



Newsletter

May 18, 2023

Democrats Win in Duval County

Florida is Not a Lost Cause

FLORIDA DEMOCRATS HAVE MASSIVE NIGHT, WINNING MAJOR ELECTIONS IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA'S LARGEST CITY

In the first elections of the 2024 election cycle, Florida Democrats have a huge election night in Republican-leaning Jacksonville.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.-- In the first test of the 2024 election cycle, Florida Democrats posted a huge win with Mayor-elect Donna Deegan in Republican-leaning Jacksonville – Florida's largest city.

In addition to Democratic Mayor-elect Donna Deegan's massive victory in an R +3 City, Florida Democrats also won Property Appraiser Joyce Morgan, and 4 of the 6 Jacksonville Council seats on the ballot, including Jimmy Peluso for City Council District 7, Reggie Gaffney Jr. for City Council District 8, Tyrona Clark-Murray for City Council District 9, Rahman Johnson for City Council District 14.

"Congratulations to Mayor-elect Donna Deegan and all of Duval County's newly elected Democratic leaders!" said FDP Chair Nikki Fried. "For too long, Jacksonville has been led by Republicans who are hell bent on taking away our rights and it's past time that the city is led by leaders with new, fresh ideas who have a plan for Jacksonville.

Tonight's election victories are the result of amazing Democratic candidates and the hard work and dedication of the staffers and the volunteers who canvassed, phone-banked, and ensured that no voter was left behind. It's a new day for Jacksonville and a new day for Florida Democrats!"

Source: Florida Democratic Party Press Release May 16, 2023

[Thanks to everyone in Sumter County who helped secure this important win.](#)

Pride Party

June is Pride month, a time when the LGBTQ+ community celebrates love, diversity, and acceptance. This year we are throwing a Pride Party in Sumter County to commemorate this important occasion.



We kindly ask you to sign up and learn more about this event by [CLICKING HERE](#) to ensure we have an accurate headcount for this event. Feel free to invite friends, partners and LGBTQ+ allies to join us in celebrating Pride Month.

Turn Outrage into Action!

Rally May 27 at Leesburg City Hall



Permitless Carry Will Put More Guns on Our Streets and Make Our Families Less Safe

- Legislators in Florida have passed dangerous permitless carry laws that allow anyone, including criminals, to carry hidden, loaded guns in public with no background checks, training, or permits.
- 73% of Floridians want reasonable restrictions on gun ownership like background checks, permits, and training that keeps our communities safe. Ron DeSantis and the Republican legislature passed this new law against the will of Floridians, in order to appease a small, extreme faction of his base.
- In the age of increased mass shootings and gun violence, including in Florida, removing common sense gun safety measures designed to protect our families is reckless and dangerous.
- Permitless carry will put more guns in the wrong hands, and more Floridians will die. Floridians can't get behind the wheel without a license and proper training—they shouldn't be able to own a gun without it either.
- This legislation is another attempt by DeSantis and the Republican legislators who do his bidding to appease a very extreme faction of his base.

Source: Florida Democratic Party Newsletter, May 14, 2023

Wildwood Fourth of July Celebration



Celebrate the U.S.A., July 3, by volunteering

This annual event celebrates our nation's Independence Day. This is an outdoor family event that has food, music, kids' zone and fireworks at the Wildwood Community Center and Millennium Park, 6500 Powell Road.

Sumter Democrats will participate with our tent, activities for the kids and information for adults. Please sign up for a shift and help us let Sumter County families know there are Democrats here committed to protecting their freedoms.

This also gives us the opportunity to provide voter-registration and voting-by-mail enrollment services.

