

Supporting the Local Food Economy

BY JOYCE NORRIS

Registration opens October 1st for Eat Local Week 2022 events! Transition Sarasota, a non-profit that works to provide food and economic security by supporting sustainable local sources, organizes the festivities each year. Eat Local Week 2022 will be held from **October 21 to October 28**. The theme this year is "Locally Rooted - Globally Connected". The festival will feature engaging educational events to showcase and build community around our region's thriving local food economy.

Eat local Week festivities begin October 21 with a kickoff keynote presentation by Chef Kaytlin Danganan at the Sarasota Art Museum. Danganan, a Tampa native, trained at the French Culinary Institute in Manhattan. She has worked in restaurants in New York, San Francisco, and Miami and is now executive Chef and General Manager of Bistro, located at the Sarasota Art Museum. She will speak about her passion for cooking and the importance of supporting our local food system through the use of fresh, seasonal, local ingredients. In the days that follow, there will be a diverse array of events.

Does an educational tour inspire you? - The

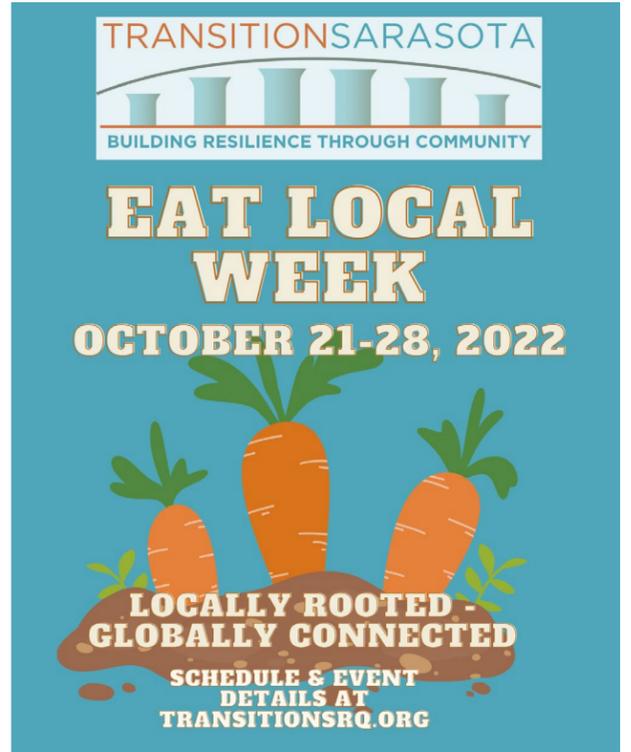
Siesta Key Rum, Mote Aquaculture Research Park, Operation EcoVets farm, and Food Forest Tour at Caples Garden will be your ticket.

Looking for a cooking experience? Then you will love the Preparing & Cooking Jackfruit class with Happy Soul, and the Cooking with Scraps & Composting class with local chef Alyson Zildjian of Zildjian Catering followed by a composting lesson with Sunshine Community Compost. Culinary students shine at the Boys & Girls Club Culinary Student Prepared Appetizers event.

Hoping to learn something new? The Medicinal and Edible Plant Walk with Bob Linde, and Food Photography Class with local pro Kathryn Brass-Piper are a fun way to learn.

Eat Local Week events have limited space so please reserve in advance. Full details about all the events and how to register can be found at www.TransitionSRQ.org/eatlocalweek.

Transition Sarasota's main initiatives are the annual Eat Local Week and the Suncoast Gleaning Project, which organizes volunteers to harvest excess produce from local farms to donate to local food banks. The Gleaning Project has provided more than 482,000 pounds of fresh produce to those in need in



our community since the program launched in 2010.

Transition Sarasota is still accepting sponsors for this year's Eat local Week. Please reach out to Exec@Transitionsrq.org.

An Inside View: Local Charter Amendments

BY CATHY ANTUNES

Along with important elections for Governor, State Legislature and County and City Commissioners, our local constitutions are on the November ballot. City Charter Amendments have been advertised, and the County Commission has also voted to put a County Charter Amendment on the November ballot. Here is a review and my take on these amendments. The City Charter amendments are in no particular order. At the time of this writing the ballot order is unknown.

Having served on the City's Charter Review Committee (CRC), I expected this article to be a pretty straightforward undertaking. But, I am surprised (not in a good way) by the final version of some of the proposed City Charter amendments. I'll start with the most concerning.

Proposed amendment to provide that City Commission may change city boundaries consistent

with law; to allow for digital posting of ordinances and resolutions at City Hall; to remove reference to retention or ordinances in a book; and to update powers and duties of City Auditor and Clerk, including audit function, as provided in Ordinance 22-5419 including responsibility for access to public records and Commission agenda preparation.

This amendment broadly expands the City Auditor and Clerk's function from a focus on finances and records ("Audit of Accounts") to a sweeping "Audit Function".

The current language in Article VI, section 6 of the City Charter reads:

Sec. 6. Audit of accounts.

At the end of each fiscal year or more often as required by the city commission, the city auditor and clerk shall audit any accounts and records of the departments, officers and employees and all other accounts and records in which the city is interested. He/she shall at all times have access to and may inspect and make copies of all records relating to the receipt or expenditure of money on account with the city and of all vouchers, accounts, bills, warrants, drafts, contracts or other

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

Nov. 8, 2022
General Election

Tuesday, October 11
Voter Registration Deadline

Monday, Oct. 24 - Sunday, Nov. 6
Early Voting

Saturday, Oct. 29, 5pm
Deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot

Tuesday, Nov. 8th
Election day, polls open 7 am - 7 pm

papers relating thereto.

The proposed change to the Charter (which you won't see on your ballot) would replace "Audit of accounts" with the following "Audit function":

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Celebrate the Opening of our Newly Renovated Patio!

Music by Soul Purpose, Strangeways, and Saxman Duane Freeman

October 16, 4-9pm

IN A PICKLE
A STREET FOOD BELL

FOOD

FUN

FREE

Chill Mobile
ICE CREAM & TREATS



Fighting for Gun Safety

BY CAROL CONYNE RESCIGNO

Brady Sarasota is preparing to kickstart the 2022-23 year with its fall meeting on Thursday, October 20 at 4 pm in the Oasis Center at First Congregational UCC, 1031 S Euclid Ave. On the agenda will be upcoming state and national legislation, with emphasis on letting our legislators know that we oppose the permitless carry of weapons in Florida and favor an assault weapons ban nationally.

