



Newsletter

October 19, 2023

## A Note from the Editor

Thank you for your kind words about my family emergency. My husband and I had to go help older relatives in the Tampa area. They are doing better. Our laptop died while we were there, so I had a hard time getting anything out. We have a new laptop with all that I need, so I should be fine in the future to get information out remotely. Laura Goudreau

## Cocktail Party

*"We have a great story and we need to tell it"*  
Barack Obama

<p><i>This is our story...</i></p> <p><b>Democrats believe in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Environmental Protection</li><li>*Women's Choice</li><li>*Gun Control</li><li>*Social Justice</li><li>*Racial Equality</li><li>*Public Education</li><li>*Social Security</li><li>*Healthcare for all</li><li>*Voting Rights</li></ul>	<p><b>Join Us for a Private Cocktail Party</b></p> <p>Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm</p> <p>Guest : Florida House Representative Anna Eskamani <b>"Breaking Through the Noise"</b></p> <p>Enjoy heavy hor d'oeuvres and drinks while you connect with neighbors who share our vision for a more inclusive, equitable and prosperous future.</p> <p>Dress: Dressy Casual</p> <p><b>Your support will help fund our messaging campaign</b></p>
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Your financial support will advance a broad-based messaging campaign to  
**"Breaking Through the Noise" and tell our story in Sumter County.**

Tickets are \$200 each. Can't attend? Please consider making a contribution to tell our story.

The link for both tickets and contributions is <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/break-through-the-noise>

## Electing Democrats



Thank you to our volunteers who sent out 1,200 postcards to South Florida in support of Johnny Farias in the Special Election for House District 118 on December 5. For background on this important race, click here.

<https://floridapolitics.com/archives/629006-3-candidates-qualify-for-hd-118-special-election/>

For more information about Johnny Farias, go to <https://voteforjohnny.com/>. To donate, click here.

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

## Thank You to Villages Democratic Club

October 15, 2023

Dear Villages Democratic Club Members,

On behalf of the Sumter County Democratic Party, we want to express our gratitude for your recertification funds that will play a vital role in supporting Sumter County's Democratic values and principles.

The Sumter County Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) is the working arm of the Florida Democratic Party for all of Sumter County. We are a clearinghouse for Voter Advocacy. We help with:

- Voter Registration
- All Voting Processes
- Ensuring all votes are counted

Our voter outreach program to Democrats and Left Leaning NPAs includes texting, phone banking, postcards, canvassing and participating in community events. We are ramping up our messaging campaign to tell our story to voters in Sumter County.

We enjoy partnering with the Club on many activities including "meet and greet" gatherings south of 44, golf cart parades, fundraisers, petition drives and candidate forums. Many of you are part of our Neighborhood Links program, providing information to voters and encouraging voting.

We use Mailchimp to reach county wide voters with targeted emails and our weekly newsletter, which includes information on club activities and promotes membership.

To support the Florida Democratic Party's mission to "Take Back Florida", our voter outreach includes 6 counties without an organized County Democratic Party. Our "Get Out the Vote" effort includes assisting with special elections around the state and we have participated in the League of Women Voter's returning citizens voter registration project.

Our headquarters serves as the Democratic Community Office and is open to all like-minded organizations to use for events, meetings, trainings, and organizing materials for canvassing, postcard projects, Neighborhood Links and other activities. Because of this space, we have been able to host candidate "meet and greets", LGBTQ Caucus events, and regional meetings with leaders from the surrounding counties.

Please know your contribution will be used wisely to support all our efforts to "Take Back Florida".

Forward Together,

The Sumter County Democratic Executive Committee

## Bushnell Fall Festival

This is a fun family event in downtown Bushnell. The Bushnell Fall Festival's "October on the Plaza" will provide quality retail vendors selling a variety of items, compelling informational booths, community minded non-profit and civic groups, kid-oriented games and goodies and delectable food choices for all appetites!

Shifts are 9 AM to noon, noon to 3 PM, and 3 PM to 6 PM

<https://www.mobilize.us/sumtercountydec/event/582792/>



## Blue Crew



Blue Crew, sponsored by the Villages Democratic Club, is headed back to Brownwood on Tuesday, Oct. 24, for music and fun with Democrats

The entertainment will be Chasing Amy, starting at 5 p.m.

Let us know you plan to attend -- and wear blue.

Email [dfdf4242@att.net](mailto:dfdf4242@att.net)

## Golf Cart Parade



Join our One Year to Victory kickoff event Sunday, Nov. 5. Democrats need to make some noise -- and it starts with one of our famous Golf Cart and Car Caravans!

