



**MARION COUNTY
DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
Democratic Party Newsletter



December 2020

**Monday, December 7, 2020 General Meeting
via Zoom Video Conference
Program: Organizational Meeting**

DEC Officers

Chairwoman

LaVonda McCandless

Vice Chairman

Mike Davis

Secretary

Bonnie Purdy

Treasurer

State Committee

Richard Perry

State Committee

Joyce Blake

Appointed Members

Coordinated Campaign

Mary Ann Lambert

Diversity & Inclusion

John Moxley

Programs Coordinator

Diana Williams

Technology Coordinator

John Hickey



**Monday, December 7, 2020
DEC Organizational 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 and an email link will be sent. You can join the meeting on your cell phone, computer, or tablet.

Florida Democratic Party Bylaws and Marion County Democratic Party Bylaws require an Organizational meeting in December following the November general election. The purpose of this Organizational meeting will be to elect Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and State Committeeman and State Committeewoman. The agenda for the Organizational meeting is set by the Bylaws and no other business may be conducted during the Organizational meeting.

Donate or contact us at:

www.mariondems.org

or

352-402-9494

DEC 2020 Nomination Committee Report

Committee Members

Chair-Joyce Blake, Dan Lack, Kathy Davis & Jacqueline Gary

Our committee opened nominations to everyone. Someone could nominate a person or you could nominate yourself. We developed the below questionnaire and sent it to all candidates and then summarized the responses of the candidates we are now nominating for office.

Elections will be held at our December 7, 2020 DEC meeting.

Nominating Committee Questionnaire

Name:

Position:

Please respond to each of the questions with concise but thorough answers.

1. How many years have you served as a member of the DEC?
2. Why do you want this position?
3. What background and experience do you have that will help you in this position?
4. What volunteering have you done in Marion County, either with the Democratic Party or any other organizations?
5. As a member of the DEC, have you served in an elected or appointed position? If so, what was the position and responsibilities?
6. What personality traits do you have that will help you to succeed on the Board?
7. How should the Marion County Democratic Party engage with the Democrats in the county?
8. What does the DEC need to do to move forward after this election?
9. Is there anything in your circumstances the opposition can use against you? If so, what?
10. Do you foresee anything that will prevent you from completing your term of office?

Marion County Democratic Party 2020 Nominations

Chairwoman

Chairwoman

Diana Williams is deeply committed to Marion County politics. She has served on the DEC for ten years and seeks the Chairwoman's position to set a stage of inclusion and diversity for all by supporting social and economic equality opportunities for all. Diana is a Precinct Captain for precinct 5. As Program Chair for MCDEC, Diana diligently provided programs to educate and enlighten members by selecting topics that helped to broaden our views, understanding and knowledge of said topics.

Diana is a multi-tasker as a mother of four, she manages a professional career (including 25 years as Financial Advisor), and sits on many Boards of Directors. She has been on board with the fundraisers and all efforts of the DEC, involved with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness, local affiliate and state boards), currently serving on the boards of Salvation Army, Historic Ocala Preservation Society (HOPS), Independent Citizens Referendum Oversight Committee (ICROC) for school board tax, member of Kiwanis since 1991, Ocala Women's Network (OWN), helped start the Democratic Woman's Club, former Supreme Court Mediator, and members of Friends of Silver Springs State Park.

Diana believes that moving forward after this election it is best said by RBG's quote: "Fight for the things that you are about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." She is also of the opinion that we must find common ground, move ahead with compromise, line up qualified candidates to run for office, and engage with more young voters and working groups.

Vice Chairman

Vice Chairman

Michael Davis was elected in January of 2020 to fill the second year of the term of Vice-Chairman. He took on the role of communication with Clubs and Precinct Captains and providing data and charts on the effort to sign up Democrats for Vote by Mail, and tracking the Vote by Mail ballots as they came in.

Michael is seeking the office of Vice Chairman to continue assisting the DEC and Democrats win up and down the ballot and increase the number of Precinct Captains. Mike is a Precinct Captain for precinct 4654. During the eight years that Michael has been a member of the DEC he has restarted the Oak Run Democratic Club, served as President and Board member for the Oak Run Club, and vigorously participated in GOTV efforts. He is also a charter member of the Bridges Project and a Guardian-ad-Litem.