The following Thursday, October 27, Brady will start up its weekly 4 pm rallies at the Sarasota Bayfront. All are encouraged to attend when possible and newcomers are especially welcome. The rallies, which take place most Thursdays into May, are at the southernmost end of the Bayfront parking lot in front of Bayfront Park and O’Leary’s and along U.S. 41. Look for the yellow signs!

The sixth annual Vigil for Victims of Gun Violence will be held on Friday, December 9, at 6 pm at First Congregational UCC. The program, including speakers, will be announced closer to the vigil.

Brady, the granddaddy of the Gun Violence Prevention movements, evolved from a group that



started in 1974 to control handguns. In 1981, when President Reagan was shot, his press secretary, Jim Brady, was seriously wounded with lifelong injuries. His wife, Sarah, started working with the original group, which eventually took the name Brady. In addition to the national staff based in

Washington, Brady has grassroots chapters across the country. Sarasota has had the largest Florida chapter for some time.

Brady works across Congress, the courts and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike, to take action, not sides, and end America’s gun violence epidemic.



Critical Times is a publication of WSLR, Inc.

MISSION:

WSLR+Fogartyville is a center for creative expression and community engagement that amplifies the voices of our diverse community and promotes peace, sustainability, democracy and economic and social justice.

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The Manhattan Transfer



10 Grammy Awards
20 Nominations



also appearing Special Guest **Liston Gregory III**

October 21st
Sailor Circus Arena
Sarasota

Ticket Information
www.jazzclubsarasota.org

Presenting Sponsor



Bobbi and Will Lorry

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For more information, email
CriticalTimesSRQ@gmail.com

Locals Organize to Save Old Miakka

BY JOHANNES WERNER

The developers of Lakewood Ranch want to expand into rural east Sarasota County. To maximize their profit, SMR Communities asked for — and was granted on Aug. 31 by the Sarasota County Commission — a completely new type of zoning that allows them to duplicate the pattern of sprawl that is already covering much of east Manatee County.

The approval process for Lakewood Ranch Southeast, planned to replace 4,100 acres of pasture land with up to 5,000 luxury homes going for \$700,000-plus each, is now hurdling towards its expected conclusion Oct. 25 in a “yes” vote by Sarasota County commissioners.

The suburban blob is inconsistent with the 2050 Plan, which was adopted two decades ago as a compromise between developers, environmentalists and farmers. The activists that are trying to stop the bulldozers fear Lakewood Ranch Southeast will be a major domino piece dropping on the remaining agricultural land in the east county; the developers’ success raises expectations among the heirs of farming families to be able to sell to developers seeking similar amendments to the comprehensive plan. The activists have sent thousands of emails to commissioners and provided hours of testimony, including by experts and lawyers, pointing out how this

project wreaks havoc on wildlife, threatens existing land and homeowners with more flooding, burdens existing taxpayers with additional infrastructure costs, and burdens area roads with 45,000 additional vehicle trips.

The doggedness of the small group of “Keep the Country Country” activists is understandable considering that all of them live in and around Old Miakka. The cluster of farms, complete with a church and an old schoolhouse, is one of the oldest continuous settlements in the region. The residents, already organized in the 73-year old Old Miakka Community Club, know that the sprawl project will overwhelm not only their community but end their lifestyle, which is still largely based on agriculture.

The pandemic, climate change and rising global conflict have exposed the vulnerability of supply chains, and “Eat Local” has become much more than a fad. In light of this, the rural community’s fight to preserve agriculture and the environment that was created in nearly two centuries of farming, is beginning to resonate with city dwellers and urban organizations. Among the endorsers of “Keep the Country Country” are not only environmental

and historic preservation groups, but also groups and individuals that are fighting similar battles in their urban communities and neighborhoods against overdevelopment.

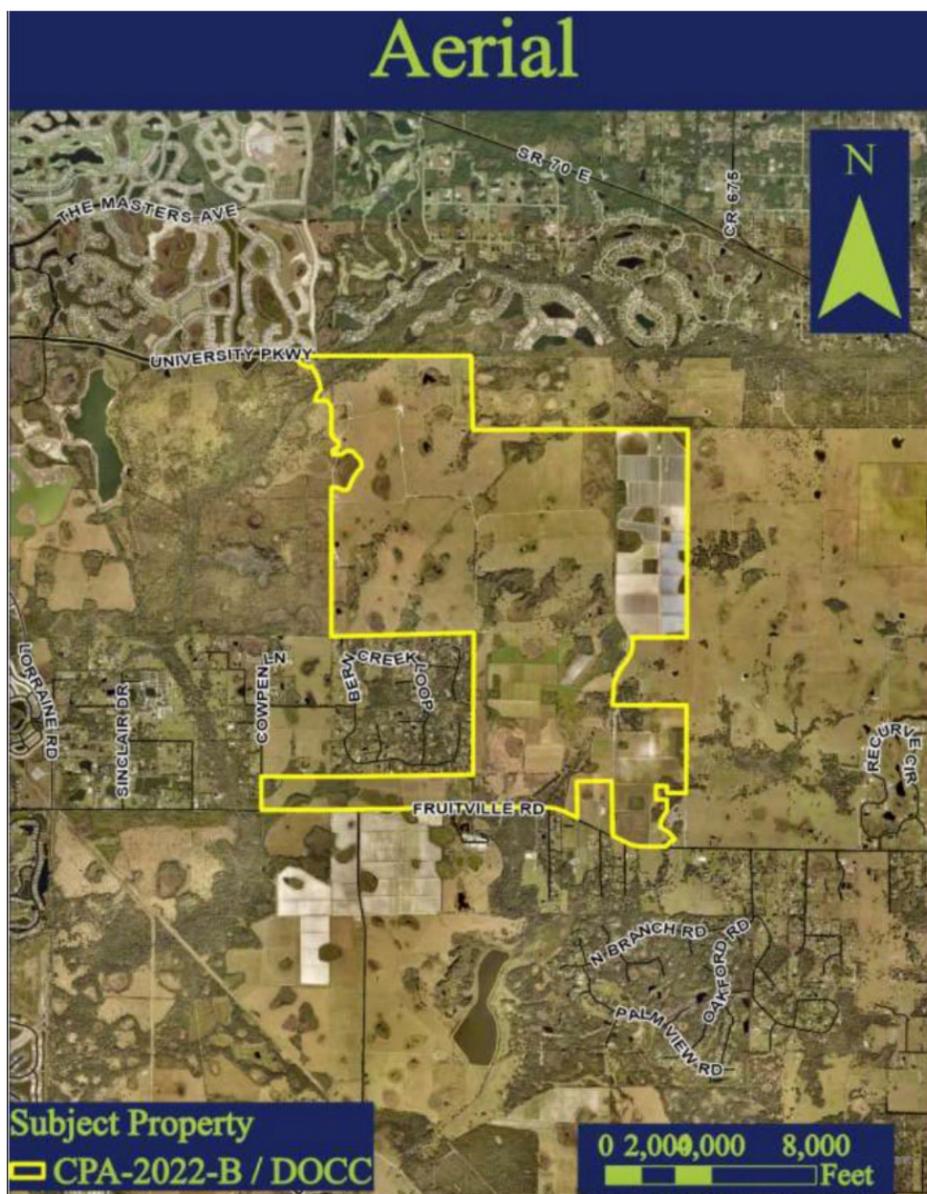
The electoral dimension of this battle is beginning to unfold as well. The sitting commissioners’ sympathies — most of them elected with major campaign contributions from developers — came on full display during the Aug. 31 county commission meeting. Four of the commissioners — the one in whose district this is all happening was absent — sat through nearly four hours of opposition testimony by residents, experts, and lawyers, often yawning, and sometimes nodding off, only to vote 4-0 in favor of the developers. Their explanations for the vote ranged from the expected financial windfall for the county (without considering its larger social and environmental cost), to the “great product” Lakewood Ranch offers, and the argument that — somehow — the luxury mansions one of the commissioners said she could not afford, would solve the affordable housing crisis. The chairman finally let it be known how difficult his job was, and that much of what the activists were saying was not well informed. He conceded, however, that they had behaved “fairly well” that day.

