



**MARION COUNTY  
DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



*Democratic Party Newsletter*

**September 2020**

**Tuesday, September 8 General Meeting  
via Zoom Video Conference  
Program: Democratic Candidates**

**DEC Officers**

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**Diversity & Inclusion**

John Moxley

**Programs Coordinator**

Diana Williams

**Technology Coordinator**

John Hickey



**Tuesday, September 8, 2020**

**DEC General Meeting**

**will be held via Zoom Video Conference**

All elected members of the DEC and Club Presidents will receive an email with a link to the meeting. If you know someone who would like to attend but are not a DEC member, please RSVP for the meeting at [lavonda@mariondems.org](mailto:lavonda@mariondems.org) and an email link will be sent. You can join the meeting on your cell phone, computer, or tablet.

**Vote by Mail ballots mailed September 19**

Vote by Mail ballot will be mailed September 19 and should arrive shortly after that date. If your ballot does not arrive, or if you would like to sign up to Vote by Mail, call the Supervisor of Elections at 352-620-3290. It is important to fill out your ballot, sign the envelope, date it **and return it to the Supervisor of Elections as soon as possible.**

Donate or contact us at:

[www.mariondems.org](http://www.mariondems.org)

or

352-402-9494



# *Make a Plan to Vote*

The result of the 2020 election could very well determine if we continue to have a democratic form of government in this country. It is vital that every person who is eligible to vote is registered to vote, and then casts a vote in this election.

Do you have a Plan to Vote?

Do the members of your family have a Plan to Vote?

Do your friends and neighbors have a Plan to Vote?

Making a Plan to Vote starts with registering to vote. October 5 is the last day to Register to Vote for the general election. Here's how to register to vote:

- Online at [www.votemarion.gov](http://www.votemarion.gov)
- At the Supervisor of Elections office, 981 NE 16<sup>th</sup> St , Ocala,
- At any Public Library or Marion County Tax Collector's office, or
- At the Marion County Democratic Office, 970 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave

Once registered to vote, Plan how and when you will vote. In Marion County you have the following voting options for the general election.

**Vote by Mail** from the safety of your own home. To sign up to Vote by Mail, call the Supervisor of Elections at 352-620-3290. When your Vote by Mail ballot arrives in mid September, it is vital that you vote and return it to the Supervisor of Elections as **soon as possible**. Vote for one candidate in each of the election races listed, place your completed ballot in the return envelope, and **sign and date the return envelope**. Your signed and dated Vote by Mail ballot can be returned to the Supervisor of Elections in any of the following ways:

- Mail it as soon as possible after voting, best if mailed before October 1,
- Take it to the drop box at the Supervisor of Elections, 981 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street,
- Take it to the drop box at one of 9 Early Voting locations from October 19-31, All Vote by Mail ballots must arrive at the Supervisor of Elections by 7:00 PM, on November 3 in order to be counted.

**Early Voting** will be available at nine Early Voting poll locations from October 19-31. Early voting polls are open from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM.

**Election Day** voting on November 3 in your assigned precinct will be from 7:00 AM-7:00 PM.



## How Does Vote By Mail work?

### How Do I Get a Vote By Mail (VBM) Ballot?

It is very easy to sign up for VBM. Just call the Marion County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) at 352-620-3290, go online at [www.votemarion.gov](http://www.votemarion.gov) or sign up in person at the SOE office at 981 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street, in Ocala. You may request a VBM ballot up to 10 days prior to Election Day.

### When Will I Receive my VBM Ballot?

Vote by Mail ballots are mailed approximately five weeks before election day, or within a few days of signing up for VBM.

### How Do I Vote On a VBM Ballot?

Review all the candidates and amendments to know how you would like to vote. You may request a sample ballot from the SOE prior to voting. Use a black or blue pen to clearly and fully color in the oval next to the candidate or amendment for which you wish to vote. Do not make any unnecessary marks on your ballot. If you make a mistake, you can request a replacement ballot from the SOE. Don't worry, only one ballot with your voter ID number will be counted.

