

July/August 2019

MANATEE MATTERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY



Triple Play -
Manatee Dems,
Marauders & You!



Saturday, August 24
6:30 pm

Join the fun on the lower party deck with a package that includes game, baseball hat, raffle tickets, food and post game fireworks. Details at <http://bit.ly/2XDizA0>

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Spirits High at Pride Park Community Cookout

Turnout was great, spirits high, food tasty, music fun, and even the rain held off until everyone began packing up. The Manatee County Democratic Party Pride Park Pre-Independence Day cookout met all expectations and proved to be a good model for reaching out to neighborhoods.



County Commissioner Reggie Bellamy and School Board Member Rev. James Golden were on hand to greet the crowd. Besides food, music and fun, the walkway was lined with colorful information tables, including a voter registration station and representation from Democratic

clubs and caucuses. Chair Tracy Pratt emceed the festivities, thanking all the participants, donators and hard-working volunteers who made it happen.

Organizer Leslie Harrell says "I'm really excited about what we are doing with the pre-4th of July celebration. It brings us together not just as Democrats but as a community. It's not just about coming out when we need a vote but it's about bringing people together. It's so important that Democrats acknowledge all communities in Manatee County because we have to be inclusive."

For more photos: manateecountydemocrats.com/our-party



Pride Park Cookout Proves Good Model for Voter Outreach

Planning for the June 29 Pride Park cookout event focused on engaging the community as well as creating a successful event. Volunteers canvassed around the Pride Park area in the Oneco neighborhood (Precinct 415) for four weekends leading up to the event, inviting people to the cookout. From these door-to-door conversations, canvassers collected over 70 voter registrations and 100 Vote By Mail requests.

Leading the effort was community activist Leslie Harrell and Bob McCaa, our new Chair of Vote By Mail and Voter Registration. Says McCaa, “Knocking on doors in the Florida heat is hard work, but the response is very encouraging. We are giving Dems hope when it is most needed. Please remember too that we are empowering a community that Leslie and other Pride Park neighbors will build on for years.” McCaa points out that over 1200 Democrats in Precinct 415 did not vote last November (<50% turnout, <40% for Hispanics). Mel Little, in his bid for County Commissioner in 2018, lost in Area 4 by only 900 votes. High turnout in this one precinct alone could turn the tables in future elections.

“2020 St. Patrick's Day will give us a preview of our success,” McCaa continues. “Democratic turnout in Precinct 415 was 25.2% in 2016 for the presidential preference poll, 12 points below the county average. What we've already accomplished leading up to the 2018 elections has moved the needle one percentage point and boosted Vote By Mails by 15%. If we meet our goal for Precinct 415 and Dems win Florida in 2020, we will carry the joy in our hearts forever!”



Meet and Greet with Florida Hispanic Caucus Tuesday, July 9th

Join us at Manatee Democratic headquarters for drinks and light snacks from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. Hear what the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida is doing around the state and find out how you can help us get a chapter going in Manatee County. RSVP to Graciela Greenberg by text 914-325-0560 or email graciela2@aol.com.



“Mindful Mondays” Start July 8th



Gather at Democratic headquarters 6:30 to 8:00 PM, have some complimentary pizza and learn something new. This is a class series the second Monday each month, meant to provide education on civics topics, such as local and state government, in a casual setting. All welcome. Contact info Anthony Eldon at aeldon@mail.usf.edu.

Manatee County Democrats Support Opening Impeachment Inquiry

The Manatee Democratic Party has voted to endorse a resolution calling on Congress to begin an impeachment inquiry into President Trump for obstruction of justice, abuse of power, and violations of the emoluments clause. The resolution originated with the Democratic Progressive Caucus of Florida and has been ratified by the Sarasota-Charlotte Democratic Progressive Caucus (SCDPC). The Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) of the Manatee County Democratic Party endorsed the resolution at its monthly meeting on June 24.

Tracy Pratt, chair of the Manatee County Democratic Party, emphasized that although various House committees are conducting hearings on potentially impeachable offenses, no formal process to tie these together is under way. “Furthermore, our representative, Vern Buchanan (R-16), has resisted many, many calls from his constituents for an in-person town hall to discuss impeachment proceedings and other matters, and actively shut out members of the public from a recent presentation on the state of the District,” she said.