More information: www.sarasotacountry.net



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Sign up to the Keep the Country Country email list, by emailing Becky Ayech (miakka1945@gmail.com)
- Join weekly demonstrations Saturday mornings at the downtown Sarasota Farmers Market and Wednesday mornings at the Phillippi Farmhouse Market. Contact: Johannes Werner (huitzi@aol.com).
- Attend and speak at the Oct. 25 Sarasota County Commission meeting, demonstrate outside before and after the meeting.



SUNSHINE FROM DARKNESS

INSPIRING HOPE DINNER

Shining A Light On Mental Illness

FRIDAY, JAN. 13, 2023
6:30 – 9:30 P.M. • RITZ-CARLTON, SARASOTA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER & PERFORMER
JENNIFER HOLLIDAY

LEE AND BOB PETERSON LEGACY AWARDEES
JOAN AND BOB GEYER, ACADEMY AT GLENGARY

The Inspiring Hope Dinner is presented by Sunshine from Darkness, a subsidiary of the Lee and Bob Peterson Foundation

Proceeds will benefit local mental health services provided by Harvest House and Teen Court of Sarasota, and cutting-edge research funded by the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation

Tickets and information: SunshineFromDarkness.org

The Risks of Climate Change Locally

BY MARGARET JEAN CANNON AND ROY WYSNEWSKI

PREDICTED LOCAL RISKS

Four years ago, a west-coast non-profit risk advisory firm Four Twenty Seven specializing in determining the economic risks associated with climate change, released the results of a vulnerability study for 761 cities and 3,143 counties in the United States with populations exceeding 50,000. The study ranked Sarasota as the No. 2 American city at risk from climate change, trailing only Miami Beach. In the ranking of counties at most risk in the nation, Manatee County was ranked No. 1, and Sarasota County was ranked No. 10. The study focused on the risks posed by sea level rise, stronger and more frequent tropical cyclones, extreme rainfall (in-land flooding), heat stress and water stress.

RISK CONFIRMATION

Today, there is strong evidence via scientific data and actual climate change impacts to corroborate the 2018 risk-assessment results.

Scientific Data: The table below lists Sarasota - Bradenton's average yearly temperature for a recent decade (2011-2020).

Because of the significant temperature increase (73.7 to 76.3 degrees Fahrenheit) during this period, scientists refer to the decade as the warmest on record. In 10 years, the difference in the recorded temperatures is 2.6 degrees Fahrenheit, or 1.5 degrees Centigrade (1.5 C).

Climate Change Impacts: It has been shown that human-induced (anthropogenic) carbon dioxide emissions increase with population growth. When the rate of population growth is high and continues for a decade, as it did from 2011 to 2020 (Sarasota County grew by 14.4%, nearly twice the nation's 7.4% rate), there is a rapid increase in CO2 absorbed into the atmosphere and oceans ultimately leading to rapid temperature increase and ending with a variety of undesirable weather-related events (impacts).

Here is a summary of recent climate change impacts that concerned Four Twenty Seven.

- Sea level rise - Nationally, the sea level has risen by 6.5 inches since 1950. Scientists say sea levels could increase by 11 to 12 inches locally by 2050.

Time Series Summary for Sarasota-Bradenton, FL (ThreadEx)

Year	Mean Average Temperature
2011	73.7
2012	74.4
2013	74.2
2014	73.1
2015	75.1
2016	75.2
2017	74.4
2018	74.6
2019	76.2
2020	76.3

The data in this table is from the Sarasota-Bradenton weather data file at SC ACIS: scacis.rcc-acis.org.

- Extreme rainfall – a significant increase occurred between 2011 (41 inches) and 2020 (57 inches).
- Heat stress – Climate Central scientists project that the twenty-five life-threatening heat days (with a heat index of 105 degrees) that Southwest Florida currently experiences will expand to 130 such days by 2050.
- Water stress - A prolonged and costly red tide season (2017-2019) resulted in the loss of thousands of fish and a significant tourism-related financial loss. Also, a record number (1,100+) of manatees died (lack of seagrass) in 2021.

But how significant is the temperature increase? In just one decade, the Sarasota/Bradenton area's temperature increased, prematurely reaching the 2030 global goal of 1.5 C set by the International Paris Agreement. This result not only gives credence to the 2018 risk predictions on climate change but also begs these questions: Has the window (2030-2022) of opportunity to effectively mitigate our rapidly changing climate closed, and how bad might future climate change impacts get for our area?