After voting, place the ballot in the "security sleeve" that was included with your ballot, and place the ballot and the security sleeve in the return envelope.

**On the back of the return envelope, sign your name as it appears on the ballot and add the date.**

### How Do I Return my VBM Ballot?

After signing and dating the back of the return envelope, you may return your ballot several ways:

- Stamp it and mail it back to the SOE, best if it is mailed before October 1,
- Drop it off at one of nine Early Voting polling locations between Oct. 19-31, or
- Drop it off at the SOE office at 981 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Ocala before 7:00 PM on election day.

### How Do I Know my Vote was Counted

You can find out where to vote, check your voter registration status, request a sample ballot, or check the status of your VBM ballot at [www.votemarion.gov](http://www.votemarion.gov) click Ways To Vote; Track Your Mail Ballot; and enter your name and date of birth and the information will be displayed.

## 5 Reasons to Vote By Mail

This November's election is so very important and every single vote counts! Here are 5 reasons to Vote By Mail.

First, voters who receive VBM ballots are more likely to actually vote. Voters have more time to study the candidates and the issue and make their decisions.

Second, it also removes deterrents to voting like long lines at the polls, taking time off work to vote, or arranging for childcare in order to go to the poll.

Third, voters who VBM are more likely to vote for down ballot candidates. The increase number of votes for down ballot candidates can be the winning margins in close elections.

Forth, voting from the comfort and safety of your own home reduces voter suppression tactics at polling locations.

Fifth, when voters who seldom vote register to VBM, they frequently become recurring voters.



## Hispanic Voter Outreach

Mary Ann Lambert, Guille Mejia, Jeanette Ortega, as well as the Latino Club are organizing a Hispanic Voter Outreach as part of the Coordinated Campaign. They plan to have voter education and registration events to encourage all eligible residents to register and vote in the upcoming election. Marion County residents who moved here from Puerto Rico, and meet all the other requirement to register to vote, can vote in the November election. If you know someone who needs to register to vote or would be interested in helping with the Hispanic Voter outreach, please contact Guille at [gem624@gmail.com](mailto:gem624@gmail.com)

## Marion County Veterans Caucus is Recruiting New Members

Marion County registered Democrats who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces and family members of veterans, are invited to join the Marion County Democratic Veterans Caucus. To learn more about the Marion County Veterans Caucus, call Mary Savage at 352-870-2267, or email Bill Sullivan at [Bill\\_as@mail.com](mailto:Bill_as@mail.com) Our local caucus is part of the Democratic Veterans Caucus of Florida. To learn more about the **Democratic Veterans Caucus of Florida**, view their Web site: <http://demvetsfl.org/>

# VOTE!

## Democratic Candidates on Nov. Ballot

Everyone knows Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are on the November ballot but there are also important “down ballot” races that we also need to win. Please be sure to vote for candidates in all of the races listed on your ballot. Here are the Democratic candidates who may be on your ballot depending on the district where you live.

### President/Vice President

Joe Biden/Kamala Harris

### Congressional District 3

Adam Christensen

### Congressional District 11

Dana Cottrell

### Florida Senate District 5

Melina Farley-Barrett

### Florida House District 22

Barbara Byram

### Florida House District 23

Cynthia Dela Rosa

### Florida House District 33

Dee Melvin

## Amendments on the Nov. Ballot

There will be six Amendments to the Florida State Constitution on the November ballot. Amendments with voting recommendations are listed below.

**Amendment 1 (No)** would change the language from the current “every” citizen of the US... can register to vote, to “only” a citizen of the US...can register to vote.

**Amendment 2 (Yes)** would increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2026.

**Amendment 3 (No)** would establish a top two open primary system for state offices.

**Amendment 4 (No)** would require 60% of voters to approve state constitutional amendments in two successive elections.

**Amendment 5 (Yes)** would increase the time period from 2 years to 3 years to transfer Save Our Home benefits to a new homestead.

