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## Congressional candidate comes from Levy County



**Franklin Schuler Jr. sits at Julie's Diner in Bronson on Wednesday morning (Feb. 28) before being interviewed.**

### Story and Photo

**By Jeff M. Hardison © March 1, 2018 at 3:38 p.m.**

**LEVY COUNTY** -- Among the candidates for the United States House of Representatives, District 2 Florida seat is a man with Levy County roots.

Franklin Schuler Jr., 67, of Bronson was born in Gulf Hammock. During the recent Black History Month event, some of his relatives introduced him to the audience as "Kilroy," and during an interview with Schuler on Wednesday morning (Feb. 28), he shared the origin of that nickname as well as reasons people should choose him first as the Democrat in this race, and then as the overall candidate during the general election in November.

The current man holding that position is U.S. Rep. (Dr.) Neal Dunn, M.D. (R-District 2 Florida).

In addition to Schuler, another Democrat interviewed so far for this position is Brandon Peters. The story about Peters can be seen by clicking [HERE](#).

Betty Jean Schuler Jones was Franklin Schuler Jr.'s mother. His father Franklin Schuler Sr. died in a car accident in 1955 on U.S. Highway 19 in Gulf Hammock.

The origin of the saying "Kilroy was here" includes many tales. There was one person who led or participated in every combat, training or occupation operation during WWII and the Korean War. That person was known as Kilroy.

"Kilroy Was Here." Somehow, this simple graffiti captured the imagination of soldiers everywhere they went from WWII through the Korean Conflict.

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Schuler, a veteran of the United States Army, served from October of 1969 until June of 1972. He said he was among the first of the Army soldiers who was allowed to have an early release in 1972. He was let out a few months early, he said.

He served in Fort Benning, Georgia; Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and Uijeongbu, South Korea.

Schuler's working background after the Army, and and after working for the Veterans Administration, was primarily in construction, including working with his uncle by marriage the late Frank Buie.

Buie and Schuler were partners in construction for a time. Schuler said he admires the work ethic of Buie. Another hardworking man in construction, Schuler said, was James Mongo.

Schuler also worked as a detention officer at the Levy County Jail, where he worked for 19 years before retiring.

Schuler has served on the Bronson Town Council for 16 years, including as vice mayor and as mayor. He served with Edith Brown during his first set of years.

Schuler said he is running for Congress to "be the people's voice."

"I want to be the people's voice," he said, "for the people who can't be their own voice."

Schuler considers himself to be the candidate who is going to Washington, D.C., to represent them.

The candidate understands "there is a lot of bargaining in Congress," however he has no doubt that he can negotiate well with people from both the Democratic side and the Republican side of the aisle. He said Rep. Dunn appears to vote straight Republican Party lines.

The first thing Schuler said he wants to work on is community relations with the police officers to improve safety in schools.

"I believe every school should have two, paid by the federal government, School Resource Officers," Schuler said. "That would be two officers, in every school, in every county at all times."

Schuler said he believes the four deputies in Broward County should have been enough; however, he added, if there were two SROs on the campus, then one could cover the other as they would take turns going through the school to locate and apprehend or stop the shooter.

The number two item on his list in Congress will be to improve the national healthcare situation.

"I'm a pretty good candidate to tell them about healthcare," Schuler said. "I've been a diabetic since I was 42-years-old (for 25 years now). I'm 67 now, and I went through a lot."

Twenty-five years ago, Schuler said, his insulin cost \$7 a month. That went to \$250 a month, and he had to take three different types at that cost – equaling \$750 a month.

"I don't think anybody should have to die," Schuler said, "or spend all of their money on healthcare."

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, often shortened to the Affordable Care Act or nicknamed Obamacare, is a United States federal statute enacted by the 111th United States Congress and signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010.

Schuler said he believes Obamacare is a wonderful thing.

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“Maybe Obamacare wouldn’t be the total answer,” Schuler said, “but I think it is part of the answer. By cutting it out, you are hurting a lot of people.

“Do you know how many people in this (Congressional) District would have been hurt if they did away with Obamacare?” Schuler asked and answered. “Sixty-three thousand people would have lost their health insurance if Trumpcare would have come in.”

Speaking off the cuff, Schuler said infrastructure is his third priority when he goes to represent the people of this district of Florida in Congress.

The roads in Alachua County need work, he said. The bridges leading to Cedar Key and other parts of this district need repairs as well. Infrastructure improvement is a realm of life where the federal government can help all of the people, Schuler said, and not just those in urban areas.

Schuler has many goals, including helping assure that senior citizens are protected and cared for in assisted living facilities.

Two other general areas where he will focus are assuring environmental protection for the continuation of fishermen; and helping Florida’s tourism industry.

Among the platforms Schuler endorses, too, is the restoration of the right to vote for convicted felons in Florida.

Schuler said he does not agree with people who think an AR-15 is a gun for any civilians to own.

“What’s the point?” he asked. “If you hunt with it, you’re destroying the game that you killed. And too many people are getting them (AR-15s).”

Another point Schuler made in that regard is that he would not accept money from the National Rifle Association for his campaign.

“People are more important than money,” Schuler said. “Some people put the NRA right up there with God.”

As for being on the ballot, Schuler said he is going to pay the \$10,440 rather than petition with signatures to run.

Schuler said that he is funding his campaign alone pretty much so far, although he is looking at a fundraiser in the future.

Bronson Mayor Bruce Greenlee said in a telephone interview on Thursday (March 1) that he will be glad to help Schuler in his campaign for Congress. Schuler had mentioned that Greenlee said he would cook some barbecue at fundraisers, and Greenlee confirmed that.

Schuler is an active member of St. John Missionary Baptist Church. He is a Christian man.

If he reaches Congress, one of the first things he intends to tell the other member of that body is to remind them all that everyone is human.

“It does not do any good for me to be mad at you and you to be mad at me,” Schuler said. “That’s no good. I think that we should all be human beings and if a bill is affecting the people, and we are arguing about it and never doing anything about it, we are not suffering. The people are suffering.”

Schuler said he will hold strong to his ideals. He will, however, vote for the best action – not straight party.

Every member of Congress, Schuler said, should be working to help all of the people of the United States – not just Republican or Democrat.