WSLR News Team Welcomes Interns



Joshua Epstein and Nickolas Steinig, Fall 2022 Mellon Interns

WSLR has a long-standing relationship with New College of Florida. This year we are pleased to be part of a radio broadcasting internship program funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The internship aligns well with the Mellon Foundation Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities program's desire to integrate social and racial justice work into artistic practice and teaching as well as its goal to encourage exploration of questions of special interest to the local community. program. Three New College students are currently producing stories for our Critical Times News Team – Joshua Epstein, Basil Pursley, and Nickolas Steinig. You can tune in to our local news broadcast on Fridays at 6pm (and if you miss it, you can catch the re-broadcast on Monday at 9:30am). You can also subscribe to the Critical Times podcast wherever you get your favorite podcasts. If you have a story idea for our news team, please email NEWS@wslr.org.

Sustainable Communities

2022 HYBRID WORKSHOP Nov. 01 | 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Join us for the 17th Annual Sustainable Communities Workshop "Advancing Climate Solutions" which will bring the community together to discuss environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainability.

Registrants are welcome to attend this hybrid event either in-person at the New College of Florida Harry Sudakoff Conference Center in Sarasota or participate virtually.

TOPICS INCLUDE: carbon sequestration, regenerative agriculture, climate change, social equity, local projects, ways to get involved, and more.

Don't miss our featured speakers: Julie Henry and Sophia Kianni.

REGISTER NOW!

Registration fees: \$10-\$45 general | \$5-\$25 student
Registration includes access to all speaker and panel sessions, as well as Expo and Networking areas.

Register or find more information at
scgov.net/sustainablecommunities

or call 941-861-5000

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Organizers:



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Addressing Health Concerns in North Sarasota

BY ONYX HADWEN OF THE
MULTICULTURAL HEALTH
INSTITUTE

Driving down Myrtle Street between Central Avenue and Washington, you encounter a land use combination directly from the nightmares of any NIMBY activist. On the south side of the road, you'll find Booker High School, an assortment of housing units, and the R.L. Taylor Community Complex. On the north side, there are a string of industrial and manufacturing plants: Atlantic TNG (precast concrete), Frederick Derr & Company (construction), Steel Products, Seaboard Steel Corporation, Trademark Metals Recycling, MasterRock (concrete recycling), and Single Stream Recyclers. Although a NIMBY activist's nightmare, industrial plants situated alongside schools and community centers are a well-known focus of environmental justice efforts locally and nationally.

These sites have been a source of community concern for many years. In 2018, the Multicultural Health Institute worked with others to form the Newtown Health Disparities and Environment Collaborative. Through community surveys and data analysis, the group found 58% of respondents noticed dust or particles in the air every time, or almost every time they passed by Booker High School on Myrtle Street. Forty percent said the dust bothered them every time or almost every time.

By analyzing data from the Florida Department of Health, the Newtown Health Disparities and Environment Collaborative found that although the 34234 zip code (Newtown) accounts for 5% of the population, they accounted for 15% of County hospitalizations due to Asthma.

In January and February of 2020, Kimley-Horn and Associates found arsenic levels exceeding the



Booker High School is directly across from several industrial plants. Photo taken July 2022.

recommended levels for residential areas in the soil and groundwater along Myrtle.

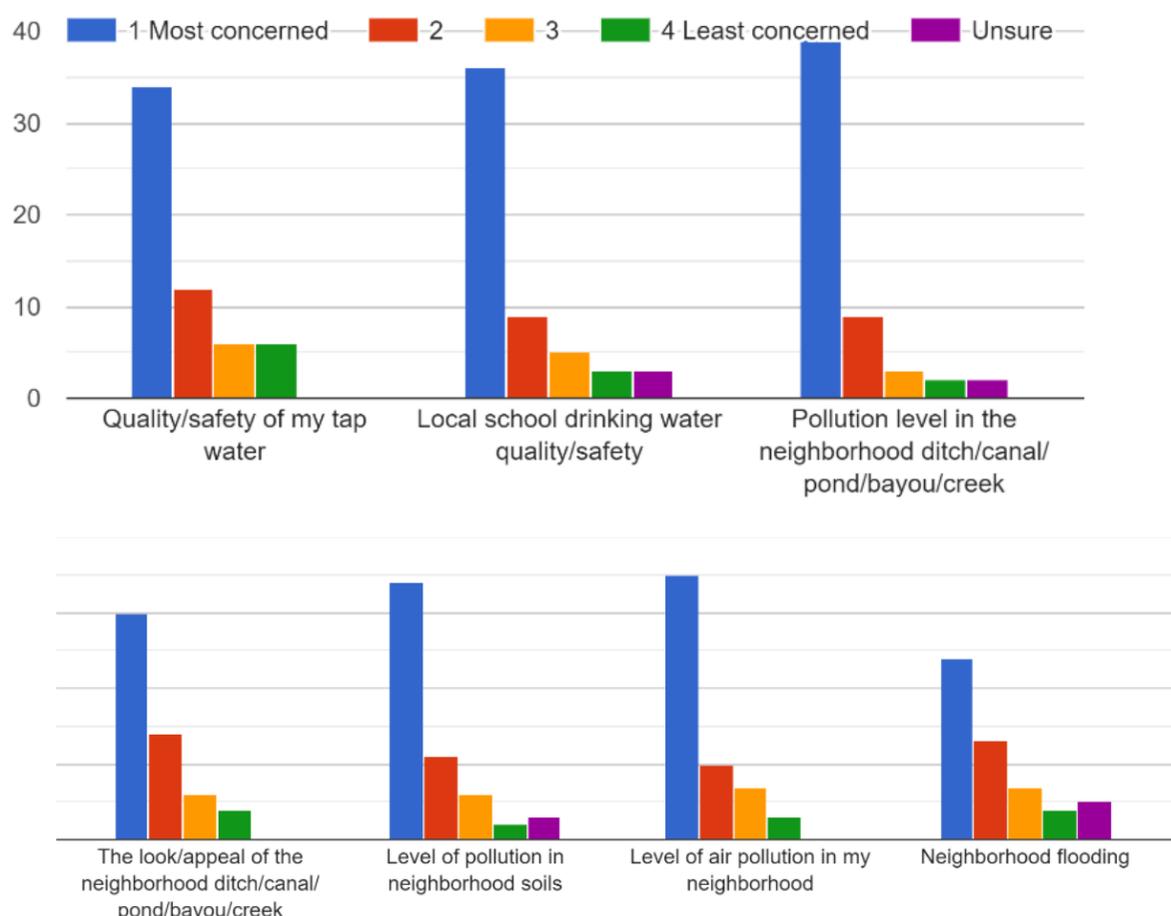
Resident concerns continue into 2022 as a second community survey explored North Sarasota residents' perceptions of their environment and desired improvements. Water quality drew the most attention as 83% of respondents expressed concern about the pollution level in the neighborhood pond/ditch/canal/creek and 79% expressed concern about the quality/safety of their tap water. The quality of local school drinking water, level of pollution in neighborhood soils, and level of air pollution all received similar responses with 78% of respondents indicating concern.