**Amendment 6 (Yes)** would allow a homestead property tax discount to transfer to the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran.

## **Poll Watcher Volunteers needed for the General Election**

Did you know that the Republican Party is publicizing that they have recruited and trained over 50,000 poll watchers nationwide for the general election? Those poll watchers will be deployed strategically to challenge voter's rights to vote when they go to their polling location.

The Florida Voter Protection Program has asked Marion County to recruit Poll Watchers for the upcoming general election. We will need volunteer Poll Watchers at Early Voting locations during the 13 days of Early Voting, October 19-31. We will also need Poll Watchers at 18 high priority precincts on election day, November 3. Volunteer Poll Watchers will be assigned 4 hour shifts and volunteers can be assigned to multiple shifts on multiple days. Poll Watchers will receive training on voter eligibility and identification required to vote a regular ballot, not a provisional ballot. Poll Watchers are not decision makers, they are our eyes and ears and if a Poll Watcher see something, they notify the Marion County Democratic office. Poll Watchers must be approved by the Marion County Supervisor of Election prior to assignment. If you are interested in volunteering to be a Poll Watcher, please contact our Volunteer Intake person, Kathy Davis at [kathyqdavis@earthlink.net](mailto:kathyqdavis@earthlink.net)



## **Help Us Elect Democrats This Fall**

Enhance your skill set and make a difference in the world!

We're looking for volunteers for the following positions to help Turn Marion County, Florida, Blue and Defeat Trump in November:

- Greeters and poll watchers for the general election\*
- Phone callers\*
- Voter registration assistants\*
- Office shift workers (for 3+ hours/week)
- Events posting lead
- VAN database assistants
- Precinct captains

\*Training required

Contact Kathy Davis at [kathyqdavis@earthlink.net](mailto:kathyqdavis@earthlink.net) for more information.



## Coming to a Location Near You

### Marion County Democratic Party Poster Billboards

In February, Marion County Democrats came together to raise money to pay for nine 10' x 20' poster size billboards that would publicize Democratic messages. The posters will go up on Labor Day and will remain for eight weeks until November 1. Please look for all nine posters with the following messages.

Approximate location	Wording
SW 20 <sup>th</sup> St & SW 27 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Restore Leadership Vote Biden 2020
SR 200 & SW MLK	Save DEMOCRACY Vote Biden 2020
SR 200 & SW 80 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Protect Medicare and Social Security Vote for Democrats
SR 40 & SW 80 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Leadership to unite U.S. Vote Biden 2020
SW 27 <sup>th</sup> Ave & SR 40	Equal Rights, Equal Justice Vote for Democrats
Maricamp Road & Pine	Support <u>Public</u> Education Vote for Democrats
US 27 & US 441	Your Healthcare Matters Vote for Democrats
US 27 & US 441	Restore Integrity Vote Biden 2020
US 441 & County Rd 326	Establish a Living Wage Vote for Democrats

In July, we started placing advertisements in six community newspapers regarding Felon Voting rights, Vote by Mail, and Voter Registration. Advertisements will run through October in the Messenger, Riverland, Citizen, El Annunciante, Mahogany Revue, and the Marion Mirror. Pick up a newspaper and look for our ad.



## 2020 Marion County Coordinated Campaign

Phase 1 of the 2020 Campaign began with virtual phone banking on April 12. The objective of Phase 1 was to call the 30,000+ Hot and New Democrats who weren't registered to Vote by Mail and ask them to sign up for VBM. From April 12 to July 22 we made over 30,000 calls. We also mailed over 16,000 postcards to Warm Democrats asking them to sign up for VBM.