So get ready for a stately procession around Brownwood Square and nearby environs. Once you let us know you plan to ride, we'll send you details. Email Club Communications Director Dennis Foley: [dfdf4242@att.net](mailto:dfdf4242@att.net) Sponsored by the Villages Democratic Club.

## Breast Cancer Walk

Villages Democratic Club President will be leading volunteers

to collect petitions to put abortion rights on the ballot.

Please contact Diane Foley at [foleydiane399@gmail.com](mailto:foleydiane399@gmail.com) to help out.



## Fundraiser for the Holidays

### *Honey Baked Ham Fundraiser*

Having company and don't want to cook?

Let Honey Baked Ham do the cooking and support the Sumter Democrats.



Buy a Honey Baked Ham gift card using our unique link and **20%** goes to the Sumter Democrats.

**It's a Win -- Win!**

To purchase your gift card  
Go to [SumterFLDemocrats.com](http://SumterFLDemocrats.com)

Or click here [https://www.honeybaked.com/fundraising/Sumter\\_Democrats](https://www.honeybaked.com/fundraising/Sumter_Democrats)

## In the News

### Florida spent \$4 million to evacuate 270 people from Israel

ZAC ANDERSON, SARASOTA HERALD-TRIBUNE

October 18, 2023 at 12:28 PM

Gov. Ron DeSantis' initiative to finance evacuation efforts out of Israel is coming with a hefty price tag.

Florida spent roughly \$4 million to [evacuate 270 people from Israel to Tampa on Sunday](#), according to state Emergency Management Executive Director Kevin Guthrie.

"All in all, we're probably sitting right around \$4 million on that particular flight with all of the services, hotel stays, rental cars — anything that we had to get to help the people get back to their homes," [Guthrie told News Nation](#).

The flight from Tel Aviv to Tampa was organized by Project Dynamo, a group formed in 2021 to help evacuate Americans from Afghanistan. Florida paid for the flight, and four others.

DeSantis, who is making a longshot bid to win the GOP nomination for president, issued an executive order last week declaring a state of emergency in Florida following the surprise attack on Israel by Hamas, and subsequent retaliatory efforts.

Read more here. <https://www.aol.com/florida-spent-4-million-evacuate-162809242.html>

From CBS News

### Scholastic book fairs, a staple at U.S. schools, accused of excluding diverse books

BY AIMEE PICCHI

UPDATED ON: OCTOBER 17, 2023 / 2:12 PM / MONEYWATCH

Book fairs run by publisher Scholastic are a staple at schools across the U.S., with the pop-up sales events allowing students to shop for new titles without leaving school property. But now, the company is being accused of creating what some are calling a "bigotry button" that allows school districts to exclude books from the fairs that touch on race, LGBTQ and other issues related to diversity.

Some social media users [noticed](#) last month that Scholastic had carved out a separate category of books for the book fair events dubbed "Share Every Story, Celebrate Every Voice." The collection, which includes books about civil rights icon John Lewis and Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown, among others, allows schools to opt out of carrying the titles in their book fairs.

Scholastic on Friday issued a [statement](#) defending the new collection, saying it took the step because of existing or pending legislation in 30 states that prohibit "certain kinds of books" from schools, such as titles that focus on LGBTQ issues or racism. Grouping books in this fashion is a way to protect teachers, librarians and volunteers from legal problems, or even from getting fired, for providing access to books that violate local laws.

Continue to read here. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/scholastic-book-fair-bigot-button-florida-law/>

View the list of books in "Share Every Story, Celebrate Every Voice" here. <https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/WebVault/SLJ/EDIT23/ScholasticShareEveryStoryCase.pdf>

From the Florida Phoenix

### AG Moody pushes back on abortion-rights initiative; FL Supreme Court to vet language for the ballot

BY: [MICHAEL MOLINE](#) - OCTOBER 9, 2023 6:17 PM

Republican Attorney General Ashley Moody has come out against letting Florida voters decide whether to protect access to abortion in the state, arguing that proposed ballot language is ambiguous about what the citizen’s initiative would do.

Moody, a noted abortion opponent, said as much Monday in launching the standard Florida Supreme Court review of whether the language would mislead voters.

She didn’t reveal much about her reasoning in a note to the court, writing, “For reasons that will be set forth in the brief to be filed with the court at the appropriate time, I submit that the aforementioned initiative does not satisfy the legal requirements for ballot placement.”

