



# Manatee Matters

September 19, 2022 Newsletter

*Manatee Matters now publishes twice a month, on the first and third Mondays.*

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Newsletters

## Step Up to the Voter Protection Team

**By Nancy Hughes** – During the August Primary Election, volunteers trained by the Florida Democratic Party (FDP) handled more than 1,000 voter issues at polling sites around the state.

The Manatee County Democratic Party expects more issues to arise during the November General Election period because more people will be voting, and that means the Party needs more volunteers for our Voter Protection Team.



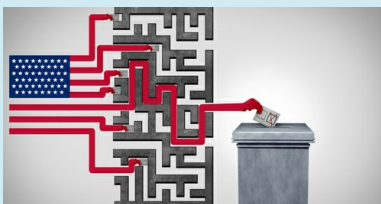
We need Democrats to serve as:

- **Poll Watchers:** These volunteers watch what happens at individual polling places and report any suspected irregularities and potential election law violations.
- **Canvassing Board Observers:** These volunteers attend the county Canvassing Board meetings to watch what happens as the board considers whether to count or reject a questioned ballot and report any suspected irregularities.
- **Hotline (Boiler Room) Operators:** These are volunteers (especially lawyers) who support the poll watchers, resolving issues as they arise.

Online training for these positions is provided by the FDP. For more information, click [HERE](#) or go to <https://manateecountydemocrats.com/take-action>.

Our country's Freedom depends on our right to vote. Sign up today [HERE](#) to be part of the 2022 Voter Protection Team or go to <https://floridadems.typeform.com/to/eB1DoQhN>.

## McManus Says Demographic Shifts Alter Voting



**By Diana Hines** – Major demographic shifts in Florida increase the odds that it may be the most critical and contested state in the upcoming election cycle, with important implications for Manatee County Democrats seeking office.

In a recent presentation before the Longboat Key Democratic Club, Professor Emeritus Susan McManus of the University of South

Florida analyzed these shifts and what they portend for the November election.

Generational shifts underscore the importance of targeting younger voters. McManus pointed out that

Florida's Baby Boomers comprise 32 percent of registered voters while 57 percent of voters are categorized as Millennial, Gen X, or Gen Z.

According to McManus, this younger group rarely reads newspapers or attends political party meetings, preferring to get their information from social media. They share a declining view of the political process and a growing mistrust in the fairness of elections.

Another key demographic is the ethnic/multi-racial population. McManus projects that in the next 20 years, the white, non-Hispanic population will decline by 6 percent while the Hispanic population will increase by 5 percent and the Black population will increase by 1 percent. By 2040, whites will be a minority in Florida.

Nowhere in the country is ethnic diversity increasing as rapidly as it is in Florida, according to McManus. Republicans have been working to suppress the power of the minority vote.

McManus' data suggest that Democratic candidates in Manatee County--Reggie Bellamy (County Commission), Kurt Landefeld (Bradenton City Council), Harold Byrd (Manatee County School Board), and Jan Schneider (U.S House of Representatives)—all face a similar challenge. Each campaign must refine its strategy by "micro-targeting" its message and using varied means and media to bring voters to the polls.

## Bay's Quality and Health an Environmental Concern

According to the Executive Director of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP), Dr. Dave Tomasko, the health and well-being of Sarasota Bay is a quality-of-life issue for Manatee County.



Dr. Tomasko gave reasons why the Bay is so important to nearly 50 persons at the Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus Fall Picnic, September 11, at G.T. Bray Park, Bradenton. He said the Bay provides 20,000 jobs, supports as many boats and gives a \$3 billion financial lift to the area.

Three Democratic candidates participated in the conversations about the environment. Reggie Bellamy, running to retain his seat on the Manatee County Commission, Harold Byrd, Jr., a Manatee County School Board candidate and Kurt Landefeld, running for Bradenton City Council, engaged in the lively discussion. President of the Florida Environmental Caucus, Russ Conn, also attended the picnic.

Dr. Tomasko mentioned water quality in the bay is better now that attention is paid to wastewater overflows. He also informed the environmental activists that sea level is up six inches during the last decade and is rising at an increasing rate.

The Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus meets the second Thursday of the month, 7 p.m., at Democratic Headquarters, 435 Cortez Road West, Bradenton. For more information, contact Ruth Lawler, [ruthlawler@att.net](mailto:ruthlawler@att.net), or Cyndy Rosso, [cynthiarosso032@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiarosso032@gmail.com).



