYPES OF DECISIONS.

I THINK THIS IS JUST A PROFESSIONAL ISSUE.

THERE'S A CODE IN THE MILITARY THAT IS HISTORY AND TRADITION
AND CUSTOM IN THE UNITED STATES THAT THE MILITARY FOLLOWS
ITS CIVILIAN ELECTED LEADERSHIP.

AND I THINK THIS IS ONE OF THOSE CASES.

>> CHRIS GRIFFIN, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

>> WELL, I THINK -- I AGREE WITH CHRIS THAT THE CIVILIAN
LEADERSHIP CONTROLS.

I THINK THE SUBPLOT HERE IS THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GENERAL
FALLON AND GENERAL PETRAEUS.

TECHNICALLY, GENERAL FALLON IS HIS SUPERIOR.

THEY HAD THEIR DIFFERENCES OF OPINION NOT ONLY WITH WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN IRAN, BUT ALSO IN THE PULL-DOWN OF THE STRENGTH TROOP IN IRAQ.

I THINK THAT'S REALLY WHERE THE FLASH POINT WAS.

I THINK CHRIS IS EXACTLY CORRECT.

YOU GO INTO ESQUIRE MAGAZINE AND START SAYING THINGS THAT ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE WHITE HOUSE POSITION, I THINK YOU HAVE TO RESIGN.

I THINK THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED.

>> IT'S AN UNTENABLE POSITION.

JOE, AT THE SAME TIME, WE'RE HEARING ABOUT THE PHASING OUT OF THE 1100 JOBS IN CENTRAL COMMAND.

JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, PEOPLE WERE TALKING ABOUT HOW THE MILITARY WAS INVESTING IN CENTRAL COMMAND AND THE BASE WAS HERE TO STAY AND NOW WE HEAR ABOUT THE JOB LOSSES AT CENTRAL COMMAND.

>> WELL, THESE ARE MOSTLY -- A LOT OF THEM ARE JUST TEMPORARY JOBS.

PEOPLE COME IN, RESERVISTS AND STUFF AND STAY AT APARTMENTS IN HYDE PARK, OVER \$3,000 A MONTH, \$50 A DAY, I BELIEVE MEAL MONEY AND ALL THAT.

IT DEFINITELY WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY.

I DON'T THINK IT WILL HAVE THAT MUCH.

MacDILL WILL STILL BE HERE.

THEY JUST GOT THIS TANKER THING, THIS AIRBUS CONTRACT, NOT

CONTRACT, BUT, YOU KNOW, THE DEPLOYMENT HERE FOR THAT.

SO IT WILL STILL BE HERE.

BUT THIS WILL DEFINITELY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE CITY'S ECONOMY.

THOSE 1100 FOLKS SPEND A LOT OF MONEY.

>> JUDITHANNE, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE NEWS THIS WEEK ABOUT FALLON'S RESIGNATION AND THE PHASING OUT OF THE JOBS AT MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE?

>> I AGREE WITH CHRIS.

I THINK IT DOES RAISE THE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE CONFLICT THERE AND WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN FOR OUR FUTURE POLICY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST.

>>> OKAY.

WELL, THE RAYS BASEBALL TEAM ISSUED A REPORT THIS WEEK SAYING THAT PLENTY OF PARKING WOULD BE AVAILABLE IF IT MOVED TO A NEW STADIUM IN DOWNTOWN ST. PETERSBURG.

BUT HALF THE PARKING SPACES THEY ARE COUNTING ON ARE IN PRIVATE OR EMPLOYEE LOTS UNAVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

AND SOME OF THE OPERATORS OF THOSE PARKING SPACES SAY THEY COULD NOT OPEN THEM TO BASEBALL FANS.

THE NEWS REPORTED BY THE "ST. PETERSBURG TIMES" CREATES YET ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO THE BUILDING OF THAT PROPOSED WATERFRONT STADIUM.

SO, JOE, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?

I MEAN, DO THE RAYS HAVE ENOUGH PARKING IN DOWNTOWN ST. PETE FOR THIS PROPOSED STADIUM?

>> THAT'S NOT THE POINT.

LET'S SAY THEY DO.

THE PROBLEM IS, ALL THE PEOPLE COMING TO THE SPACES.

THAT'S WHERE YOU GET THE PROBLEM.

IT'S NOT JUST HAVING THE SPACES.

TRYING TO GET THERE.

IF EVERYBODY COMES THERE AT THE SAME TIME, WHOA.

IT'S NOT JUST A MATTER OF HAVING THE SPACES.

IT'S THE LOGISTICS OF GETTING PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF THERE.

>> YOU'RE SAYING BECAUSE THERE'S NOT ENOUGH MAJOR ARTERIES, MAJOR ROADS LEADING INTO DOWNTOWN ST. PETERSBURG AT THAT END OF ST. PETERSBURG, IT CREATES A HUGE TRAFFIC JAM.