The 2022 survey revealed consensus around desires for improvements as well as concerns. Eighty percent of respondents indicated they would be in favor of more trash cans in their area to help reduce littering and 75% indicated they would approve of

MLK Park Development, including a walking trail. Sixty-four percent said they wanted to see vacant lots transformed into green spaces. As summarized in one free response: "More flowers, more grass, better sidewalks, more trash cans."

In recent months, local environmental lawyer Justin Bloom has successfully sued some of these same companies for polluting the Whitaker Bayou. From these lawsuits, groups like the Suncoast Waterkeepers and the Sarasota Bay Foundation have acquired funds for Supplemental Environmental Projects, also known as SEP's. These funds, along with collaboration across groups, create possibilities for addressing these long-standing community concerns. Notably, prior community efforts created many of the successes seen on the southern side of Myrtle Street – including Booker High School and the R.L. Taylor Community Complex.

To learn more about these efforts and to get involved, email northsrq.nature@gmail.com.



Graphs indicate responses to the following question by category: Are you concerned about the physical environment – air, water, and soil quality - in North Sarasota? Please rate your level of concern for each of the following (1 - most concerned and 4 - least concerned).

HELP US UNDERSTAND WHAT MATTERS TO YOU

TAKE THE WSLR LISTENER SURVEY

Let us know what you think by clicking on the 2022 Listener Survey tab at WSLR.org or scanning the QR code.

WSLR Welcomes New Local Programs

WSLR-LP 96.5 FM's broadcast community is **growing!** The radio station's offerings now include four new weekend voices which expand the most eclectic, all-volunteer radio schedule on the suncoast.



Alternating Fridays from 9pm - 11pm, **Sebastien Wegeng** will be starting off the weekend with his fins in the water for his surf/psych meets garage-rock music program, **Corduroy**. Named after the colloquial surf lingo for a series of swells marching in from the horizon, Wegeng plans to bring a matching series of reverb-soaked wave forms to get listeners ready for a weekend at the beach.

Community Conversations with Mel will join WSLR's lineup of quality public affairs programming on **alternating Saturdays from 3 pm - 4 pm**. The program will be hosted by poet, spoken



word artist, and activist **Melanie Lavender**, centered around interviews with leaders and influencers in Sarasota and Manatee Counties, while interweaving poetry and music that will make listeners think - as well as move their body.

Jay Ackermann bridges the expanse between ska, punk, and indie on his program, **The In Between, Saturday nights from 9 pm - 11pm**. Focused on building a music community, Jay has deep roots in the global ska and punk scenes - bringing hundreds of bands from all around the globe together to create friendships and awareness that the musical subculture is still alive and evolving.



Rounding out WSLR's weekend is **Discovery Road** where listeners can hear new music from new artists, new music from some of their favorite artists, and lesser known gems that are not necessarily new. Host, **Louise Coogan** brings her extensive broadcasting and music industry background to create an entertaining and eclectic mix of unexpected musical treasures to WSLR's frequency.



If you have an idea for a radio show, let us know.

You can find our application online at **WSLR.org** under the **Support Tab (Volunteer at WSLR+Fogartyville)**. As we progress into 2022, we'll be inviting you to fill out our **Listener Survey**. Your input in this survey will aid us in offering radio programming that meets the needs and interests of our community.

wslr lp 96.5 fm

WEEKLY PROGRAM GUIDE

listen on the air

- WSLR-LP 96.5 FM Sarasota
- WBPV-LP 100.1 FM Sarasota

listen online

- WSLR.org (desktop)
- WSLR App at wslr.org (mobile)

listen on demand

archive.wslr.org Music shows are archived for two weeks. News and public affairs are available for download, and expire later.

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Electronica · Dubstep · Club · HipHop
Freeform · Eclectic
Rock · Punk · Jam · Indie · Pop
News · Public Affairs
World · Spiritual

