



MANATEE MATTERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY



**Manatee County Democratic
Executive Committee**

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*Check our website for
upcoming meetings and
events, voter information,
key issues, information
on our party and more:*

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Manatee County Democrats Launch into the November 2018 Election

The event theme was “Ride the Blue Wave to End the Red Tide,” and the Manatee County Democratic Party (MCDP) event on November 6 was a rousing kickoff to the 2018 elections. The attendance was over 200 people strong as we welcomed Democrats, elected officials and candidates to our headquarters. Music from the Steve Norris Band filled the night air and conversations were lively.



**Ryan Torrens, Candidate for
Florida Attorney General**

County Democratic Chair Sheryl Wilson thanked hard-working volunteers for helping to make the event a success. Candidate for State House of Representatives, District 71, Randy Cooper expressed concern about the influence of special interest groups on politicians. He is committed to bringing the voices of voters and local businesses to Tallahassee.

The Honorable Charles B. Smith, Board of Manatee County Commissioners, District 2, was enthusiastic about the large turnout of Democrats and he encouraged each and every one to step up and run for office.

Ryan Torrens, Candidate for Florida Attorney General, reminded us there is too much at stake and we need to take the state back next year.

David Shapiro, Candidate for US Congress, District 16, said there's something about Democrats and who we are that makes us gravitate to this party. He believes we are the party of candidates and voters who care beyond themselves and their own families. "We have to build America from the middle. You can't do this with 'trickle-down economics' as we've seen play out over and over."



**David Shapiro, Candidate
for US Congress, District 16**

Grassroots Precinct Development—How Democrats Win Elections

Next November's midterm election could be a game-changer for Congress and the Florida state legislature. The Manatee County Democratic Party (MCDP) is ramping up its efforts now to get all Democrats (and Democratic-leaning non-affiliated voters) to speak up, reach out, and join in a grassroots effort that will be critical to next year's success.

The first course of action is to strengthen the party structure at the most local level - in neighborhoods and precincts.



"All politics are local," said Randi Sathan, MCDP Precinct Development Chair. "Since the strongest, most trustworthy messages are delivered one-on-one, we need volunteers in the precincts where they live to help us with outreach and volunteers to adopt other precincts that need extra help."

Precincts are the foundation of the MCDP and are divided into five geographic areas, each comprised of at least 11 precincts.

Precinct Captains Help Get Us Organized

There are 70 precincts in Manatee County, yet fewer than half have a precinct captain. While boots on the ground at the neighborhood level is important, Democrats need to coordinate their efforts to have the most impact. That coordination is done at the precinct level.

"We have developed a detailed, easy-to-follow precinct captain manual," said Randi. "It provides step-by-step guidance so precinct captains know specifically what is needed and how to be effective. The county party is here to help guide people to be successful precinct leaders."

The precinct manual is part of MCDP's growing library of resources to strengthen the ever-so-necessary grassroots effort needed to generate support for candidates and turn out the voters.

Volunteers Make a Difference

For people who would like to help but have limited free time, precinct captains are always happy to have assistance in pulling together identified Democrats in their neighborhoods. These gatherings can be simple affairs with no formal agenda. The intent is to mingle with your neighbors and possibly share your thoughts on local issues.

These gatherings could also provide precinct captains with a venue for collecting contact information from your neighbors, passing along MCDP volunteer sign-up sheets, distributing vote-by-mail reminders, and welcoming new residents who have recently registered as Democrats. If you're not certain which of your neighbors are Democrats, your precinct captain can provide you with a list of registered voters to get you started.

Not certain of the boundaries of your precinct? Visit the Manatee County Supervisor of Elections website at <https://www.votemanatee.com/Maps/Maps>

Interested in learning what a precinct captain does? Read about MCDP Precinct Development at <https://manateecountydemocrats.com/precinct-development>

Ready to volunteer? Contact Randi Sathan at rmsmanateedems@gmail.com.