But Moody offered more detail about her thinking in [an opinion piece](#) published last week on the Florida Voice website, arguing the word “viability” as used in the proposal is ambiguous. She accused the sponsors of trying to deceive people.

“While I personally would not vote for this initiative no matter what definition of ‘viability’ it was using, I know that to some voters, it is material to their vote – whether you are talking about an abortion in the first trimester or at the end of the second trimester,” Moody wrote.

In her note to the court, Moody noted that the proposed state constitutional amendment sponsor, Floridians Protecting Freedom, had collected one-quarter of the 891,589 signatures needed to qualify for a place on the ballot. At least 60% of the voters would have to approve for the amendment for it to take effect.

As of the [latest update](#), the state Division of Elections had validated well more than that amount with 402,082 petition signatures.

Read the rest of the article here.

<https://floridaphoenix.com/2023/10/09/ag-moody-pushes-back-on-abortion-rights-initiative-fl-supreme-court-to-vet-language-for-the-ballot/>

## Petitions to Place Potential Florida Constitutional Amendments on the Ballot

Petitions are in circulation supporting abortion rights and ensuring clean water. The petition for the legalization of marijuana has enough signatures. Petitions and more information about them can be found here.

<https://sumterfldemocrats.com/local-issues/>

We are a hub for the abortion rights petitions. There are actually more petitions that have been collected than reported in the above article. They haven’t been verified yet. See above for an opportunity to help collect petitions.

All petitions 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.

## Florida Democratic Talking Points

### Israel-Hamas War



Following the October 7th Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel, Israel declared war on Hamas. An invasion of Gaza is expected in the immediate future. On Saturday, Chair Nikki Fried, House Democratic Leader Fentrice Driskell, and Senate Democratic Leader Lauren Book released a [Joint Statement of Solidarity](#).

### **Our communities must stand together to condemn and resist all forms of bigotry, hatred, and violence.**

- Israel has declared a state of war. We unequivocally stand with Israel and support their right to self-determination and self-defense.
- We grieve with the families whose loved ones have been killed or kidnapped in this war and pray for peace and security in the region.

- We echo President Biden’s call for Israel to do everything in their power to avoid civilian casualties in Gaza, and support the UN’s ongoing humanitarian aid mission.
- Yesterday in Chicago, a Palestinian-American child was murdered and his mother was stabbed by their landlord. These are hate crimes, and the Florida Democratic Party joins the Biden administration in a call to reject all forms of hate and bigotry.
- We remember and renew the long-standing solidarity between Florida’s Black and Jewish communities during this time of rising antisemitism and Islamophobia in Florida.

### First Lady Jill Biden visits Florida

On Monday, First Lady Jill Biden visited Florida to address a cancer survivorship summit at Nova Southeastern University and tour military facilities in Brevard County.

**While the Republican Party is focused on self-inflicted chaos, the Biden-Harris administration continues to show strong and empathetic leadership on issues that affect the lives of millions of Floridians.**

- The Florida Democratic Party thanks the entire Biden-Harris administration for their continued commitment to the people of Florida — Dr. Biden is always welcome here.
- Hope is a core Democratic value, and President Biden’s Cancer Moonshot initiative has given Floridians newfound hope that progress toward a cure is possible.
- Dr. Biden’s visit to Patrick Space Force Base and Cape Canaveral underscores the administration’s dedication to Florida’s military personnel and their expanding role in our economy.

### House Republican Caucus Chaos

On September 30th, House and Senate Democrats worked across the aisle to find a bipartisan solution averting a government shutdown. In response, Matt Gaetz threw the House of Representatives into chaos by introducing a Motion to Vacate the Office of the Speaker. The House has been without a speaker since October 3rd.

**Chaos caused by Matt Gaetz and his allies has endangered our ability to respond to crises like the attacks in Israel.**

- Thanks to Matt Gaetz, the House of Representatives has been at a standstill for weeks during a time of global crisis.
- During the budget talks, Matt Gaetz and his supporters were more than willing to sacrifice people’s pantries and paychecks to prove a political point.
- Matt Gaetz dangled millions of people over a cliff for weeks with Ron DeSantis and Rick Scott cheering him on from the sidelines.
- If Republicans elect election denier Jim Jordan as Speaker, Matt Gaetz and the Freedom Caucus will be able to inject even more chaos into Congress.
- Voters can’t trust the Republican Party to govern if they can’t even govern themselves.