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12 mid.		Down The Road Syndicated	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	Music Automated playlist	All Mixed Up Syndicated	And You Don't Stop Syndicated	In My Room Syndicated Midnight Music Meditations The Musician's Son
1 a.m.	Deep Threes Syndicated					Synthelectico Syndicated	
2 a.m.	Music Automated playlist	Midnight Special Syndicated	Music Automated playlist	Upfront Soul Syndicated	Music Automated playlist		
3 a.m.							
4 a.m.	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Music Automated playlist	Music Automated playlist
5 a.m.							
6 a.m.	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)	Background Briefing Ian Masters (Syndicated)		
7 a.m.							
8 a.m.	Blues to Bluegrass John D.	Blue Groove Mark Gruder	Generation X Alecia Harper Music with a Purpose Pat Monahan	Eclectic Blender Dave Pedersen	Latin Explosion Juan Montenegro	Saturday Morning Gospel Beat Jonah Ray	A Way With Words Syndicated Wings of the Heart Carol or Salima
9 a.m.	Shortwave Report Critical Times Week in Review	TUC Radio Sea Change Radio	Peace & Justice Report Tom Walker & Bob Connors	The Detail Cathy Antunes	Surreal News Lew Lorini & Steve Norris	TownTalk TampaBay With Good Reason	The Detail Cathy Antunes (Rebroadcast)
10 a.m.	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Democracy Now! Amy Goodman (Syndicated)	Radio Reset Sharon Preston-Folta	Law and Disorder Syndicated
11 a.m.							
NOON	Music of the World Marco Ciceron	Nuestra Musica Mariano Afro Cuban Jazz Frankie Piniero	Blue Groove Jazz/World Edition Mark Gruder Global Village Syndicated	Metropics Carlos Pagan	Complex Waveforms Mark Zampella	Juke In The Back Syndicated Hard Knock Radio Syndicated	Folk Alley Elena See Syndicated
1 p.m.							
2 p.m.	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Thom Hartmann Show Syndicated	Julien Taylor's Jukebox Syndicated	Dadee-O's Collector's Corner Dadee-O
3 p.m.	Positive Friction John Haupt	Second Wind Seany G	Rhythm Revival Rev. Billy C Wirtz	Basement Boxes & More Purple Mike High Tide Susan Runyan	Everything But the Kitchen Sink Jazz Edition Art on the Air Everything But the Kitchen Sink Art on the Air	The Scenario Syndicated Community Conversations Melanie Lavender	Velvet Hammer Blues Beth Hammer
4 p.m.							
5 p.m.	Music Museum Ed Foster	Synthetic Age JR Indie-licious Sheila Jane	Jazz And More Brian Jones	Ted's Head Ted	Friday Happy Hour Bartender Tommy D.	Train to Skaville Syndicated	Discovery Road Louise Coogan
6 p.m.	Economic Update Richard Wolff Capitol Update State News	Ralph Nader Radio Syndicated	Ruthless Truth/Critical Times Laura Flanders Show	Alternative Radio Syndicated	Critical Times Week in Review Counterspin (Syndicated)	Upfront Soul Syndicated	
7 p.m.							
8 p.m.	Yesterday's Dead Today Mark Binder	The Root Cellar Roger & Peter	Acoustic Waves James Hawkins The Old Folk & Americana Festival	Retro Cocktail Hour Syndicated Velvet Radio Elissa Bello	Ripper's Rarities Russ Yodice	New Radio	Soul Kitchen Paul Junior Donne Del Mundo Syndicated Modern Jetset Syndicated
9 p.m.							
10 p.m.	First Voices Syndicated Indigenous Nation Syndicated	Bullwinkle's Corner Keith Winkle	Random Precision Alex	Music Is The Best Mark Markus	Songs for Knitting & Mayhem Laura Corduroy Sebastian Wegeng	The In Between Jay Ackermann	Lounging After Dark Syndicated
11 p.m.							
12 mid.	Down The Road Syndicated	Lumpytunes! The Head Lump, Rob Demperio	Music Automated playlist	All Mixed Up Syndicated	And You Don't Stop Syndicated	In My Room Syndicated Midnight Music Meditations The Musician's Son	Cafe Chill Syndicated

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LIVE FROM *Fogartyville*

COMMUNITY MEDIA AND ARTS CENTER



Sarasota's premier listening room, but concerts aren't all we do. In addition to our live concerts, we also host other arts and cultural events, educational events, and sponsor events in the community. at 525 Kumquat Court's West entrance. (in the alley, Sally)



ALL SHOWS: Student tickets available at 1/2 price (show ID at door); Kids 12 and under are free.

7-10PM 10/08 - \$5



SPOKEN WORD SERIES

with an open mic and featured performer; Bradenton's **Whit the Poet** with 2 self-published books, is NAACP Image Award nominated Spoken-word Artist, winner of multiple poetry GRAND SLAM competitions... Hosted by *WSLR's Melanie Lavender*. Sponsor: **25 GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

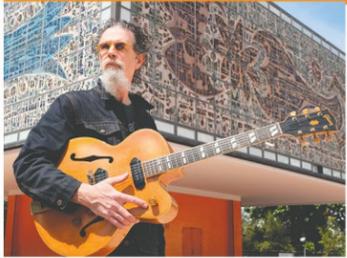
7PM 10/18 - FREE

STAY PRAYED UP



The only thing mightier than Lena Mae Perry's electrifying voice is her faith. For the last 50yrs sharing & sharpening both as the lead in *The {legendary}Branchettes*, NC gospel, that has packed churches throughout the South & lifted weary hearts as far away as Ireland. We'll follow them as they prepare to record their first, fully live album, a hallmark in the canon of Black gospel groups.

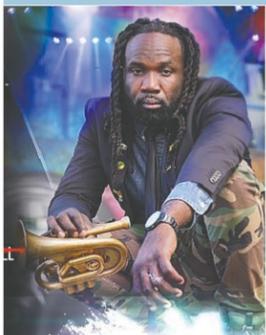
7PM 10/20 - \$15/\$18



WALTER PARKS

He was Richie Havens' lead touring guitarist struck-out on his own with a powerful / haunting blend of traditional "hollers," spirituals and Americana.

7:30PM 10/27 - \$18/\$20



SHAMARR ALLEN AND THE UNDERDAWGS

Scintillating-unique sound, look, and exemplary talents, they transcend musical boundaries for a *True-Orleans* experience right-cher!

8PM 10/28 - \$15/\$18

The Black Feathers w/ *Lazy Daisies* OPENING

From the UK the Black Feathers, acoustic indie rockers known for thier electric stage chemistry. Sarasota duo *Lazy Daisies* are originally from the corn fields of Ohio, this husband & wife are "keepin' it groovy & stayin' mellow."



8PM 11/4 - \$15/\$18



GRANT PEEPLES & THE PEEPLES REPUBLIK

a thinking human's entertainer, whose unflinching social insight and cultural acuity punctuate his humorous & ironic wisdoms

4-9PM 11/6 - \$12/\$15

VERY MERRY JERRY DAY

We've got it MADE-IN-THE-SHADE this year with the *NEW COVERED PATIO* and November date it will be COOL(er), PEOPLE! As we celebrate our Lucky 13th! annual *Tribute to Jerry Garcia* with music from **The Joint Chiefs** who are purveyors of the Jerry Songbook. And from **Dead Uncle's Ship** is Ship of Fools' Turner C. Moore (mandolin, synth and vocals) joined by Alan Gilman (Uncle John's Band) and Michael Pandiscio (Dead Set Florida).



8PM 11/10 - \$22/\$27



CHUCHITO

Spicy Cuban Rhythms and jazz

8PM 11/11 \$20/\$22

JOE CROOKSTON

Singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist with themes of lightness, darkness, clocks ticking, fiddle looping, weeping willows, slide guitar bending, cynicisms to hope.



