

**NEWSLETTER OF THE MANATEE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**


*Thanksgiving is the most American of holidays; it's the one most of us celebrate despite our cultural backgrounds or ideologies. School children still learn that it marks a time when Pilgrims met Indians who helped them survive the winter. In a more universal perspective, it recognizes Native Americans who, despite being wary, gave freely to those who had nothing. At a time of uncertainty and fear in our country, Thanksgiving reminds us -*

*We're in it Together*

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## Introducing MobilizeAmerica

Manatee County Democrats have a new on-line tool for volunteer sign-ups. When the inspiration hits, you can go to [mobilize.us](http://mobilize.us) and search by zip code, city or county on this nation-wide website for Democratic events. Once signed up, volunteers receive reminders and can give follow-up feedback about the event. "With volunteer opportunities ramping up now, everyone, including regular volunteers, are encouraged to use Mobilize America and sign-up often," says Cynthia Metzler, MCDP's new Volunteer Coordinator. Manatee County Democratic events can also still be found on the calendar at [manateecountydemocrats.com/events](http://manateecountydemocrats.com/events).

## Manatee Dems Build a Strong Field Team



With one year to the 2020 elections, Manatee County Democrats had a huge showing of volunteers to kick-off voter registration canvasses and tables. Chair Tracy Pratt and Vice Chair Matt Lepinski welcomed our new Regional Director from the Florida Democratic Party, Adrian Koster. Adrian recognized voter registration successes of the Manatee County Democratic Black Caucus and others, saying the one-year-out goal is to build a strong field team so that voter registration initiatives are happening every day in every part of the county. Lepinski compared the kick-off turnout to the previous level of involvement one-year-out to the 2018 elections, predicting Manatee Democrats have the potential to build a small army leading up to 2020. "It could be transformational in the history of Democratic politics in Manatee County," he said.

## Manatee County Democratic Black Caucus Fundraising Event — Soulful and Unstoppable

A stellar line-up of state legislative leaders addressed a capacity crowd at the Manatee County Democratic Black Caucus fundraiser, along with soulful music, delicious hors d'oeuvres and Democratic fellowship. Keynote speaker, Kionne McGhee, Florida Representative and Minority House Leader, summed up the evening's enthusiastic atmosphere with these words: "United we stand, divided we fall, together we are **unstoppable.**"



## The Truth About Representative Vern Buchanan's Environmental Record

Representative Vern Buchanan's recent media blitz in opposition to President Trump's current assault on the Endangered Species Act sports an action shot of our county mascot, the manatee, one of the species about to be booted off the endangered list. Although Buchanan portrays himself as an environmental advocate, a review of his voting record over the past four years reveals the truth. In what could be coined as "fluff", he has a history of supporting environmental bills that either have no chance of passing, require no funding or contain no regulatory action. This allows him to tout his support for popular pro-environmental issues of concern to many of his coastal constituents in high visibility, low risk ways. They are largely distractions from what actually needs to be done for the environment. The real stuff is his consistently conservative, anti-environmental voting record.

### Red Tide and Water



Buchanan has touted co-sponsorship of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2017 as one of his major environmental accomplishments. What it actually did was relegate red tide and related hypoxia (oxygen deficiency) from monitoring and regulation under the Clean Water Act where the Obama administration had labored to place it, to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) where it is limited to research on mitigation techniques. Under the Clean Water Act the EPA could have established acceptable levels of red tide toxin in coastal waters and moved toward regulating human accelerants of outbreaks such as nutrient runoff from farms and lawns, wastewater and septic tank leaks and phosphate mining discharges.

Buchanan has also voted against every attempt to control water pollution and warming of Gulf waters. He co-sponsored a bill to prevent Obama's expansion of the definition of "waters of the United States" to include more feeder streams and rivers to be covered under the Clean Water Act. Florida's consistent failure to enforce the Clean Water Act is frequently cited by environmental scientists as a major cause of increasing levels of red tide and decreasing fish and marine mammal populations in Florida waters. He has also voted to remove the need for an EPA permit to spray pesticides on navigable waters and to loosen regulations on applying pesticides to water.

### Climate Change

Buchanan's fluff issue for climate change is his opposition to President Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. By contrast, Buchanan has voted for all of the recent Republican-backed bills attempting to control the debate about climate change. A bill that prohibits federal agencies from considering the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews got his yeas vote. He also voted for a declaration that a carbon tax would be detrimental to the US economy. Many economists believe that carbon pricing, a market-based method, is the best way to reduce fossil fuel usage and finance the transition to a sustainable energy economy. Buchanan has voted for every legislative attempt to prevent the EPA from regulating greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and for the repeal of Obama's increased standards.



