



Newsletter

May 30, 2024

Blue Crew Sponsored by The Villages Democratic Club



Blue Crew heading to Sawgrass Grove

We're increasing our visibility and options for getting together as Democrats by adding the Boxcar Stage at Sawgrass Grove to our Blue Crew destinations. Come one and all. No Villages ID required.

We'll start Thursday, June 6, to hear Second Slice.

Let's gather at 6 p.m., to beat some of the heat.

RSVP to Bill Knudson, Club board director: bill.knudson@yahoo.com

Pride Party



For more information and to sign up <https://www.mobilize.us/sumtercountydec/event/625625/>

Voter Protection

There are two types of poll volunteers needed for the August and October elections. Poll watchers are inside the polling place and need to be certified by the Supervisor of Elections. Poll observers are outside watching to see if any situations arise that may need additional action and/or help voters with issue they may have had inside. This election cycle we will be using an on-line form to gather volunteer information and an on-line sign up to select polling locations and times. We need people for both Early Voting and on Election Day. See dates for elections below in the calendar section. In person training will take place in July with day time and evening opportunities. Shifts will be shortened this year to three hours for Early Voting and stay at four hours for Election Day.

We are going to start the process of looking for poll volunteers in June. Not going to be in town in July? We will be having more trainings in the fall. Watch this newsletter for more information.

Check Out Our Instagram

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

Here are some recent posts.

**President Biden
Paid Tribute Memorial Day
at Arlington National
Cemetery to Veterans Who
Died in America's Wars**



Excerpts From Biden's Address

"Freedom has never been guaranteed"

"Every generation has to earn it, fight for it, defend it in the battle between autocracy and democracy, between the greed of a few, and the rights of many."

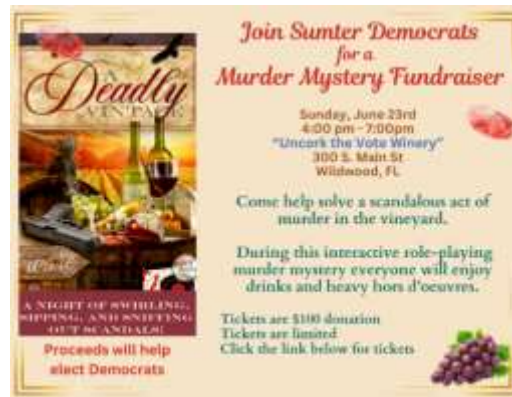
"Our democracy is more than just a system of government. It's the very soul of America."

"On this day, we came together again to reflect, to remember, and above all, to recommit to the future they fought for, a future grounded in freedom, democracy, opportunity and equality. Not just for some, but for all."



Murder Mystery Fundraiser

Be transported to a beautiful vineyard. You will not recognize our office. Each guest will play a major or minor role, which will be sent out prior to the event. You may dress as your character. No acting skills required. A limited number of tickets are still available. Get yours today.



Click here to get your tickets.

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

Day of Action



Our next **Day of Action** Volunteer Door-to-Door Canvassing is **Saturday, June 15**, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We will be in **greater Sumter** registering voters and enrolling registered voters in Vote by Mail. Now is the time to step up. We must do the groundwork now, so we are ready for August and then, of course, **November**.

Please meet at the Party headquarters, [300 S. Main St., Wildwood](https://www.sumtercountyparty.com). We provide a script, maps, and lists of addresses. Never gone door to door? It is not hard. We will teach you.

For more information and to sign up, click here. <https://www.mobilize.us/sumtercountydec/event/599569/>

When we do not have enough volunteers, we sometimes hire local people to help us in our door-to-door efforts.



Knock-Knock. Who's There?
Volunteer. Volunteer Who?
"A Democratic Volunteer with election information!"

Help us hire canvassers to knock on doors in Sumter County and register DEMOCRATS and enroll DEMOCRATS in VBM.

Every \$18.50 is one canvasser knocking on doors for 1 hour.

To donate

Click on the link below

or

Mail your check (Payable to SCDEC) to
Sumter Democratic Party
PO Box 1151
Wildwood FL 34785

The more money we raise the more canvassers we can hire and the more canvassers we hire the more doors we can knock on.