### **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/>



Advocate and Author for Gun Safety  
Fred Guttenberg

**Saturday November 11, 2023**  
Wildwood Community Center  
6500 Powell Rd. • Wildwood, FL 34735  
Admission is free  
Sponsored by the Villages Democratic Club

This special presentation at the monthly Villages Democratic Club membership meeting will start at 10 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 11. We moved to a larger location and will be inviting numerous other clubs and organizations.

We need volunteers to help with setting up chairs, taking them down afterward, and to control parking.

Email Club President Diane Foley: [foleydiane399@gmail.com](mailto:foleydiane399@gmail.com)

## Democrats Tackling Real Problems



## Vote by Mail Cards Still Work

Even though we were told there would be a new Vote by Mail form on October 1, there is not one.

We have now been told that sometime in mid-November a form will be released. So, we can still use our cards to sign up for Vote by Mail. You can also enroll in Vote by Mail on-line, at the Supervisor of Elections office, or by calling their office.



**---VOTER ALERT---**  
**ALL Mail Ballot Requests Have EXPIRED!**

**Secure Your Vote! RENEW NOW!**

<https://www.sumterelections.org/>

Here is the link to enroll in Vote by Mail <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.

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

## Upcoming Elections

Important dates for upcoming 2024 elections are contained in the calendar part of this newsletter.

### Who is running?

To see seats up for election, go here. <https://www.sumterelections.org/Elections/Seats-up-for-Election>

To see who is running at the local level, click here  
[https://www.voterfocus.com/CampaignFinance/candidate\\_pr.php?c=sumter](https://www.voterfocus.com/CampaignFinance/candidate_pr.php?c=sumter)

Click here to find out about state and national candidates who have filed.  
<https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/candidates/CanList.asp>

Click on View List of General Election with 2024

*Many candidates at the national level have not filed yet.*

**Are you interested in running for office? Please contact us using information at the bottom of this newsletter.**

## Neighborhood Links

### Be a part of a group making a difference.

Information and training sessions are being held at the Sumter County Democrats Headquarters, 300 S Main Street, Wildwood. **During the last two weeks of October training sessions for new and current Links called Linking up the Old and the New Links will be taking place. Emails were sent with a Mobilize link.**

This program is for all of Sumter County, not just The Villages. If you are interested and want more information, please email Lydia Busch at [lbusch48@gmail.com](mailto:lbusch48@gmail.com).



## 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/>

## Stay Informed





Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SumterFLDemocrats>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sumterflyoungdems/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/SumterFLDems>

Sign up for the email newsletter [SumterFLDemocrats.com](https://sumterflDemocrats.com)

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

Voting Information including registration, vote by mail, and polling locations

## 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](mailto:info@sumterFLDemocrats.com) Webpage: [SumterFLDemocrats.com](https://sumterFLDemocrats.com)

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.

## Calendar

All Sumter County residents are welcome at events listed below.

**October 21** [Bushnell Fall Festival](#), see above

**October 23** [Sumter County Democrats monthly business meeting](#), 4 PM at Headquarters, come find out more about us.

**October 24** [Blue Crew](#), Brownwood, 4:30 PM, please wear blue and email [dfdf4242@att.net](mailto:dfdf4242@att.net) if you plan to attend, sponsored by the Villages Democratic Club

**November 4** [Golf Cart Parade](#) sponsored by the Villages Democratic Club, see above

**January 5, 2024** [Fired Up for 2024](#), fun evening with a meal, Lake Miona Recreation Center

### 2024 Election Dates

**March 9 - 16, 2024** [Early Voting](#), [Presidential Preference Primary](#) 9 AM - 6 PM, Voters can vote at any Early Voting Location

**March 19, 2024** [Election Day](#), [Presidential Preference Primary](#) 7 AM - 7 PM, Voters must vote at their Assigned Precinct

**August 10 - 17, 2024** [Early Voting](#), [Primary](#) 9 AM - 6 PM, Voters can vote at any Early Voting Location

**August 20, 2024** [Election Day](#), [Primary](#) 7 AM - 7 PM, Voters must vote at their Assigned Precinct

**October 22 - November 2, 2024**, [Early Voting](#), [General Election](#) 9 AM - 6 PM, Voters can vote at any Early Voting Location

**November 5, 2024**, [Election Day](#), [General Election](#) 7 AM - 7 PM, Voters must vote at their Assigned Precinct

Have a comment or suggestion about this newsletter? Email Laura Goudreau, editor,  
at [dems\\_newsletter@sumterfldemocrats.com](mailto:dems_newsletter@sumterfldemocrats.com)

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BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.**