Sign up here. [Happy Birthday America · Mobilize](#)

Petitions to Place Potential Florida Constitutional Amendments on the Ballot

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INITIATIVE PETITION FORM – VOLUNTEER	
Amendment Information	
Ballot Title:	Legalizes Personal Use Marijuana for Adults Twenty-One or Older, Permits Adults to Cultivate Marijuana.
Ballot Summary:	Legalizes Marijuana for adults age twenty-one or older for personal use, to possess, use, process, transport marijuana, marijuana products and marijuana accessories, permits cultivating nine live marijuana plants per adult with eighteen plants maximum per household. Preserves current medical marijuana law by repealing Note 1 A. of Florida Statute 381.905 3820. Prevents legislature from limiting marijuana Tetrahydrocannabinol percentage. Does not permit selling marijuana. Does not minimize federal law violations.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INITIATIVE PETITION FORM – VOLUNTEER	
Amendment Information	
Ballot Title:	Right to Clean and Healthy Waters
Ballot Summary:	This amendment creates a fundamental right to clean and healthy waters. The amendment may be used to sue State executive agencies for harm or threatened harm to Florida's waters, which include aquatic ecosystems. This amendment defines terms, identifies affected constitutional provisions in Article IV governing the executive branch, provides for civil action enforcement, allows attorney's and expert witness fees to prevailing plaintiffs, and provides equitable remedies including restoration of waters.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INITIATIVE PETITION FORM – VOLUNTEER	
Amendment Information	
Ballot Title:	Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion
Ballot Summary:	No law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider. This amendment does not change the Legislature's constitutional authority to require notification to a parent or guardian before a minor has an abortion.

Petitions are in circulation legalizing marijuana use, ensuring clean water, and supporting abortion rights.

You can link to them below on the Sumter County Democratic Party website.

They can be returned to the address provided, or you can bring them to party headquarters, 300 S. Main St., Wildwood. The office is open 1-4 p.m., Mondays, and 9 a.m. to noon Wednesdays.

Petitions and more information about them can be found here. <https://sumterfldemocrats.com/local-issues/>

Help Returning Citizens to Register to Vote

In 2018, Florida voters approved an amendment to the Florida Constitution that automatically restored the voting rights of felons, except for murderers and felony sex offenders. The following June, the Legislature passed a law (Florida Statute 98.0751/Senate Bill 7066) requiring persons with felony convictions (also referred to as "returning citizens") to pay all financial obligations including fines, fees, costs and restitution before registering to vote.

Source: Florida League of Women Voters Website



The Sumter County Democratic Party is participating in the League of Women Voters Returning Citizen Postcard Project. Our volunteers will be addressing the cards to let returning citizens how they can be helped to register to vote and writing a brief personal, non-partisan message.

Monday, June 5, 1 pm to 4

Wednesday, June 7, 9 am to noon

Monday, June 12, 1pm to 4

Wednesday, June 14, 9 am to noon

If you have good handwriting and would like to volunteer to address these cards, sign up here.

<https://www.mobilize.us/sumtercountydec/event/564397/> Postcards will be written in our Wildwood office. See address below.

You can support this project by donating funds to purchase stamps. Postcards are \$.44 each and a roll of 100 is \$44. To donate, [CLICK HERE](#). THE MORE STAMPS WE HAVE THE MORE POSTCARD WE CAN SEND.

Are you or someone you know a returning citizen and need information about what needs to do to done to register to vote? Contact us or stop by the office during the office hours listed below.

Music Bingo

Tickets are selling fast. Don't miss out.

\$24 for 2024! Music BINGO!

Sumter County Democrats
Let's Have Some Fun!
Join us for Music Bingo
Sunday, June 4th
6:00-8:00 PM
Everglades Rec Center
Music by DJ Ric Mitchell
Tickets: \$24 for 2024! Donation

Join Us For A Fun Night.
Bring Your Friends or Come Make New Ones.
Guaranteed:
You Will Laugh.
You Will Smile.
You Will Sing.
And Just Maybe
You Will Win A Prize!
Let The Good Times Roll.
Come and Support the
Sumter County
Democratic Party
Go To
SumterFLDemocrats.com
To Get Your Ticket

Click here for Tickets

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/musicbingo2023>

Re-enroll in Vote by Mail

Vote by Mail does not automatically renew. **In October Vote by Mail is going to get more difficult. is Sign up now!**

---VOTER ALERT---
ALL Mail Ballot Requests Have EXPIRED!
Secure Your Vote! RENEW NOW!