*Executive Director of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP), Dr. Dave Tomasko*



*Food and beverages were provided and Environmental Caucus T-shirts were available*



*Nearly 50 people attended the picnic and informative talk.*

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## Hispanic Caucus Steps Up Outreach Efforts



**By Donna Hartman** – The Hispanic Democratic Caucus of Manatee County is expanding its outreach initiatives this fall to register Hispanic and Black voters and provide them with supportive information on the voting process prior to the November 8 general election.

The caucus was newly formed when the pandemic broke out in 2020, which put a damper on its work. Now, it is stepping up its outreach to voters and looking for more volunteers to join the team and help out.

“We have been recruiting, reorganizing and are slowly growing,” said Pedro Melendez, caucus co-president with Graciela Greenberg. The caucus now has 20 members. Here are some of the caucus’ key initiatives:

**Adoption of Precinct 215**, a district in southeastern Manatee County with concentrated populations of Mexican, Puerto Rican, other ethnic Hispanics and Black residents. “It is a small community with a low turnout of Black and Hispanic voters,” Melendez said. “Some people may not understand the value of getting involved. One of our best strategies is educational activities.”

Some residents, he added, are terrified to vote in elections or go to meetings because of voter suppression tactics, anti-immigrant rhetoric and well-funded, right-wing misinformation strategies. Three canvassers go to Precinct 215 every other weekend, distributing literature, and talking to people about voting and getting involved.

**Tabling at Walmart.** The caucus recently received permission to gather outside Walmart stores at State Road 64 and Cypress Creek Boulevard and at State Road 70 and U.S. 301. Caucus members register voters and instruct people on how to enroll for Vote-By-Mail. Caucus members plan to be at the stores every other weekend if volunteers are available.

**Phone banking** at Democratic Party headquarters or from home. The caucus recently completed calls to 350 families and has nine Spanish-speaking phone bankers, but could use more.

**A civics curriculum in Spanish** is in the early stages of development for young citizens or anyone who wants to learn. The caucus is exploring churches or community centers to offer the classes.

**Helping with needs** of residents in Precinct 215 with food banks, pop-up vaccine clinics as well as internet service and access to computers for school children.

Want to volunteer? Contact Pedro Melendez at [southwinds2@outlook.com](mailto:southwinds2@outlook.com) or Graciela Greenberg at [graciela2@aol.com](mailto:graciela2@aol.com). For information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/HispanicDemocratsOfManatee> or <https://floridavota.com/>

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## Sign And Wave Events Gain Momentum

Sign and Wave events in Manatee County are gaining momentum as the November General Election nears.

The events provide opportunities to promote state-wide Democratic candidates Charlie Crist (Governor) and Val Demings (U.S. Senate), as well as local Democratic candidates Reggie Bellamy (County Commission), Kurt Landefeld (Bradenton City Council), Harold Byrd (Manatee County School Board) and Jan Schneider (U.S. House of Representatives).



Participants in the Sign and Wave movement gather Saturday mornings, 8 to 10 a.m., at the corner of

43rd Street West and Manatee Avenue West in Bradenton. Signs are provided by the Manatee Democratic Party, and participants may bring their own signs. However, organizers Maggie Ozner and Maureen Dardinski do not permit the display of anti-Republican or inflammatory slogans.

"This is to protect the safety of our volunteers as we unfortunately live in a very polarized world," said Dardinski.

The events bring like-minded people together to promote Democratic candidates and remind passers-by that Democrats in Manatee County are actively working to get Democrats elected.

This year's Sign and Wave campaign kicked off September 10 with about 13 participants and is expected to attract more participants heading into the election. Future Sign and Wave events are planned for East Bradenton and Palmetto, as well as an event in Lakewood Ranch. Details on those events will be forthcoming.

Use the Mobilize link to sign up: <https://www.mobilize.us/manateecountydec/event/500491/>

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## Blue Wave Supports Literature Drops and Canvassing

Blue Wave Manatee and Indivisible Manatee encourage volunteers to join their Manatee Democratic Canvassing and Literature Drop efforts in October. All Democrats need to pull together and do what we can to get Democratic voters to vote by mail or make a plan to go to the polls and vote in this crucial mid-term election.



Democracy and all personal rights are on the line. Our vote is our power. Both Blue Wave and Indivisible support neighborhood literature drops and neighborhood canvassing.