Michael believes the DEC needs to retain and add Precinct Captains who are the core of the Executive Committee, strengthen existing clubs and caucuses, develop more community outreach, and build on the GOTV efforts we developed in this election.





Secretary

Secretary

Bonnie Purdy is seeking another term as Recording Secretary of the Marion County DEC. Most of her 25 years as a member of the DEC have been in the office of Recording Secretary, and she has had enormous experience serving in that role with her church and other organizations in the community.

Bonnie graduated from the College of Central Florida (formerly Central Florida Community College) with honors, receiving Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees.

Bonnie has a rich and deep character and is completely genuine and kind. Her strengths are anchored in her positive attitude, confidence and tenacious work habits. Bonnie is a Precinct Captain for precinct 3670. She is dedicated to democratic values and has contributed enormously to our party, working in various capacities: poll watcher and greeter, sign waver, door-to-door canvassing, Labor Day cookouts and assisting at the local Democratic Headquarters. Now that the election has ended, she wants to reach-out to independent voters in the community to expand our party. Bonnie will do whatever she can to enhance the Democratic Party in our community.

Treasurer

Treasurer

Francine Julius Edwards has deep roots in Marion County as far back as the 1800's. Willoughby Park in Summerfield is named for her ancestors.

Francine's life has been about racial and social justice while living in California and since her return to Ocala. In 2015, she was a Founding Board Member of BRIDGES Project of Ocala/Marion County, which works toward fairness and racial harmony. She fought against the display of confederate flags, she coordinated candidate forums, and she has been instrumental in racial sensitivity trainings. The past few years have found Francine at Legislative Days in Tallahassee where she has established strong ties with current and former legislators.

As TREASURER, Francine brings her experience as treasurer of BRIDGES, as well as her profession in accounting. She currently served as Political Action Chair of our local NAACP, Board member of the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, and Precinct Caption for precinct 3600. As a member of Marion County Democrats for about five years, Francine plans to bring her experience and energy to our Executive Board and a welcoming and inclusive spirit to increase the involvement of young Democrats and people of color.



State Committee

4 Year Terms

STATE COMMITTEEMAN

Richard Perry would like to continue serving as the Marion County State Committeeman. He brings almost 16 years of experience on the State Executive Committee where he has served on the Rules Committee, drafting a new charter and bylaws for the FDP to make the voting system more equitable.

Rick is a native Floridian who has lived in Marion County since 1985. He has served on the Board of Directors of The Centers, the Historic Ocala Preservation Society and the Marion County Bar Association. Rick is a Pro Bono lawyer for Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida, He has represented the poor in cases involving domestic violence, slumlords and children wrongfully taken by the state or kidnapped across state lines.

His involvement with the DEC and FDP also includes chairing the coordinated campaigns at least four times, representing Al Gore in the 2000 recount, attending the 2008 Democratic National convention and representing Ire Bethea and Joe Biden in the recent elections. Rick is a Precinct Captain for precinct 1.

Rick wants the Marion County Democratic Party to grow. He would like the DEC to reach out to the younger generation and recruit local candidates, particularly for non-partisan races.

STATE COMMITTEEWOMAN

Joyce Blake would like to continue working with our local clubs and the Florida Democratic Party in her capacity as State Committeewoman. She has developed an understanding of the workings of the party due to her eight years of experience in that position. Joyce is also the Vice Chair for the State Clubs and Caucus Committee. Joyce has been a DEC member for eleven years.

Joyce has been involved with the Marion County Democratic Party and the state party where she has been the DEC Coordinated Campaign Chair, the DEC Chair, and the FDP Congressional District 3 Chair and Vice Chair. Joyce is a Precinct Captain for precinct 2610. She also worked on the 2008 Obama campaign.

Joyce believes that we need to reach out to Marion County's Democrats including younger voters and Independent voters and we need to register more precinct captains. Those who have worked with her know that she is a team player and a consensus builder.