To Vote-By-Mail in all elections through December 2024:
Sumter County, Florida:
Renew online at [votevbm.com/sumter](https://www.votevbm.com/sumter)
Or Call the Supervisor of Elections Office at 352-569-1540
Elsewhere in Florida:
Find your Supervisor of Elections website and phone# at:
dos.elections.myflorida.com/supervisors/

Why 2.8 million Floridians voted by mail in the 2022 Election:

- ✓ It's quick, easy, and safe – no waiting in line at the polls
- ✓ Vote no matter where you'll be on voting days – working or traveling
- ✓ Insurance against emergency, illness, bad weather on voting days
- ✓ Can review your ballot and decide how to vote at home
- ✓ Drop your ballot at several locations if you prefer that to mailing
- ✓ Can verify online that your ballot has been received & counted

Check your Vote by Mail status at <https://www.sumterelections.org/Voters/Review-My-Registration-Status--Voter-Lookup>

Here is the link <https://www.sumterelections.org/Ways-to-Vote/Vote-By-Mail-Online-Request-Link> You need the last four digits of your social security card or your driver's license number to request the ballot on-line.

Neighborhood Links

Current Neighborhood Links, there will be a refresher session on July 1. Sessions will be at 9:00, 1:00, and 4:00.

Some topics will be the use of Facebook and Resist Bot, collecting petitions, and getting neighbors to VBM, and we'll be asking for feedback about what worked and didn't work as in the Links program. More information about the refresher and a bag stuffing day on May 26 is coming.

We need more Neighborhood Links. Connect with your Democratic neighbors.

Information and training sessions will be held at the Sumter County Democrats Headquarters, 300 S Main Street, Wildwood. Our next sessions are

Saturday, June 3 at 10 AM

Wednesday, June 28 time to be determined

This program is for all of Sumter County, not just The Villages. If you are interested and want to attend an information session, please email Kim Russell at russellkmb@hotmail.com.

We are also looking for precinct captains. They attend monthly meetings and work with Neighborhood Links to inform voters and elect more Democrats.



Volunteer

Help enroll other Democrats in Vote by Mail and sign petitions. We are also looking for members of the following committees:

- Community Outreach Committee
- Data Committee
- Voter Outreach Committee
- Voter Protection Committee
- Legislative Tracking Committee



Go to <https://sumterfldemocrats.com/>

Click on **Get Involved** and then **complete the volunteer form**. If your computer is acting up, give us a call and leave a message at 352.794-1351.

Support Our Efforts with a Donation

<https://sumterfldemocrats.com/>

Villages Democratic Club

If you live in The Villages, please consider joining the Villages Democratic Club. Learn more about their meetings and the club at <https://thevillagesdemocrats.com/>

They also have a newsletter that comes out on Sundays. There are many groups with activities listed there.



Florida Democratic Party Communications Update



After a successful “Stand United” Rally, which various local news outlets covered, the communications team continued to call out Ron DeSantis’ Florida blueprint, highlighting the fact that when Trump was in office in 2018, DeSantis [voted](#) for a budget deal that raised the debt limit without any requirement for spending cuts,

yet now [supports](#) the House Republicans threatening a national default unless harsh spending cuts are included. We [highlighted Rep. Wasserman Schultz](#) as she hit local airwaves touting the Biden-Harris re-election campaign after Biden for President launched a new campaign ad in Florida as part of a two-week, seven-figure buy across key states. And we underscored how Florida is already feeling the [economic impact of DeSantis’ anti-immigration bill](#) before it even takes effect on July 1.

Source: Florida Democratic Party Newsletter May 14, 2023

In the News

DeSantis wants a focus on “classical education.” What does that mean? | Editorial

What’s more important: Wooing campaign supporters or meeting students’ needs?

By [ORLANDO SENTINEL EDITORIAL BOARD](#) | insight@orlandosentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: May 17, 2023 at 5:30 a.m. | UPDATED: May 17, 2023 at 12:03 p.m.

Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Legislature have gotten a lot of attention lately for their often-successful efforts to inject high-emotion debates into Florida education, raising a ruckus over book-banning and attacks on racial and LGBTQ+ students and educators. But there's another, quieter revolution going on — one that is attempting to remake the foundation of learning in Florida to [fit a mold](#) that breaks with most contemporary research into how young people learn and flourish.