Manatee County Delegates Get New Insights at FDP Conference



In late October, Democrats throughout Florida gathered in Orlando at the Florida Democratic Party (FDP) Conference to learn how to strengthen our party. Manatee County Democratic Party delegates showed up strong at the conference with the most delegates from our county ever - proving that Manatee Matters.

Neighbor to Neighbor is What It's About

Sally Boynton Brown, former President of the Florida Democratic Party, offered a twist to the famous JFK quote about what you can do for your country. "We need to be talking about communities, not about government. What we can do together for each other? What is the shared responsibility for the community?"

Brown urged fellow Democrats to cultivate more neighbor-to-neighbor conversations. Speaking about "Why I am a Democrat" can be uncomfortable. However, if you develop a personal identity statement you will be prepared to have this kind of conversation anytime, anywhere.

A personal identity statement should

- Be less than 10 words. Think of it as a short "elevator speech."
- Be a declarative statement: "I am a Democrat because...."
- Focus on values and then on the issue that resonates with you. Values articulate why people should care. Too often we jump into debating issues and policies before we express our values which shape our view.

- Be solution focused. Now days it is easy to point what is wrong, so focus on a solution.

Once you have written your identity statement, edit and play with it again and again. Then test it on your friends and family. "You may not get it right the first time," Brown said. If people start to argue with you after you share your identity statement, then maybe the statement isn't quite right.

In the end, this exercise is not about arguing issues. "It's about identifying what we can all agree on and building connections," Brown said. "It's about finding common ground."



Delegates Susie Copeland, Florence Shelton Clark and Carol McCarthy



Above: Manatee County Democratic Party Delegates. Below: Delegate Sandy Gander. Photos by Roberto A. Andreos



Delegate Pat Benson with Julian Castro, former US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development





Coastal Rainbow Forum Premiere

Taking to the Internet “airwaves” in December our LBGTA Caucus is launching “Coastal Rainbow Forum”. Each month four different programs will focus on topics of interest to the LBGTA community, as well as universal issues of climate change, minority and worker rights, affordable housing, living wages, healthcare, and a list that is sure to grow.

The Forum will be available through SocietyBytes global internet network: www.societybytesradio.com.

The December program line-up for “Coastal Rainbow Forum” will feature: 1) an in-depth presentation of the efforts to restore Voter Rights in Florida; 2) a forum with Manatee County Democratic Chair Sheryl Wilson; 3) a look inside the Manatee Progressive Caucus; 4) getting to know PFLAG, an organization of parents, families and friends of LBGTA people.

We welcome your comments and contributions to the Manatee Matters newsletter. Please email:
HQManateeDems@gmail.com

Read on the web at:
<https://manateecountydemocrats.com/newsletter>

FDP Resolutions Make the Party Stronger

For the first time in the history of the Florida Democratic Party, the newly created Resolutions Committee solicited, took input and reviewed resolutions from Democrats around the state. This new process was a concerted effort to seek diverse viewpoints from party members and to strengthen the party by making it a more inclusive organization. The delegates overwhelmingly supported the following resolutions which can be read at <http://www.floridadems.org/statement-of-principles>.



- **Supporting Economic Justice & Prosperity for all Floridians**
- **Supporting the Right to Free, Accessible, Equitable, and Quality Public Education, Investment in Trade and Technical Schools, and the End of the For-Profit Education Industry**
- **Safeguarding the Equal Rights, Inclusion & Protection of All People**
- **Supporting Equity & Reform in the Criminal Justice System**
- **Environmental Justice for All Floridians**
- **Ending Felon Disenfranchisement in Florida**
- **Supporting Voting Rights for all Citizens & Expanding Voter Participation**
- **Keeping Florida's Public Land & Beaches Public**
- **Supporting Home Rule & Opposing Big Money in Politics**
- **Supporting Immigration & Immigrant Rights**
- **Supporting Health Care as a Human Right**
- **Promoting Responsible Gun Ownership & Common Sense Gun Safety**
- **Identifying and Advocating for Florida Veterans & Military Families**
- **Supporting Greater Youth Engagement in the Florida Democratic Party**
- **Supporting Patient Centered Treatment for Drug Addiction Recovery**