



BALLOT BOX

MAY 2026

Candidates to appear at May luncheon



ROCKY ROCHFORD



SHAY WILLIAMS

Florida legislators were called back to Tallahassee for a special session from April 28 through May 1 to address redistricting, vaccines and AI. The timing of this special session makes it impossible for the four state office-holders who were scheduled to speak at the May 1 Belleair Women's Republican Club luncheon to do so. Instead, taking the podium will be two Republican District 14 congressional candidates, Rocky Rochford and Shay Williams, who will be facing off in August's primary for a spot on the November ballot. Florida's 14th Congressional District includes southeastern Pinellas County, as well as western Hillsborough County, including most of Tampa. The seat is currently held by Democrat Kathy Castor, who is running for re-election. Other primary candidates for the seat may arise as the filing deadline is June 12.

Rocky Rochford is a retired United States Navy Captain and Commodore with 33 years of service. He is a native of Scituate, Massachusetts and earned a Bachelor's degree from Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 1985 and a graduate degree from the U.S. Naval War College in 2011. During his Navy career, he led 2,400 personnel, managed \$73 million budgets and oversaw \$300 billion in assets and briefed Congress on critical programs. Prior to retirement from the Navy in 2018, he led the largest military exercise in the Middle East since Operation Iraqi Freedom when Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz.

Rocky is a Christian and a senior advisor to Turning Point USA Faith and is unapologetically pro-life. He supports the Second Amendment as written, opposes offshore drilling along Florida's coast, supports completing the border wall, opposes biological men competing in women's sports and supports banning gender transition procedures for minors.

In preparation to hit the ground running if elected to the U. S.

House of Representatives, Rocky has built nine structured forms across every major community in Tampa Bay. He has also drafted 34 bills that support children and families which he intends to put forward immediately after being sworn in if elected.

Shay Williams honorably served nearly 30 years in the United States military as a helicopter pilot and senior leader in both the U. S. Army and U. S. Coast Guard. Over his career, he flew UH-60 Blackhawks, MH-6 Dolphins and MH060 Jayhawks. Leading crews in some of the most demanding environments imaginable. His missions ranged from air assault operations to medical evacuation, search and rescue, law enforcement and counter-narcotics, always with a focus on protecting lives and completing missions safely.

Shay began his aviation career as a U. S. Army Warrant Officer, earning his wings through one of the military's most demanding flight training pipelines flying UH-Blackhawks with the 82nd Airborne Division. He later conducted life-flight medical evacuations in Hawaii, rescuing both military members and civilians and experienced firsthand the weight of responsibility that comes with flying when lives are on the line. After he transferred to the U. S. Coast Guard, he flew search and rescue missions out of New Orleans and played a key leadership role in the response to Hurricane Katrina, helping rescue more than 90 people during one of the largest aerial rescue operations in U.S. history. For his actions, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The May luncheon will take place at Belleair Country Club, 1 Country Club Lane, Belleair. Check-in begins at 11:30 am, with lunch served at noon. The cost to attend is \$40 per person. Reservations and payment are due to arrive no later than noon on Tuesday, April 21. Mail checks to BWRC, 1350 County Road 1 #57, Dunedin, FL 34697, or send payment using Zelle.

MAY MEETING INFORMATION

Friday, May 1

**Belleair Country Club
1 Country Club Lane
Belleair, FL 33756**

Luncheon Fee: \$40

**Registration & networking
begin at 11:30am.**

**Event begins
at 12 pm.**

To RSVP:

**A \$38 check made payable to
BWRC or electronic payment
is due by April 21.**

**Mail check to:
BWRC**

**1350 County Road 1 #57
Dunedin, FL 34697**

**Scan this code to pay with Zelle
or send via Zelle bank transfer to
bellemessages25@gmail.com.**



**Alternate meal must be
Requested with your RSVP.**

**No substitutions may be made
the day of the luncheon.**

**Reservations and
advance payment required.
Please, no walk-ins.**

MAY MENU INFORMATION

Belleair Salad: Lettuce, Almonds,
Cranberries and Feta Cheese
w/ Balsamic Vinaigrette

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Sliced Pork Tenderloin
w/ Apple Chutney

Garlic Mashed Potatoes
Baby Carrots & Green Beans

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Bread & Butter

+++

Chocolate Cake

+++

ALTERNATE VEGETARIAN PLATE

**Butternut Ravioli in a Creamy
Sauce w/ Sage & Sauteed Spinach**

BWRC is privileged to host meetings and social events at Belleair Country Club. Members and guests must comply with BCC's dress and conduct code. Dresses, skirts, blouses, dress slacks and pantsuits are appropriate for women. Men must wear shirts with sleeves and remove caps in the dining room. Blue jeans are not permitted.



