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Manatee Matters **NEWSLETTER**

ManateeCountyDemocrats.com

FROM THE MANATEE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

February 2025

The lead story in the February Manatee Matters misidentified the Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) of the Manatee County Democratic Party. Here is a corrected version of the article.

Manatee DEC Elects Slate of Officers

The Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) of the Manatee County Democratic Party elected Brett Thomas chair at its monthly meeting, January 28.



Thomas will lead the county party with the help of the other elected officers – Randi Sathan, vice chair; Randy Cooper, treasurer; and Kathryn Brightbill, secretary. Thomas commented on what he believes the party needs to be successful.

“Our priority must be to rebuild the organizing infrastructure in the neighborhoods and precincts,” he said. “I’d like to have meetings by district and gather all the precinct captains together.”

Other areas of concern, according to Thomas, are: robust fundraising efforts, increase the size and diversity of the DEC, use all the social media resources available to attract younger voters and a sustained effort to focus on close to the people issues such as flooding, insurance and traffic.

Previously, the DEC elected State Committee members: Kaitlyn Danehy-Samitz, Sari Lindroos-Valimaki, Rob Hall, Tsi Smyth, Brett Thomas, and Lewis Wasserman.

Manatee Dems Endorse Petition Drives

The Manatee County Democratic Party headquarters serves as a hub for state constitution amendment petition drives. Information about the amendments as well as petitions can be picked up or dropped off during normal office hours at MCDP headquarters, 435 Cortez Rd. W, Bradenton.

Tables and supplies are available for use at community events. Instruction will be provided. MCDP office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, noon to 4 p.m.

[Read More](#)

Hispanic Caucus Sponsors Immigration Workshop

The Hispanic Democratic Caucus of Manatee County is sponsoring an informational workshop on what the new immigration executive orders mean for Manatee County. The talk is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 13, 6 to 7 p.m., at the Manatee County Democratic Party headquarters, 435 Cortez Rd W, Bradenton. The presentation will also be available on Zoom.



The mission of the HDCM is to bring like-minded people together to actively support and promote causes that benefit the Hispanic/Latino community. New members are always welcome. Text Patricia DeVilliers, 205-790-5866 or visit floridavota@gmail.com for more information.

Indivisible Manatee Plans Informational Workshop



[Sign Up Here](#)

Indivisible Manatee is planning a kickoff workshop to propose action teams to address the era of Trump and prepare for the 2026 mid-terms, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2:30 p.m. at the Braden River Library, Room 102, **4915 53rd Ave., E (Rt.70), Bradenton.**

The workshop will feature information about the Indivisible Action Teams and the opportunity to choose the team(s) that are of interest to you. Indivisible is not affiliated with any political party.

For further information, contact Indivisible Manatee at indivisiblemanatee@gmail.com or follow on Blue Sky, [@IndManatee.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/@IndManatee.bsky.social)

Women's Club Schedules Scholarship Fundraiser

The Democratic Women's Club of Manatee County will have its Scholarship Fundraiser, Thursday, Feb. 13, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Peridia Golf and Country Club, 4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton.

Featured speaker at the event will be Mitch Maley, columnist and senior editor of the *Bradenton Times*. Cost of the luncheon is \$40 per person. For more information and to make a reservation, contact Wini Meier-Oakes at winimo.3@gmail.com.

Clean Water Petition Drive at Cortez Festival

The Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus will have a table at the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival to gather petitions for the Right to Clean Water constitutional amendment drive.

The festival runs Saturday, Feb. 15 and Sunday, Feb. 16, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., on 46th Ave. at the end of 123rd Street W off Cortez Road. Environmental Caucus volunteers will set up with other nonprofits by the Dock Talks presentation near Fulford Dock.

The festival celebrates our community's fishing heritage and includes live music, nautical arts and crafts, children's activities, environmental exhibits and seafood. This event is expected to draw 20,000 people from all over Florida.

The event is an opportunity for Manatee Democrats to become engaged in the community. To be successful, the Manatee Dems need volunteers. Click on the button below to sign up for the day(s) and time(s) you would like to participate.

[**Sign Up Here**](#)

Manatee Environmental Caucus Seeks Members

The Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus invites you to become a member for 2025. For the modest annual fee of \$15 per person, you will join other environmental supporters working to address Manatee County's environmental issues through political and group action, as we learn from experts on relevant topics.



The Caucus also seeks and supports candidates for local, state and national office who understand how important it is to take action to protect our environment. As members, you are encouraged to participate in Caucus committees. Expertise is needed in many areas at the local level, including technology, marketing, educational event organization, membership development and financial record keeping.

Here is the direct link to join:

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/decf_dues_manatee

If you prefer to mail a check, please make it payable to MDEC and send it to Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus, **435 Cortez Road W, Bradenton, FL 34207.**

We also recommend you join the statewide caucus (Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida - DECF) for \$10 per person at the following link:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/decfmembership>.

As a State Caucus member, you provide support for the extensive work being done by DECF to affect positive environmental change, which is sorely needed in Florida. We're recommending becoming a member of both groups this year, to enable participation in local gatherings and events, while also supporting advocacy work at the state level.

For more information, contact Ruth Lawler, Chair, Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus, 941-350-6085; eco.manateedems@gmail.com.

Enroll in Vote-By-Mail Program for 2026 Election

Voting by mail has gained popularity because it is a safe and convenient way to cast your ballot. For many years, Manatee County voters who have voted by mail have become accustomed to automatically receiving a ballot in the mail. However, that process was changed by the state legislature.

Florida voters are now required to make a new request to receive a Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballot for every election cycle, including 2026.

Make your VBM request by visiting www.votemantee.gov/VBM or by calling the Supervisor of Elections at 941-741-3823 and pressing 1.

Request Your Ballot



The Manatee County Democratic Party is a **100% volunteer organization**. All contributions of any size are appreciated.

Get involved! Check out the many area Democratic clubs and caucuses. Meet like-minded people at fun events!

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Headquarters Office

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Hours

Tuesdays - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday - Noon to 4 p.m.
Friday - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Contact us to schedule a meeting



[Visit our Website](#)

Manatee County Democratic Party | 435 Cortez Road W | Bradenton, FL 34207 US

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