Donate here: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/24knock-knockcvr>

Upcoming Elections

Local candidates are beginning to qualify for the August and November ballots. Want to know who has prefiled or qualified so far? Click here. https://www.voterfocus.com/CampaignFinance/candidate_pr.php?c=sumter

Candidate Qualifying for Constitutional Officers, County, Cities, & Special Districts finalizes June 10-14, so we will know who is on the August primary ballot after that.

Your Local Democratic Candidates



Barbie Harden Hall, Congress
<https://barbieforcongress.com/>



<https://holleranfordistrict11.com/>



Ash Marwah, State Representative

<https://ashfor52.com/>

Volunteer Opportunities

Our incredible treasurer Todd Zelnick is moving closer to his grandchild, so we need a new treasurer. Please call or email us to find out more.

We need to people to phone bank and have additional door to door opportunities. We are also looking for volunteers in the following areas:

Community Outreach

- Data
- Voter Outreach

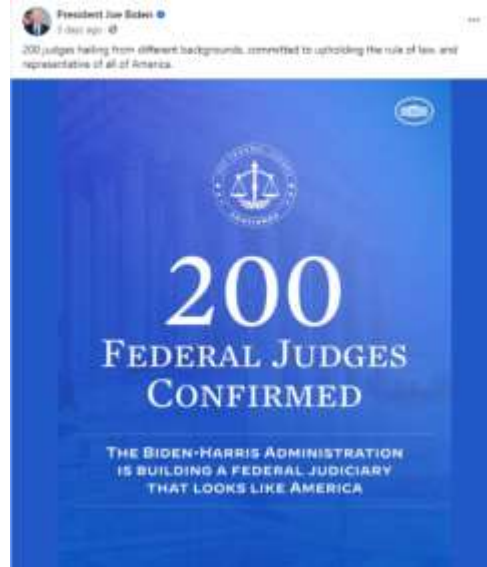


- Voter Protection including poll volunteers
- Legislative Watch

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.

Democrats Deliver



Villages Democratic Club

Our June 8 speaker: Immigration law expert Elizabeth Ricci



In addition to litigation, she has been an expert witness in major court cases and has been interviewed on MSNBC, CNN, CBS, and Fox and has been quoted in The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Washington Post.

Watch her story here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPfoFJX8zBo>

Her focus at our meeting will be:

- What we are missing in the immigration debate.
- Fact-checking Republican claims. -- Dangerous rhetoric about immigrants.
- Florida's anti-immigrant agenda.
- The importance of immigrants to Florida's economy and the nation's.

Colony Cottage Recreation Center,
10 a.m., Saturday, June 8.

It's the economy, again

By most benchmarks, the U.S. economy is among the strongest in the world.

Inflation is down, so is unemployment. Wages are up, so is job creation.

Why, then, do national public-opinion surveys show voters believe the economy was better under Trump (It wasn't) and that President Biden is to blame for current problems such as increases in food and gas prices (He isn't)?

Those skewed views hurt Biden's re-election chances. What can be done?

Turns out the Club has an economics expert: At-large board director Bill Knudson.

He earned a bachelor's in economics at UC-Berkeley and a masters in policy analysis at Carnegie-Mellon. His career included three major banks, and major investment, real estate, and insurance companies.

He's going to help us better understand and explain economic trends, so you can try to have informed conversations with those who care to listen.

He'll briefly introduce himself at our next Club meeting.

Meanwhile, he's building up economic topics information on our website with easy-to-grasp charts, graphs, and text.

Check out the information here. <https://thevillagesdemocrats.com/Inflation>

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/>

Their Sunday email newsletter has many activities and information about other Democratic groups in the Villages.

Sign Up for Vote by Mail



Get your ballot in advance. Vote by Mail is your insurance that you can vote in the 2024 elections. You do not need to use your Vote by Mail ballot if you still want to go to the polls. **Sign up for Vote by Mail today!**

The state has a new Vote by Mail form. You can still sign up for Vote by Mail on-line or call the SOE office. We have request forms at our office. 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>

Register to Vote

Republicans in Florida continue to make registering to vote harder. Voters must send in the form themselves. In the past, we could bring the application to the Supervisor of Elections. Now there is a new form that we did not anticipate. Need to register to vote? Here is more information on how to register to vote.