7-10PM 11/12 - \$5



SPOKEN WORD SERIES with an open mic and featured performer; As *She Speaks*. Hosted by *WSLR's Melanie Lavender*. Sponsor: **25 GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

8PM 11/13 \$28/\$30- INDOOR; \$25/\$27- OUTDOOR

THE SLAMBOVIAN CIRCUS OF DREAMS



A rootsy rockin' psychedelica, expanding the borders of the Americana genre with their fantastic stories and performance since the late 90's in Sleepy Hollow, New York. The band's music is equal parts Washington Irving, Woodstock and British Invasion.

7PM 11/15 - FREE

OUTTA THE MUCK

Family, football and history come-to-life in a portrait of the **Dean family**, longtime residents of the historic town of *Pahokee, Florida*. Stories that transcend space +time, an intimate portrait of a community that resists despair with love, remaining fiercely self-determined, while forging its own unique narrative of achievement.



Mary GAUTHIER

Grammy nominated for Best Folk Album, as well as a nomination for Album of the Year by the Americana Music Association. Numerous artists have recorded her songs, from Jimmy Buffett, to Blake Shelton, to Boy George and more; she is joined by with special guest **Jaimee Harris**.



8PM 11/18 - \$15/\$18

DAVID JACOBS-STRAIN & BOB BEACH

striking slide guitar player and song poet from Eugene, Ore. His deep love of blues and roots music is evident in every one of the songs he writes. And Bob Beach is a mouth-harp maestro who swaggers into a solo like The Marlboro Man, then quietly leaves the set while the rest of us wonder what just happened and how such a tiny instrument could possibly sound like that.



8PM 11/26 - \$18/\$21

THE WORLD FUSION ORCHESTRA

Gypsy Jazz meets up with funk, classical and hardcore fusion with guitarist **Gustav Viehmeyer** drummer **Art Weiss** and upright bassist **Jack Berry**

8PM 12/02 - \$15/\$18

LANEY JONES AND THE SPIRITS



Rolling Stone to hailed her as *an Artist You Need To Know* and praised her "penetrating hooks" and "70s-era flourishes." Say you "SAW" Laney Jones, when...

8PM 12/09 - \$20/\$24

SETH GLIER W/ REED SOUTHERLAND (UPRIGHT BASS)

NPR describes his voice as "otherworldly" His songs are soulfully intelligent stories that can alternatively fight the power or break your heart.

8PM 12/17 - \$12/\$15

REBEKAH PULLEY AND THE RELUCTANT PROPHETS

Soul-steeped rock'n'roll band with an Americana twist, provide an earthly soundscape to Rebekah's evocative songs & seductive voice.



Winner of 8 'Best Of The Bay' songwriting awards.

7PM 12/18 - \$15/\$18

THE JONI PROJECT Presents an evening of the *Songs of Joni Mitchell*. The band is comprised of **Joni Adno**: vocals, keys & guitar, **Art Siegel** on percussion, **Joe Bruno** on bass, **Bob Miner** on saxophone + **Dr. Jon Godfrey** on guitar.



8PM 01/06/23 - \$25/\$30

Election 2022 Overview

This year marks the first statewide elections to be held with Republicans exceeding Democrats in voter registration. It's been a long decline for Democrats, who once dominated registration in North Florida and other rural counties. Non-Partisan voters have seen their share of registration rapidly increase (see map on right).

Statewide Elections

The elections you're likely to hear the most about in the next month are the Senate Race between incumbent Marco Rubio (R) and Congresswoman Val Demings (D) and the Governor's race between current Gov. Ron DeSantis and Congressman Charlie Crist. Expect lots of TV ads and mailers as DeSantis has a monstrous stash of cash and Crist/Demings will be fundraising like mad to get their message out. A poll conducted for AARP Florida by two top pollsters in September showed that Rubio had a slim lead polling at 49% support among likely voters to Democrat Val Demings' 47%. That puts the race well within the poll's 4.4% margin of error. Key issues for voters include Medicare and Medicaid support and interest in lowering pharmaceutical drug costs.

In the same AARP poll, Gov. Ron DeSantis leads Charlie Crist by a slight 50% -47% margin in the race for Governor. Both candidates win over 90% of their own party's voters, with DeSantis holding a 4-point edge among Independents. There is a narrow gender gap, with men voting for DeSantis by a larger margin than women are backing Crist, but a huge gap on education with Crist winning voters with 4-year college degrees by 15-points and DeSantis ahead by the same amount with those who do not have one. Within the 50+ universe, white voters give DeSantis a 17-point lead, Hispanics are almost evenly divided, and Black voters 50+ favor Crist by 60-points.

Attorney General

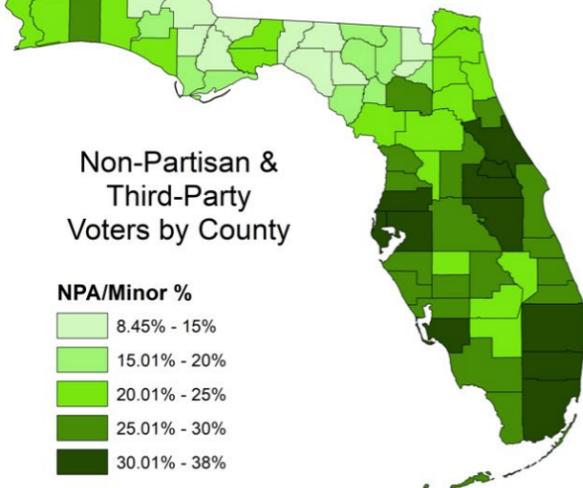
Democratic candidate Aramis Ayala was elected in 2016 as state attorney as a reformer, gaining national attention in 2017 when she announced she would not use the death penalty in any cases. The result was Rick Scott moving capital cases to a different district and the Supreme Court eventually saying she could not make such unilateral decisions. Ayala will face incumbent Ashley Moody. Moody has raised \$1,669,941 in monetary donations and also has over \$1,035,000 in in-kind donations. Ayala raised \$140,988 for the primary and as of Sept, 9, 2022 has less than \$20,000 remaining in her campaign account.