>> YOU HAVE THE THING CALLED THE BAY.

[LAUGHTER]

GOING TO HAVE A LONG TROLLEY OR SOMETHING --

>> IF THIS ISSUE IS ON THE BALLOT IN ST. PETERSBURG AND THE PUBLIC IN ST. PETE IS ASKED TO VOTE, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE VOTERS OF ST. PETE WILL DO?

>> SAY NO.

LOOK, WE ALREADY GOT THIS BIG THING, THIS TROPICANA FIELD THING WE'RE STILL PAYING FOR.

ASK US TO PAY FOR SOMETHING ELSE?

THAT'S WHAT I THINK.

IF I WAS LIVING OVER THERE, THAT'S WHAT I WOULD SAY.

>> I THINK THEY JUST HAVE TO LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.

I STILL CALL IT THE ICE PALACE BECAUSE I LIKE THE NAME, BUT DOWNTOWN TAMPA STOPS AT EVERY HOCKEY GAME OR EVENT.

WELL, GUESS WHAT?

THEY HAVE A LOT MORE DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND COMMERCIAL THAN WE DO, AND YET WE'VE GOT THOUSANDS OF PERMITS ON CONDOS.

WE HAVE A CONVENTION CENTER.

WE HAVE ALL THAT GOING ON AND NOT ONE MAYOR OR LEADERSHIP IN THE CITY OF TAMPA HAS IMPROVED HARTLINE OR HART BUS SYSTEM SO PEOPLE CAN WALK OR RIDE EASILY DOWNTOWN, AND IT'S NO DIFFERENT IN DOWNTOWN ST. PETERSBURG.

IT WOULD ONLY BE WORSE THAN HERE.

>> AND THERE'S NO TROLLEY IN DOWNTOWN ST. PETE.

>> NO.

THAT TROLLEY IS A TOURIST DEVELOPMENT VEHICLE.

IT IS NOT A TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE.

>> JUDITHANNE, YOU WORK IN DOWNTOWN ST. PETE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL TO PUT THE STADIUM DOWN THERE?

>> I AGREE.

THE SENTIMENT OF FOLKS THAT I TALK TO DOWNTOWN AREN'T EAGER TO SEE A NEW WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND SHARE THOSE CONCERNS REGARDING JUST GETTING AROUND.

AND THE FACT THAT WE ARE STILL PAYING FOR THE STADIUM THAT IS BUILT AND RIGHT OFF THE INTERSTATE.

>> -- NEVER STOPPED OUR COMMUNITY IN THE PAST.

[LAUGHTER]

>> SO CHRIS GRIFFIN, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CHANCES ARE THAT THIS STADIUM -- BASED ON WHAT WE KNOW RIGHT NOW, CHANCES THAT STADIUM GETS BUILT?

>> I AGREE WITH JOE, I DON'T THINK THE CHANCES ARE VERY HIGH.

AND I'M A FOOTBALL FAN ANYWAY, SO I HAVEN'T REALLY PAID THAT MUCH ATTENTION.

[LAUGHTER]

I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO SEE IT GET BUILT.

>> I TALKED TO A LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL IN THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AREA THIS WEEK WHO SAID THAT HIS DREAM IS TO BRING THE RAYS OVER TO HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.

AND I CAN'T TELL YOU AT WHAT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT THIS PERSON WAS.

BUT THERE ARE SOME POLITICIANS IN TAMPA THAT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE TEAM OVER HERE.

YOU LIKE THAT?

>> I WANTED TO BRING THE MAGIC TO THE ICE PALACE IN ADDITION TO THAT.

IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE IT, LET'S REALLY HAVE IT FIRST-RATE. LET'S MAKE SURE WE PUT THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN FIRST.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE THE ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION.

IT'S NOT JUST THE CONGESTION.

THAT'S A MAJOR PROBLEM AT THE BALL GAME, BUT IT'S ALL THE TIME BECAUSE YOU ARE TRYING TO BRING MORE THINGS INTO A CENTRAL PLACE.

AND THAT'S THE IDEA OF URBAN CENTERS, BUT YOU HAVE GOT TO MATCH IT WITH THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE TRANSPORTATION AND THE WALKABILITY FOR PEOPLE TO ACCESS ALL OF THE THINGS.

>> OKAY.

WELL, FINALLY EACH WEEK, WE ASK OUR PANEL ABOUT ANOTHER STORY FROM THE WEEK OR ON THE HORIZON THAT AFFECTS PEOPLE HERE IN WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA.

JOE, YOUR OTHER BIG STORY OF THE WEEK?

>> WELL, YOU KNOW, REALLY SOLVING PROBLEMS IN TALLAHASSEE. THE SENATE THE OTHER DAY PASSED THIS PULL-UP-YOUR-PANTS BILL THAT'S BEEN GOING AROUND THE LAST COUPLE OF SESSIONS. THE KIDS WHO WEAR, YOU KNOW, THE BAGGY PANTS.