FROM THE BWRC PRESIDENT

Dear Members of Belleair Women’s Republican Club,

The BWRC April meeting with Congressman Byron Donalds was one of our best! He entertained us and informed us of so much that is going on in our great free state of Florida. We are honored to have such a bright, dedicated young man step up and run for office. And I know he enjoyed all of us as much as we enjoyed him. The Congressman was on a tight schedule, but in the end he gave us extra time to answer all of our questions. Thank you to BWRC First Vice President Jessica Reed who worked tirelessly for several months to secure Congressman Donalds appearance. Also thanks to Belleair Country Club staff and Belleair police officers, all of whom did an excellent job establishing service, safety and order.

The BWRC Executive Committee has secured the morning of Saturday, July 18, at Belleair Country Club to invite club members and their guests to an informative program to help everyone do all they can to win the mid terms and the Governor’s election in November. Details about the event will be coming soon. In the meantime, mark your calendars and save the date.

Here is a photo of me and the dedicated security officer, Mark, who greets everyone as they arrive at the country club gate. We spoiled him with a snack basket from BWRC before the April meeting. His smiling face has been welcoming us for years as we enter the property. Please be careful as you pass his gate for your check in ticket. Recently, Mark was hit by a car and did require some medical attention. We are all eager to get in early to get a good seat, but please drive slowly and carefully and be mindful of him. Thank you. We need him. Isn’t it nice to begin a day with such a lovely welcome?



The BWRC meeting in May is on Friday, May 1 the day before Derby Day, which is always the first Saturday in May, the month that also features Mother’s Day. Let’s celebrate all of our Mothers and the Derby by wearing hats to the May luncheon. I will know who reads this newsletter, because they will all have hats on!

Corinne Steinhardt
BWRC President



BWRC OFFICERS

President
Corinne Steinhardt

First Vice President
Jessica Reed

Second Vice President
Carol Abernathy

Treasurer
Jude Zentmeyer

Asst. Treasurers
Janet Cameron
Louise Davis

Corresponding Sec’y
Denise Nye

Recording Secretary
Jo Nichols

Chaplain
Patricia Wagner

Director Communications
Claudia Thomas

Director Hospitality
Carol Hillier

Director Ways & Means
Charlotte Smith

Director Past President
Dianne Blum

Parliamentarian
Louise Davis



LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS

- **Q—I hear paying for luncheons with a Zelle bank transfer is quick and easy and would like to try using it. Are there any things I should be aware of?**
A—Yes, indeed there are! Club treasurers agree with you, Zelle is great, but there are some issues to address. Notes attached to Zelle payments, such as the name of one’s guest or special meal requests, do not appear on the club’s statements. This can cause great confusion! Therefore, when using Zelle to make a payment, please email BWRC Treasurer Jude Zentmeyer at judezentmeyer@gmail.com to let her know the name of any guests and any special meal requests. (IF paying by check, just write the name of any guest you are paying for and any special meal requests on the front of the check.)
- **Q—May I send the club Zelle payments from my business account?**
A—Yes, of course, but please follow up with an email to BWRC Treasurer Jude Zentmeyer at judezentmeyer@gmail.com to tell her the name(s) the payment is for. We don’t always know what club member owns what business.
- **Q—Do I need to cancel my reservation of I cannot come? If so, how do I do that?**
A—Yes, please do let us know if you need to cancel. Just send an email to BWRC Treasurer Jude Zentmeyer at judezentmeyer@gmail.com with that information as soon as you can.

From the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections (SOE):

Are You Election Ready?