The concept DeSantis is pushing flies under the attractive banner of “classical education,” and he's edging it into Florida's K-12 schools as well as colleges (in fact, his takeover of New College promises to replace the school's “woke” focus with classical learning). As the Sentinel's [Leslie Postal recently reported](#), lawmakers have also adopted a standardized test known as the Classical Learning Test, or CLT, as a qualifying test for Bright Futures scholarships in addition to the ACT and SAT. The governor has said he wants to use the same test in college admissions. In the 2022 elections, he also pushed slates of School Board candidates who (among other things) promised to force more classical standards into local curriculum choices.

At first blush, it seems like an appealing direction for schools. Classical programs focus on fundamental skills for all students, taught in a very structured way that emphasizes “great works” of history and rarely strays beyond the boundaries of textbooks. Reputable studies have shown that many students who attend high-quality, classical-education schools do better on standardized tests and sometimes in college. (Ironically, classical education is also in part a backlash against the former GOP priority toward “accountability,” as measured by progress on standardized tests that grew to dominate Florida classrooms in a way that drowned out both classical and integrative learning. Equally ironically, this approach is now being [rebranded as “neoliberal.”](#))

Who could possibly argue with that?

Well, for starters, most of the educational research of the past five or six decades — which has shown that most children learn better when classes stimulate their natural curiosity, and when lessons have relevance to current events and their everyday lives. Classes, especially at the elementary level, often encourage students to integrate skills from one subject to another (one popular integrative model engages students to view science, technical and math-based skills in combination with arts-based lessons, the so-called STEAM approach). There's also a focus on critical thinking and problem-solving skills — which many have interpreted as “woke ideology,” since students often explore current events through the lenses of the skills they are learning.

That doesn't preclude them from studying the classics; many of them take on new vibrance when viewed in a modern light. (Beatrice and Benedick, the couple at the center of Shakespeare's “Much Ado About Nothing,” is one of our favorite examples of this — characters who would be perfectly at home in any modern drama).

But classical education models discourage that kind of integration. They unabashedly [focus on historic Western civilization](#) and rely heavily on rote memorization and facts-based testing.

That leads students to views that are also out-of-date and Eurocentric. Since many of those great texts were crafted in theocratic societies, they tend to be more overtly religious — and the religion is almost exclusively Christianity, which is generally portrayed as tantamount to virtue. The roles of women and ethnic minorities are far less likely to be included in lessons, and there is little mention of marginalized communities. Students are rarely exposed to the perspective of someone who is “other,” through their ethnicity or sexuality.

To read the rest of this article, click here. <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/2023/05/17/desantis-wants-a-focus-on-classical-education-what-does-that-mean-editorial/?share=tpnncacracduetnocae>

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Sumter County Supervisor of Elections <https://www.sumterelections.org/>

Sumter County Democrats

The Mission of the Sumter County Democratic Executive Committee is to achieve an inclusive society by electing qualified and responsible candidates who effectively represent the diverse population of Sumter County, Florida.

Headquarters:

300 S Main Street

Wildwood, FL 34785

[352-794-1351](tel:352-794-1351)

Office Hours:

Monday 1 - 4 PM

Wednesday 9 AM - noon

Email: info@sumterFLDemocrats.com

Webpage: SumterFLDemocrats.com



Your party headquarters is open -- drop on by

The Sumter County Democrats/Villages Democratic Club office is open for YOU.

The office is located at 300 S. Main Street, Wildwood, in a stand-alone building shared with a doctor's office and facing Ace Hardware.

Current hours are Mondays from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m.- noon.

At the office you can:

- Find out more about the Sumter County Executive Committee, The Villages Democratic Club, and other Democratic organizations in the county.
- Volunteer and give money to support Democratic efforts.
- Purchase Democratic merchandise, such as car magnets, notepads, and bracelets.
- Sign and drop off petitions about clean water, abortion rights, and legalizing marijuana.
- Fill out or drop off a card to re-enroll in Vote by Mail.

Calendar

All Sumter County residents are welcome at events listed below.

June 4 Music Bingo, Everglades Recreation Center – see above

June 11 Pride Party – see above

July 3 Happy Birthday, America – see above

March 19, 2024 Florida Presidential Preference Primary

Have a comment or suggestion about this newsletter? Email Laura Goudreau, editor,
at dems_newsletter@sumterfldemocrats.com

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