From the DEC Nominating Committee

The Chair of the DEC has appointed the 2020 Nominating Committee. It is the intention of the Nominating Committee to build a leadership team for the DEC that is supportive of the goals of the DEC, is self-motivated, and has good working relations with others. To familiarize yourself with the details of the DEC, I encourage you to read the DEC Bylaws which may be found on our website, www.mariondems.org, click About Us, and then click Bylaws. We look forward to a diplomatic election and transfer of officers. All questions and recommendation regarding nominations and elections should be directed to Joyce Blake at blakejag90@embarqmail.com. Below is some basic background information on who and how the nominations will move forward.

The Nominating Committee has been established under the Marion County DEC Bylaws Article I. B. 10. The term "Special Committee" shall mean a committee assigned to complete a specific task and is dissolved upon completion of the task or a date otherwise specified. It is not a permanent committee. Article II, A, 4. The DEC shall make party nomination when required by law. See Fla. Stat. § 103.121(a)5.

Article III A.1. The DEC shall consist of four types of members, a. Elected, Appointed, Automatic, and Emeritus.

Article III B.1. Elected members of the DEC shall consist of a man and a woman from each precinct in Marion County, Florida, who are registered Democrats and who reside in, are registered to vote in, and are elected from the precinct they are to represent. They shall be elected by a plurality vote on the First Primary Ballot of each Presidential election year.

Article III B.4. Elected Members shall qualify and be elected to office at such time and in such manner as provided by the Florida Statutes. See Fla. Stat. § 103.091(4); and, FDP Bylaws art. V § 1.1.5.

Article III B.5. Elected members shall take office on the first day of the month following each presidential election and shall serve for a term of 4 years as provided by FDP Bylaws art. V § 1.1.6. See Fa. Stat. § 103.091(4). What this means is only those people that presented their documents to our DEC or Supervisor of Election for the primary election of 2020 are members of the DEC as of November 4, 2020 and will serve a four year term. Additional members may be elected after the December Organizational meeting (election of officers).

Article III D.2. Automatic Members are defined as those registered Democrats who reside in Marion County, Florida and: a. Hold office as president of a duly chartered Democratic club in Marion County, Florida or b. Hold office a president of a duly charted Democratic Caucus chapter.

Article III D.4. Automatic members shall enjoy complete voting privileges. See FDP Bylaws art. V § 1.2.1.

Article III D. 5. Automatic Members shall not serve as Elected Officers of the DEC. See FDP Bylaws art. V § 1.3.1.

Elected officers as prescribed by the FDP are: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer (serving two year terms), State Committeeman and State Committeewoman (serving four year terms)

Article VI.B. 1. No vote shall be taken by secret ballot. See FDP Charter art. I § .4.1.1 For questions regarding proxy voting please read DEC Bylaws Article VI.B. 1.3a –d i.-vi and c.

All nomination to the Nominating Committee will be vetted to ensure all qualification are met and we will recommend a slate of candidates for December elections. Also, if someone has not been recommended by the Nominating Committee they may seek nomination from the floor on the night of election. REMEMBER ONLY DEC members are eligible to be nominated!!!

State of the Marion County Democratic Party

This will be my last newsletter as Chair of the Marion County Democratic Party. I have learned many things (including Power Point) and met so many dedicated and wonderful people, it has truly been a very interesting two years. I would like to share with you some of the achievements we have made together as Democrats.

There are now 84,356 registered Democrats in Marion County, an increase of 4,000 registered Democrats in 2020. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we were not able to engage the public in voter registration activities. Instead, Democrats nationally focused on signing registered voters up to vote by mail. Statistics show that having a vote by mail ballot greatly increases the likelihood that a voter will actually vote. In the November election, 39,282 Democrats voted by mail, with over an 80% ballot return rate. In fact Democrats cast 3706 more votes by mail than during early voting or election day voting combined. More information on our Coordinated Campaign on the next page.

During the past two years, we welcomed 13 new Precinct Captains. There will be 7 new Precinct Captains who will begin their term on December 1, 2020 with many more Democrats interested in becoming Precinct Captains. Mike Davis has been working to better organize our Precinct Captains to become a truly effective force in Marion County.

Our Democratic Party can be a year round presence in Marion County because of the financial support we receive through recurring monthly donations and special events during the year. Since the spring of 2019, we have held 5 very successful fundraisers to include:

- 2019 Proud To Be A Democrat Dinner and Auction,
- 2019 Postage Fund donations,
- 2020 In It To Win It,
- 2020 Virtual Fundraiser with Rep. Val Demings, and
- 2020 Campaign sales.