### Oil and Gas Drilling

This is Buchanan's most favorable environmental issue in Florida as he has consistently supported at least a moratorium on new off-shore drilling leases since shortly after the disastrous Deepwater Horizon spill in 2010. He also supported the newest legislation which permanently bans new leases for much of the Atlantic coast. But this support does not translate to a true pro-environmental stance. He recently voted against a bill which prohibits exploration and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. The opening of this wilderness preserve to drilling has been fought by environmentalists for decades. *(continued)*

## Buchanan's Environmental Record — *Continued*

### Endangered Species

Despite Buchanan's opposition to Trump's threatened decimation of the Endangered Species List, he has no Endangered Species legislation to his credit and has voted against land management bills that would expand protected habitats. More recently he voted for expanding unlicensed hunting on federal lands. He has done nothing to address the main causes of extinction-habitat loss and climate change. Protecting endangered species is a perfect "fluff" for Buchanan, it is a complex and therefore easily misrepresented issue of great concern to many Floridians.—*Jane Sellick, Vice President, Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus*

*The newly-formed Democratic Environmental Caucus meets at Manatee County Democrat headquarters monthly to hear informative environmental experts and form action plans. For information on the caucus and a full version of this article with bill references: [manateecountydemocrats.com/eco](http://manateecountydemocrats.com/eco).*

### Betsy Young — Candidate for State Attorney, District 12

Democrat Betsy Young, a Sarasota attorney, is challenging incumbent Republican Ed Brodsky in the race for the state attorney of the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, which consists of Manatee, Sarasota and DeSoto counties. "The state attorney is one of the most powerful local officers we have," she explains, "who is solely responsible for how crimes get prosecuted, everything from petty theft to homicide."

Young is a former assistant state attorney who has prosecuted thousands of felonies. "In my current practice [with her husband at The Young Law Group] I'm involved with the state attorney's office on a daily basis, and I see that things need to change," she says. "Our area is growing very fast, so we have to modernize our criminal justice system to keep up and to be able to handle an increased case load." She particularly supports using more digital technology and paperless filings. Modernization can help reduce the financial burden on taxpayers, help rehabilitate nonviolent offenders so they become productive members of society, and target serial offenders and those who prey on our most vulnerable citizens, she says.



Another of her priorities is to advocate for victims. "The most important role of the state attorney is to deliver justice for victims," she emphasizes. Young says that at present the office has a "troubling track record" of ignoring victims and is beset by internal conflict and political infighting. "We need a prosecutor who can do the job right," she says.

"I've been working in the criminal justice system since 1998, and another thing that is driving me is concern for public safety," she notes. "I have two daughters and I want to make sure that my kids are as safe as possible." Young serves on the School Advisory Council in the Manatee County district where her daughters are students and is also a mentor with Take Stock in Children.

Young is a former vice president of the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys Sarasota Chapter and is an active member of the Sarasota/Manatee County Bar Association and the Florida Association of Women Lawyers.

The race for state attorney for the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit will be on the ballot in the November 2020 election.  
— *Barbara Hyde*

*Find out more about Young at her website, [betsyyoung.vote](http://betsyyoung.vote).*

## David Fairey — Candidate for Florida State House, District 73

Empathy, compassion, data, logic, reason, personal experience and sound advice. Those are the guiding forces that David Fairey says he will employ when he is elected to the Florida House of Representatives and tackles the complex issues facing the state. Fairey is challenging freshman Rep. Tommy Gregory, a Sarasota Republican, in District 73.



“I come from a business background,” he explains. “When I bid on a contract, I can't list every conceivable issue that may arise on a project. What I do is submit a letter of intent. Here's my intent when I am elected state representative: to fight for working families of Florida, to help them thrive, to make everything around them better.”

Fairey grew up in Tennessee and moved to Bradenton eight years ago. He is a CPA and holds a master's degree in business administration and accounting. He currently serves as the CFO for a global technology company headquartered Sarasota.

“The biggest challenge facing my campaign has to do with reaching as many people as possible,” he says. “There are thousands of new residents in the district, particularly in the eastern section, and many new young families. The biggest chunk are people with no political affiliation. We need more resources to be able to reach them. We need to get our campaign message out.”

Fairey's message focuses on commonsense solutions to the problems facing Floridians. “Our overall message is economic freedom.” By that he means addressing the interconnection of structural changes so that “people have more money in their pocket and their tax dollars are spent wisely.” For example, he believes an urgent issue the state legislature needs to tackle is affordable housing. “We also need to tackle healthcare, because if healthcare is too expensive you can't afford housing. We need to tackle childcare, because if the cost of childcare is too expensive you may have to quit your job to take care of your kids and lose your employer-sponsored health coverage.”

Fairey places the issue of gun safety decisively in the public health bucket. “This shouldn't be a partisan issue,” he says. “The legislature has made changes since the Parkland school shooting. But the new gun laws are insufficient. We need to tackle gun safety at both the federal and state level.”

Fairey sums up his campaign this way: “As a father of four amazing children, I want them to have and inherit a community where we all are as healthy as possible, well educated, and safe from violence and hate – to fight for the brightest future for all.” — *Nancy Hughes*

*To learn more about David Fairey, his campaign, and the issues he is focusing on, visit [fairey2020.com](http://fairey2020.com).*

*Florida's 73rd District for the Florida House of Representatives includes a large portion of eastern Manatee County (both north and south of the river) as well as a large portion of Sarasota County. Florida State Representatives serve two-year terms. All 120 Florida House seats are up for re-election in 2018.*



**Register to Vote**



Voter registration is by far the most important thing Democrats can do now—both door-to-door and tables in Democratic-leaning locations. Developing a strong field team one year out to the 2020 elections can turn the county around. Waiting until July is too late. Sign up for voter registration training at [mobilize.us/manateecountydec/event/147427/](http://mobilize.us/manateecountydec/event/147427/)