- Are you **registered to vote**? State law requires citizens be registered to vote in Florida at least 29 days before an election.
- Polls are open from **7 am to 7 pm on Election Day**. Be sure to allow enough time to arrive before the polls close.
- Do you know **where your polling place is**? Your polling place for a county election may be different than your polling place for a municipal election. Use the "[Find Your Precinct](#)" feature on the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) website (www.votePinellas.gov) to confirm your polling place.
Note: If you have moved, be sure the Elections Office has your new address to avoid delays at the polls.
- Do you have [valid and current picture and signature ID](#)? Be sure to bring the proper ID when voting at an early voting site or your polling place on Election Day.
- Have you viewed your **sample ballot**? Get Election Ready by [viewing your precinct-specific sample ballot](#) at www.votePinellas.gov.
- Is your **address on file current** or have you moved? Call 727-464-VOTE (8683) to make an address change within the state.
- Has your **signature changed**? To update, complete a [Voter Registration Application](#) at [the SOE website](#). Applications may also be obtained and returned at any public library, tax collector office or [Supervisor of Elections Office](#).
- Need to request a **Mail Ballot**? Any registered voter may [vote by mail](#). All requests for ballots to be mailed must be received no later than 5 pm on the 12th day prior to an election. Return your ballot by mail or use one of the convenient drop-off locations available during designated dates and times throughout the county. Check the [Track My Ballot](#) feature on the SOE website to see when your ballot is received by the Supervisor of Elections.
- Are you **Early Voting**? Check [Early Voting](#) days/hours/locations for upcoming elections on the SOE website. (Note: Municipalities and Special Districts are not required to provide early voting for their elections.)
- Do you need **assistance voting**? Bring someone or poll workers will be available to assist you. Florida law requires some paperwork to be completed if assistance is required at the polls.
- Do you know where to find **election results**? Look for a link to "Election Results" on the [homepage of the SOE website](#) to view real-time results on election night.
- Did you **request a mail ballot** and **decide to vote at the polls instead**? Bring your mail ballot kit with you to the polls and ask a poll worker to cancel it so you can vote at the polling place.
- **For Primary Elections:** Confirm or change your **Political Party Affiliation**. Party changes may be made up to 29 days prior to an election by submitting a voter registration application. Go to the SOE website to complete an [online voter registration application](#) or a paper [Voter Registration Application \(PDF\)](#) to change your party. Florida is a [closed primary state](#). **Only voters registered with a political party** are entitled to vote in that party's primary election.
- Visit the [What to Expect at the Polls page](#) on the SOE website for information about using the optical scan voting system.

BWRC member Suzy Sofer honored with 2026 Home Rule Hero Award

The Florida League of Cities (FLC), the united voice for Florida's municipal governments, recently recognized Belleair Bluffs Commissioner and long-term BWRC member Suzy Sofer with a 2026 Home Rule Hero Award for her hard work and advocacy efforts during the 2026 Legislative Session. Suzie worked tirelessly throughout session to promote local voices making local choices by sharing insights, local data, and real-world examples that helped inform state lawmakers and elevate the voice of Florida's cities.

"Local voices matter, and during the 2026 Legislative Session, leaders like Commissioner Sofer made sure those voices were heard," said FLC Chief of Legislative Affairs Casey Cook. "By engaging early, often, and thoughtfully, she helped elevate the municipal perspective and reinforce the importance of local decision-making. We sincerely appreciate

her dedication and are proud to recognize her advocacy on behalf of Florida's cities."

Home Rule is the ability for a city to address local problems with local solutions with minimal state interference. Home Rule Hero Award recipients are local government officials, both elected and nonelected, who consistently responded to the League's request to reach out to members of the Legislature and help give a local perspective on an issue.

"It is a true honor and privilege to serve my constituents and our beautiful community for over 17 years, and I am honored to receive the 2026 Home Rule Hero Award. As a Belleair Bluffs Commissioner, I have always, and will continue to, put the needs of my constituents first. This award is proof of that commitment and dedication," said Commissioner Sofer.

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST BWRC MEMBERS

Maureen Anstey

Barbara Busch

Laura Hughes

Terry Levarn

Lisa Lindberg

Charlotte Mason

Marilyn McLaughlin

Carol Smith

VISIT BWRC.US TO VIEW PODCAST #2 HONORING AMERICA'S 250th & BWRC's 62nd BIRTHDAYS

AMERICA



PICTURES FROM THE APRIL BWRC LUNCHEON



(To see more pictures from BWRC events, visit bwrc.us > Photo Gallery)