Altogether, the DEC has raised over \$54,000 in the past 2 years. A tremendous **Thank You** to everyone who donated to our Democratic Party. We are now on a sound financial footing to expand our presence with the goal of electing Democrats to county, state, and national offices.

LaVonda McCandless
Chair, Marion County Democratic Party

REBUILD WITH BIDEN



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2020 Marion County Coordinated Campaign

The election of 2020 is over and in less than two months our country will be led by President Biden and Vice President Harris. An era of intelligent and compassionate leadership will begin for the United States and the world. A special thank you goes to all of our local courageous and self-sacrificing candidates who took up the challenge of running for office and giving the Democrats of Marion County another reason to vote in this election.

The 2020 Coordinated Campaign was a true team effort in the best sense of the word. As Chair, Mary Ann Lambert appointed twelve team leads to work with 426 incredible volunteers. Those volunteers included:

- 200 volunteers who made tens of thousands of virtual phone calls to voters,
- 132 volunteer poll watchers and poll greeters at 9 early voting polls and 19 high priority election day precinct polls,
- 103 volunteers who addressed and purchased stamps for 14,000 Vote By Mail postcards,
- 42 volunteers who sent thousands of text messages to voters,
- 35 volunteers who addressed 25,000 candidate slate postcards,
- 16 volunteers who did Hispanic Outreach and “cured” 56 VBM ballots, and
- 10 volunteers who staffed the DEC office 24 hours/week for 3 months.

Activities of the entire Coordinated Campaign team have let the Democrats in Marion County know that they are not alone, there are Democrats in this county who are willing to step up and make our presence known. The billboards, yard signs, Facebook posts, and our website have proudly shown Marion County that the Democrats are a part of this community. Much work remains, but we have built a structure that will continue to grow with future campaigns to achieve our mission of “uniting and electing Democrats to office”.

Ed Explores Issues: *Conservative Justice (?)*

The far right's power-and-greed agenda cannot succeed without "conservative" courts that empower their elitist schemes. Packing the judiciary thusly is so vital to their cause that it is the sole reason so many conservatives tolerate Trump's bungling narcissism. The conservative philosophy is portrayed like "motherhood and apple pie"; who could be against smaller government, free enterprise, and strict adherence to our Constitution? As with so much else, such characterizations belie more perverse intentions. Here are three aspirations exposed:

Preserve Elitist Supremacy: One tactic aimed at preserving elitist supremacy is claiming religious freedoms in order to discriminate against the marginalized and to prevent women from controlling their own bodies – effectively taking away religious freedoms of those with differing beliefs. Reducing government support for public education and healthcare helps suppress non-elites while opening the doors for profiteering and exploitation. Also in their crosshairs for suppression are birthright and other paths to citizenship, raising the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, comprehensive census counts, and increased childcare funding.

Minimize Government's Role: Government regulations are society's defined limits for pillaging, profiteering and exploitation. The fewer and weaker the regulations, and the lesser the enforcement, the more the barons can get away with. A very narrow interpretation of our Constitution limits government's ability to regulate what our visionary founders could never have foreseen – like the internet and like single-shot black-powder guns evolving into mass killing machines. Restricting government's reach through whatever means possible, especially involving finance and the environment, furthers their greed-driven agenda.

Perpetuate Elitist Control: A host of voter suppression tactics seek to inhibit black, brown, young and poor voters. Gerrymandering of voting districts enables people with minority views to outweigh majority views. The Citizens United ruling awarded undue influence in elections to money and special interests. Conservatives further suppress the will of voters by restrictive interpretations of legislation like the Voting Rights Bill and Florida's constitutional amendment to restore voting rights to ex-felons.

The right-bias of the courts is so extreme and non-representative that Democrats must seriously consider watering down conservatives' undue judicial influence. Let's all help support and promote Democrat candidates in the upcoming Georgia election so advances such as these can be accomplished.



December 2020

Dec. 7	Organizational Meeting	7:00 PM	Via Zoom, link to all DEC members, others RSVP lavonda@mariondems.org get the meeting link
Dec 17	Veteran's Caucus meeting	7:00 PM	Video meeting, email Bill Sullivan, Bill_as@mail.com