<https://www.sumterelections.org/Voters/How-to-Register-to-Vote>

From the Sumter County Supervisor of Elections site: NEW TO FLORIDA? DO NOT FORGET TO REMOVE YOURSELF FROM YOUR FORMER STATE'S ROLES. [CLICK HERE](#)

Florida Democratic Weekly Talking Points

May 28, 2024



HURRICANE SEASON

Saturday, June 1 is the first day of Hurricane Season.

While our property insurance crisis rages, Florida is facing what could be one of the busiest hurricane seasons in history.

- As we prepare for what could be an [unprecedented hurricane season](#), Florida Republicans have left our state vulnerable to both natural and economic disaster.
- Last year, [insurance experts warned](#) that a direct hit from a major hurricane could bankrupt Citizens, the state-run property insurance company that currently holds [three times](#) as many policies as it's designed to safely manage.
 - Florida's property insurance rates increased 125% from 2018 to 2023, bringing our costs to [four times the national average](#).
 - The property insurance crisis doesn't just affect homeowners — landlords are passing down higher premiums to renters through rent hikes and increased fees.
 - When asked about solutions to the property insurance crisis last year, [Ron asked Floridians to "knock on wood"](#) and hope that a hurricane would not hit Florida.
- In the 2023 budget, Ron [vetoed](#) over \$13 million in projects earmarked to improve stormwater, flooding, and drainage systems across the state — including over \$1 million in areas heavily impacted by Hurricane Idalia.

PRIDE MONTH

Saturday, June 1 is the first day of Pride Month.

The Florida Democratic Party stands with the LGBTQ+ community and will continue to fight tirelessly for the rights of queer and trans people.

- Over the last year, many of Florida Republicans' most extreme anti-LGBTQ+ measures — including bans on drag queens and the expanded "don't say gay" law — were [overturned](#) by the courts.
- Even still, Ron's extreme policies still shape Florida today — from bans on books and rainbow lights on bridges to restrictions on gender affirming care for both children and adults.
- Florida Democrats are proud to support legislation protecting and honoring the LGBTQ+ community — including sponsoring the first pro-LGBTQ+ bill passed in recent memory, [HB 159](#), which will provide expanded access to HIV prevention medication.
- While Florida Republicans continue to target queer and trans people to score political points, Florida Democrats will continue to fight back against all forms of government interference and discrimination.

ABORTION

Women in Florida are now living under one of the most extreme abortion bans in the country. The six-week ban signed into law by Ron DeSantis went into effect on May 1st.

Florida's extreme six-week abortion ban has virtually no exceptions and puts women's lives at risk.

- The near-total abortion ban is even more extreme because of Florida's mandatory 24-hour waiting period — signed into law by Rick Scott — and a requirement to have two in-person doctors appointments before accessing abortion care.
- [New polling](#) shows that 65% of Florida voters — including nearly half of Florida Republicans — support the right to safe, legal abortion.
- Donald Trump has made it clear that he's not satisfied with overturning *Roe v. Wade* and unleashing extreme abortion bans across the country — last week, he [signaled](#) that he would even be open to restricting access to birth control.
- Florida voters can reverse this extreme ban and restore reproductive freedom in our state by voting yes on Amendment 4 and re-electing President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

RICK SCOTT

Last week, Rick Scott officially [launched](#) his bid to be the next Senate Republican Leader. Florida is ground-zero in the fight for control of the Senate and now the stakes are even higher.

Rick Scott's self-serving agenda would be a disaster for women and working families.

- As GOP leader, Scott would enact a national abortion ban, slash Social Security and Medicare, and raise taxes on working families while cutting taxes for corporations and the wealthy like himself.
 - Scott [supports](#) a national abortion ban and says he would support "[any](#)" anti-choice bill.
 - Scott's signature plan to sunset Social Security and Medicare would spike costs for seniors and families and rip away hard-earned benefits.
 - Scott's plan would raise taxes on the middle class while lowering taxes for corporations and the wealthy, like himself.

Rick Scott is fully behind Florida's abortion ban.