Phase 2 of our campaign started on July 21 and finished on August 17 (day before election day). The objective during this phase was to Get Out The Vote (GOTV) in the districts with primary competitive Democratic races. We called and texted voters in Congressional District 3, FL House Districts 20 and FL House District 23. Here are some key Marion County primary election results:

- **Vote by Mail** Democrats out voted Republicans - 17,220 to 16,334, however there were 12,526 Democratic VBM ballots that were not returned to the SOE,
- **Early voting** Republicans out voted Democrats - 3,935 to 1,338,
- **Election day voting** Republicans out voted Democrats – 18,328 to 4,788, and
- **Yvonne Hayes Hinson is our newest FL House District 20 Representative.**

Phase 3 of the campaign will involve a combination of virtual phone calls and texting for GOTV to Democrats who have never voted, or are not register to VBM. Calls and texts will also be sent to left leaning NPA voters, and Democrats who requested a VBM ballot but did not return their ballot in the primary. The last two weeks before election day, we will chase the votes by calling all registered Democrats who have not yet voted.

VBM ballots will be mailed beginning September 19, 2020. We will be mailing over 22,000 candidate slate postcards to Democratic households with voters who are registered to VBM. Slate cards will have recommendations for Marion County Democratic candidates and the six Constitutional Amendments on the November ballot.

## Ed Explores the Issues: *Cognitive Dissonance*

Cognitive dissonance is the inner tension people feel when they face internal contradictions in their beliefs and/or actions, such as knowing that smoking can kill but continuing to do it. Resolution of the dissonance can come from corrective actions (quitting smoking) or from some rationalization or excuse to justify the conflicting behavior or belief (telling yourself that smoking promotes weight loss).

45 (a.k.a. “he who shall not be named”) has completely overwhelmed his party with cognitive dissonance wherein continuing their support requires frequently excusing actions that contradict their personal and/or party values. Supporting him despite his privileged abuse of women was just a tiny first step. He has driven his contrary influences to unprecedented extremes by associating nearly everything with personal loyalty and demanding that it be absolute – to the point where (until his recent epiphany) wearing a mask during a pandemic was viewed as being disloyal.

The overwhelming torrent of cognitive dissonance that 45 has forced his followers to address has surely taken emotional tolls. The challenge for Democrats is to help his followers resolve these inner tensions in ways that restore engagement of their value systems. One constructive step would be to help promote their self-image by disassociating their rationalized support from their personhood. (Note that this recommendation is contrary to characterizing his followers as “deplorables.”)

A second step would be to help break the linkage between their actions and questions of loyalty. It is not all about him! As often as possible we need to elevate higher purpose into conversations and tactfully enable his followers to see the lameness of their excuses. What is being termed “mixed messaging” needs to be more properly characterized as truth verses lies.

Many of us thought the limit to most people’s ability to rationalize away their personal beliefs in the face of 45’s flagrant assaults against honesty, the sanctity of his office, and our nation’s entrenched values would have been reached long ago. Rather than cling to a hope that it will happen prior to the election, Democrats need to exert positive energies to help set his followers free from their cognitive bondage so that they can vote their conscience.



# September 2020

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|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------|--|
| <b>Sept. 8</b>  | Marion County DEC meeting   | 7:00 PM | Via Zoom, link to all DEC members, others RSVP <a href="mailto:lavonda@mariondems.org">lavonda@mariondems.org</a> get the meeting link |
| <b>Sept. 19</b> | Vote By Mail ballots mailed |         | Vote for all races, sign & date envelope, and return it ASAP   |
| <b>Sept. 24</b> | Veteran's Caucus meeting    | 7:00 PM | Video meeting, email Bill Sullivan, <a href="mailto:Bill_as@mail.com">Bill_as@mail.com</a>   |



## Florida Voter Protection Program

Every vote counts and we want to count every vote. Every effort should be made to vote on a “regular” ballot and avoid voting on a provisional ballot. Best way to do this is to present the correct voter identification when voting at the polls. Voters are required to show current and valid photo ID and signature, usually on a driver’s license or state or federal issued ID card. Two forms of ID may be used if one has a photo and one has a signature. If you see or encounter issues when voting, please call the Florida Voter Protection hotline at 1-833-Vote Fla (1-833-968-3352).