Lit Drops mean NO DOOR KNOCKING. Just drop off literature about Democratic candidates to a list of households where registered Democrats live. For Lit Drops, sign up [HERE](#) and you will be contacted with further logistics, materials and a walk list.

Canvassing is all about knocking on doors and engaging with Democrats who haven't voted in previous elections. Canvassers register citizens so they are eligible to vote and sign people up for Vote-By-Mail/Vote-At-Home services. Canvassing is done in neighborhoods that are largely Democratic.

To participate in canvassing activities, contact Dan Coppinger, [dancoppy@yahoo.com](mailto:dancoppy@yahoo.com). Sign up at <https://www.mobilize.us/manateecountydec/event/475568/> or [CLICK HERE](#).

To volunteer for other Democratic initiatives, visit <https://manateecountydemocrats.com/take-action>.

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## Voter Outreach Expands to Thursdays



The Manatee County Democrats schedule literature drops and canvassing every Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m. and every Saturday from 4 to 6 p.m. The goal is to get every eligible Democratic-leaning person to register to vote and enroll in Vote-By-Mail.

The literature drops are for Democratic candidates. Literature droppers will not knock on doors, but simply leave the literature at the door of Democratic Voters.

Canvassing involves knocking on doors to register voters and sign people up for Vote-By-Mail/Vote At Home. Canvassing is done in neighborhoods that are largely Democratic.

Meet at Manatee Democratic headquarters, 435 Cortez Road, Bradenton, for materials and instructions, then go out with a partner. Training is provided. Contact Dan Coppinger, [dancoppy@yahoo.com](mailto:dancoppy@yahoo.com). Sign up at <https://www.mobilize.us/manateecountydec/event/502278/>

[Sign Up Here](#)

## Events Roundup

### **Sept. 19 - Schneider to Address Public Education Caucus**

Democratic Party supporters of public education are invited to the Zoom meeting of the **Democratic Public Education Caucus of Manasota** Monday, September 19, 7:30 p.m.

Jan Schneider, Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress, District 16 is the featured speaker. She is running against incumbent Rep. Vern Buchanan. Also on the agenda is Daniel Kuether, who is running for the Sarasota County Commission. Sign up [HERE](#) for Zoom link.



### **Sept. 21 – Veterans Advocate to Speak at LGBTQ+ Meeting**



This month's speaker, Anthony Hardie, was honored with an invitation to the White House to witness President Biden signing into law the Honoring Our PACT Act. This bipartisan legislation marks a national reckoning with long overlooked toxic wounds and the millions of veterans forever affected by them.

A board member of the LGBTQ+ Caucus, Anthony has long been an advocate for veterans and is the current National Chair and Director of Veterans for Common Sense, an organization that focuses on improving the VA and programs and services for veterans and military service members.

Members will receive Zoom access information near the meeting date. Non-members should send a request to Kent Noel, at [ManateeLGBTADems@gmail.com](mailto:ManateeLGBTADems@gmail.com).

### **Sept. 22 - MCDDBC Facilitates Political Extremism Panel Discussion**



The troubling trend of political extremism will be explored in a panel discussion moderated by Glenn Pearson, 1st Vice President of the Manatee County Democratic Black Caucus.

First you will see a video that directly takes on the issue from a unique and unexpected perspective, followed by a panel discussion and question/answer session. Against the backdrop of Florida's culture wars, this promises to be a spirited event.

The meeting will be held on Zoom Thursday, September 22, at 6 p.m. Click [HERE](#) to attend. Meeting ID is 881 6971 4751 and the passcode is 899873.

### **Oct. 6 - Manatee Dem Club Explores Prosecution Issue**

The **Manatee Democratic Club** will host a talk, *Should Donald Trump be Prosecuted?*, at its October luncheon meeting, Thursday, October 6, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Peridia Golf and Country Club.

Sam Reich, retired assistant federal district attorney of Pennsylvania, is the speaker. He is a MDC member and a club director.

Register by emailing Paul Dain, [pauldain73@gmail.com](mailto:pauldain73@gmail.com). Cost is \$15 payable at the door by cash or check.



**Get involved!** Check out the many area Democratic Clubs and Caucuses. Meet like-minded people at fun events!

[Click for Events List](#)



*The Manatee County Democratic Party is a 100% **volunteer organization**. All contributions of any size are appreciated; \$22/month goes a long way to help elect Democrats in the 2022 elections.*

[Donate Now](#)

### Resource Links

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