- Now that the ban is in effect, Florida women are living under one of the most extreme abortion bans in the country.
- Florida is ground zero in the fight for reproductive freedom and the fight for control of the Senate.
- Rick Scott is running from his support for the ban, but [take his own word for it](#) — he would've signed the bill into law himself: "[If I was the sitting governor, and the six-week abortion ban came in front of me, I would sign it. I've always said I would sign it.](#)"
- In May, Scott [pledged](#) to "[sign any anti-abortion bill.](#)"
- Rick Scott is hiding because his extreme anti-abortion agenda is at odds with Floridians, [nearly 70 percent](#) of whom support reproductive freedom.

In the News

State investigating Sumter County School District over underperforming students

BUSHNELL, Fla. - A sign outside the Sumter County School Board boasts of it being an "A-rated district."

However, a letter from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) said the district was now under investigation for allegedly taking underperforming students and moving them to so-called "shell schools." Parents outside Bushnell Elementary School said the allegations were disappointing.

"Obviously, that wouldn't be good, that wouldn't be honest. That would be concerning," said parent Mike Brown.

According to a letter from the state, the practice of moving low-performing students to "shell schools" allegedly started around the 2016-2017 school year. It said this was done to remove the students' statewide assessment results from calculating school grades.

Read the rest of the article here. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/state-investigating-sumter-county-school-district-over-underperforming-students/ar-BB1mWBjl?ocid=socialshare>

Florida voucher program for home-schoolers on pace to at least double this year

TALLAHASSEE — A state voucher program that began in the 2023-2024 school year is on pace to at least double as applications roll in from families who teach their children at home in search of funds to make a range of purchases.



What's known as the Personalized Education Program provides voucher money to students not enrolled full-time at public or private schools. The program was established through a 2023 law (HB 1) that massively expanded the state's voucher programs.

Money from the Personalized Education Program can be used to purchase such things as instructional materials, virtual education courses, tutoring and services at public schools. It is provided to students through what's called education savings accounts.

The law allowed for the Personalized Education Program to provide vouchers for 20,000 students in its inaugural year, and the program almost hit its cap, with vouchers for 19,514 students funded.

Click here to read the rest. <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/2024/05/28/florida-voucher-program-for-home-schoolers-on-pace-to-least-double-this-year/?share=nihp0l20s5optonsaoe5>

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 voter 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)



Hours: Mondays 1-4PM, Wednesdays 9 AM- noon, Friday 1-4 PM, Saturdays 10AM to 1PM

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

The office, which is funded by the Sumter County Democratic Executive Committee and The Villages Democratic Club, 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.

June 5 Democratic Breakfast, Panera Bread, Lake Sumter Landing, 9 AM, RSVP Susan Houston: houdem93@gmail.com, sponsored by The Villages Democratic Club

June 6 Blue Crew, see above

June 16 Pride Day, see above

June 19 Democratic Lunch, noon, Havana Country Club, 2484 Odell Circle, The Villages, RSVP Dennis Foley: dfdf4242@att.net, sponsored by The Villages Democratic Club

June 23 Murder Mystery Fundraiser, see above

July 4 Happy Birthday, America, Wildwood, more details to come

2024 Election Dates

July 22 Book Closes, last day to register to vote for the August primary

August 8 Last day to request Vote by Mail ballot to be mailed

August 9 Last Day to pick-up a Vote-By-Mail Ballot, without an Emergency Affidavit

August 10 – 17 Early Voting, Primary 9 AM - 6 PM, Voters can vote at any Early Voting Location

August 20 Election Day, Primary 7 AM - 7 PM, Voters must vote at their Assigned Precinct

October 22 - November 2 Early Voting, General Election 9 AM - 6 PM, Voters can vote at any Early Voting Location

November 5, Election Day, General Election 7 AM - 7 PM, Voters must vote at their Assigned Precinct

The weekly newsletter of the Sumter County Democrats comes out every Thursday at 10 PM via email. It is also posted on our website. Want to sign up for the newsletter. Click here. <https://sumterfldemocrats.com/>
The sign up is at the bottom of the page.

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

PAID FOR AND AUTHORIZED BY THE SUMTER COUNTY DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.