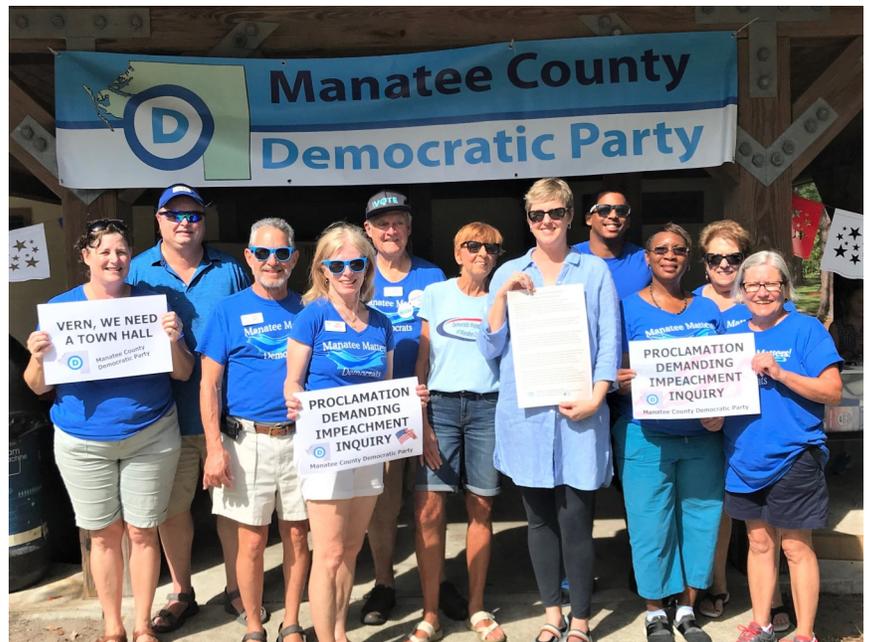
“Why won’t Rep. Buchanan publicly address questions about foreign interference in our elections or potential obstruction of justice by the President?” Pratt said. “The people of Manatee County deserve to know more, and we deserve to be protected from interference in our elections by Russia, a foreign adversary. The integrity of our elections is of utmost concern to the Democratic Party – on behalf of ALL the American people. The proper channel to air and address these concerns is by opening up an impeachment inquiry,” Pratt said.

The resolution reads, in part, “As the president continues to obstruct justice by denying Congressional oversight, and in light of the multiple well-documented incidents that appear to be obstruction of justice laid out in the Mueller Report, to do anything less would set the terrible precedent of Congress abdicating their responsibilities under the Constitution....In addition to obstruction allegations, there is clear evidence that President Trump has abused the power of his office and violated the emoluments clause. Members of the House must do their duty, even if they believe that many Senators will not do theirs.”

The resolution has also been endorsed by the Sarasota Democratic Party. The Florida LGBTQA Caucus, Sarasota Stonewall, and Manasota Young Democrats have also joined the call for an impeachment inquiry.

“Impeachment is the remedy the founding fathers provided for dealing with a corrupt or criminal president,” said Dr. Claire Snyder-Hall, chair of the SCDPC, who presented the resolution at the Manatee Democrats’ meeting. “Our representatives in Congress have sworn an oath to protect our Constitution and our democracy and regardless of party, they should all support opening an impeachment inquiry so the American public can find out what is going on.” - *Barbara Hyde*

For the full proclamation: manateecountydemocrats.com/take-action



Manatee Democratic Caucuses Have Ambitious Action Plans

Manatee County’s Democratic caucuses are chartered by the Florida Democratic Party at the state level. Each caucus focuses on their own issues of interest, and all work in coordination with the Manatee County DEC. Meetings are open to everyone. Find contact information and meeting times at manateecountydemocrats.com



MANATEE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC BLACK CAUCUS

This year the Manatee/Sarasota Black Caucus split into two separate groups, resulting in increased participation and ability to be more focused. Priorities are 1) voter education, 2) voter registration, 3) health in the community, 4) public education, 5) employment, and 6) candidate recruitment. Members of the Black Caucus lobbied in Tallahassee during the 2019 legislative session.

MANATEE DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENTAL CAUCUS

This caucus was newly formed just a few months ago and is already off to a great start with a sizable group. They schedule excellent guest speakers well-versed on a variety of environmental topics and are starting up an Eco Legislative Action Committee. They are planning an Eco Expo for February 2020 at Bradenton River Walk featuring 40 vendors offering environmental education and services, as well as food and music.



MANATEE DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

This caucus promotes progressive actions throughout the county. This year they are focusing on four major initiatives: 1) attainable housing, 2) Protect Our Public Schools (POPS), 3) civics and legal rights education, and 4) voter outreach.

MANATEE LGBTQA DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

Often working hand-in-hand with the Manatee County Progressive Caucus, the LGBTQA Caucus has taken on a wide range of community projects, particularly in affordable housing. They host a weekly half-hour radio program, Coastal Progressive and Rainbow Forum, where guests are interviewed for their perspectives on issues that impact the LGBTQA community. Hear the program at www.spreaker.com/show/coastal-rainbow-forum



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN’S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY

The club’s goal is to further women’s issues and its members are frequently involved in outreach and community projects. They meet monthly for business and fellowship, and to hear talks on issues of interest to women. Rather than being chartered by FDP, the DWC is an autonomous organization that supports the Democratic Party and its platform. Each year, the Manatee County DWC is proud to offer scholarships to deserving young people in our county.

MANASOTA YOUNG DEMOCRATS

The name is just what it implies – young Democrats in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. The Manasota Young Dems took on Tallahassee during the 2019 legislative session with a full schedule of meetings, trainings, and legislative events. Two Manasota Young Dems have been elected to the state board - Daniel Kuether was elected as the new Political Director and Wesley Anne Beggs is now the new President of the Florida Young Democrats.