OBSVIOUSLY, THE INSURANCE CRISIS AND ALL THAT STUFF, THAT'S NO BIG DEAL.

THE CRISIS IS KIDS WEARING THEIR PANTS TOO LOW.

>> JUDITHANNE, YOUR OTHER BIG STORY OF THE WEEK.

>> ACTUALLY, I HAVE TO SAY, AFTER SITTING ON THE HOWARD FRANKLAND AND LITERALLY NOT MOVING FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR, I HAVE TO GO BACK TO MAYOR IORIO'S RENEWED CALL FOR AN EMPHASIS ON SEEING LIGHT RAIL IN THIS REGION.

>> THAT IS SOMETHING.

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT THE MAYOR IS DOING IS RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

SHE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH MORE TIME TO BUILD HER LEGACY.

AND IF SHE IS TO DO SOMETHING, THAT MIGHT BE PART OF HER LEGACY.

>> ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.

IT'S SORELY NEEDED.

>> WELL, CHRIS HART, YOUR OTHER BIG STORY OF THE WEEK?

>> WELL, I WOULD HOPE SHE WOULD MAKE THE BUS WORK FIRST.

IF IT'S GOING TO HAVE MY NAME ON IT, I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IT WORK.

[LAUGHTER]

BUT THE HOME FORECLOSURES, THEY NOW HAVE HIT ASTRONOMICAL PROPORTIONS OF SOME ORDER OF MAGNITUDE SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

IT TURNS OUT THAT ON FRAUD DEALING WITH HOMES AND LOANS, FLORIDA IS LEADING THE NATION.

NOW, THAT'S A HECK OF AN ACCOLADE TO HAVE.

CONCURRENT WITH THAT, THE FED JUST CAME OUT WITH A 200 BILLION-DOLLAR BAILOUT OF THE BANKING INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ALL OF THIS FUNDING, BUT IT ALSO INVOLVES THE BANK OF CANADA, SCOTLAND AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL, SO IT TELLS YOU THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL THING.

THIS IS NOT LIKE ANYTHING WE'VE HAD HISTORICALLY.

I'M REALLY CONCERNED THAT IT'S A HARBINGER OF THINGS TO COME.

>> IS THE GOVERNOR PLANNING TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?

>> YES.

IN FACT, I'LL GO UP NEXT WEEK TO TESTIFY BEFORE HIS H.O.P.E. TASK FORCE, HOMEOWNERSHIP PROMOTES THE ECONOMY.

THEY ARE TAKING A VERY POSITIVE VIEW.

ALEX SINK, OUR CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, IS ON THAT.

THEY HAVE REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL THE BANKING, MORTGAGE, REALTY, AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

AND THEY ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS THIS VERY QUICKLY AND GET SOME THINGS DONE TO INCLUDE DURING THIS SESSION.

>> ALL RIGHT.

CHRIS GRIFFIN, YOUR OTHER BIG STORY OF THE WEEK?

>> ROB, YOU CAN'T HAVE A NEWS PROGRAM THIS WEEK AND NOT USE THE TWO WORDS "ELLIOT SPITZER."

AND IN ALL SERIOUSNESS, IT'S A POLITICAL STORY.

IT'S TRAGIC AND FASCINATING WHEN YOU SEE THE INTERSECTION OF THE PERSONAL AND THE POLITICAL.

I MEAN, GOVERNOR SPITZER WAS A RISING STAR IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

HE WAS ANNOYING A LOT OF PEOPLE UP THERE, BUT HE HAD A FUTURE.

BUT THEN WHEN YOU SEE WHAT HIS WIFE AND HIS FAMILY HAVE GONE

THROUGH, AND IT'S REALLY GENERATED A LOT OF INTERESTING DISCUSSION, AT LEAST AMONG MY FRIENDS, ABOUT HIS WIFE STANDING THERE WITH HIM AND THE ROLE OF POLITICAL SPOUSES. AND AS TRAGIC AS IT IS -- WELL, DON'T THEY ALWAYS SOMETIMES BY THEIR OWN CHOICE, SOMETIMES PERHAPS NOT. I THINK IT'S A FASCINATING STORY, BUT I FEEL SO SORRY FOR THE FAMILY.

>> WELL, THANK YOU, DR. JUDITHANNE SCOURFIELD-MCLAUCHLAN, AND THANK YOU -- THANK YOU FOR WATCHING THIS IMPORTANT PROGRAM DURING FUND-RAISING WEEK.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SPONSOR THIS PROGRAM BY DONATING ONLINE WHERE A "FLORIDA THIS WEEK" 15-OUNCE MUG IS OUR THANK-YOU GIFT WHEN YOU DONATE \$75 OR MORE.

REALTIME CAPTIONING BY AMERICAPTION, INC.

>> "FLORIDA THIS WEEK" IS A PRODUCTION OF WEDU, WHO IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS CONTENT.