Agriculture Commissioner

Haitian-American Naomi Blemur, a Miami-

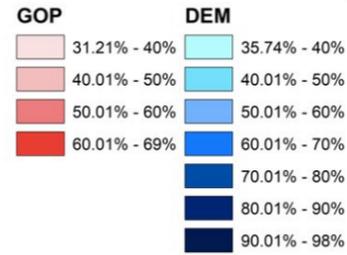
August 2022 Voter Registration

Using "Active Voters" Data



Source: <https://mci-maps.com>

GOP 36.2%
DEM 34.7%
NPA 29.1%



Dade Pastor and businesswoman, won the Democratic primary in August despite numerous endorsing politicians rescinding their support when old homophobic and anti-choice comments came to light. She will face Republican Senate President Wilton Simpson in November. Simpson's background is in farming, as his family runs a multi-million-dollar egg farm in Pasco County. Simpson has raised over \$2,000,000 and has the backing of Governor DeSantis' backing.

Congressional Races

Thanks to the DeSantis gerrymandered maps, only a few Congressional Districts are considered competitive. The map also severely weakened the power of black voters; reducing the number of black-performing districts from 4 to 2. The Congressional map drawn by Gov. DeSantis (R), was adopted by the Florida Legislature during a special session after DeSantis vetoed previous districts passed by the Legislature (see map below).

Congressional District 16

The new 16th Congressional District includes all of Manatee County and a part of Hillsborough County. Incumbent Vern Buchanan faces a challenge from Democrat Jan Schneider. Buchanan has served in Congress since 2007 and is a senior member of the powerful House Ways & Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over tax policy, international trade, health care, welfare, and Social Security. He has a [10 point plan to create jobs](#) and restore our economy that you can find on this website. It includes reducing government regulation, implementing a Balanced Budget Amendment, expanding oil drilling, and supporting right-to-work legislation (anti-union).

Schneider graduated with a bachelor's from Brown University and a master's in international affairs from Columbia University. She also has a Juris Doctor and a PhD in political science from Yale. As an author, Schneider has written books on protecting natural resources as well as on global warming. Schneider has run for the Congressional seat multiple times. She mounted two considerable challenges to Katherine Harris in 2002 (losing 54.8% - 45.2%) and 2004 (losing 55.3% to 44.7%). She opposes Buchanan's positions on privatizing Social Security and raising the age for Medicare eligibility, and strongly supports a women's right to choose. You can learn more about her positions here: <https://votejan.com>.

The FEC website shows that Buchanan raised over \$3,737,000 million and had \$1,766,000 cash on hand as of 8/03/2022; Schneider had \$41,178 cash on hand as of 6/03/2022.

Congressional District 17

The new 17th Congressional District covers all of Sarasota County, all of Charlotte County, and a small portion of upper Lee County. CD17 is a heavily Republican seat where 57.49% of voters supported Republican Donald Trump in the 2020 election. It is also the whitest district in Florida with 79.1% of voters identifying as white. Incumbent Greg Steube faces a challenge from Democrat Andrea Doria Kale. Prior to being elected to Congress, Steube served three terms in the Florida House, representing the Sarasota-Manatee area from 2010-2016 and two years in the Florida Senate. Steube has aligned himself with the Trump wing of the Republican party.

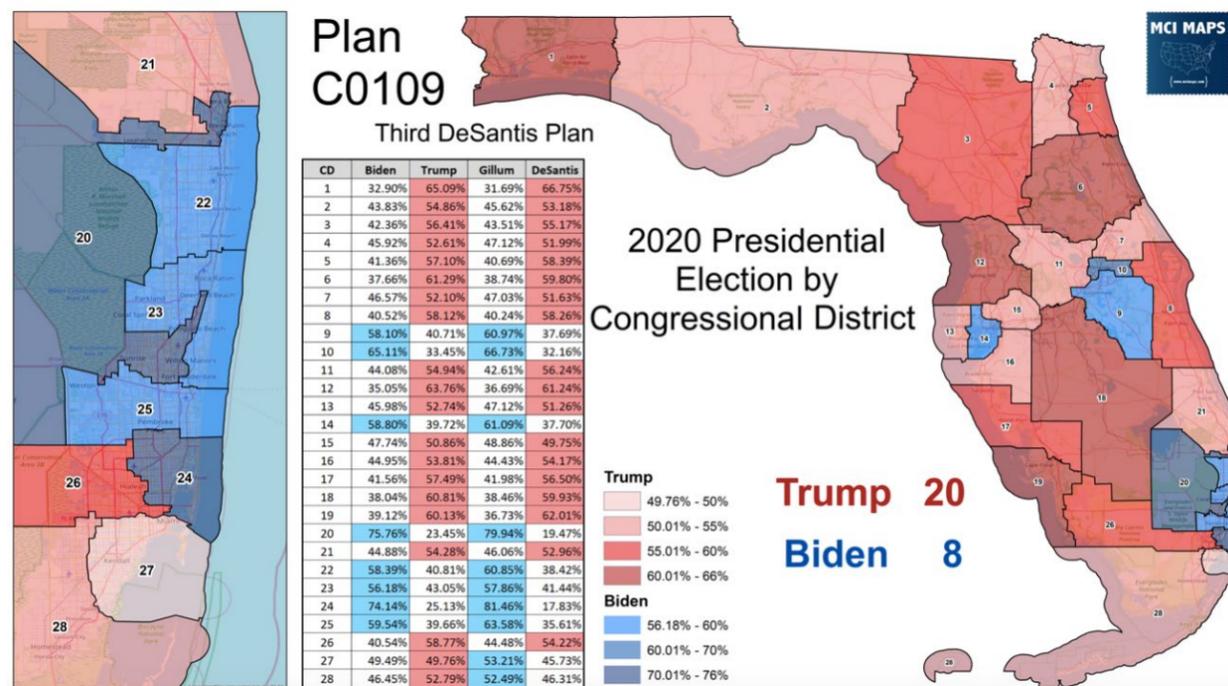
Before moving to North Port, Kale worked for a substance abuse research company in New York for 37 years. She started out as a researcher and worked her way to information technology director for National Development Research Institute. Kale was also the state IT Director and Deputy Operations Director for the 2016 Clinton presidential campaign. She is a staunch advocate for a women's right to choose, protecting voting rights and supports the Justice in Policing Act.

Steube has raised \$1,278,176 as of August 3, 2022, and has \$853,959 left on hand for the general election. Kale has raised \$18,215 and has \$1,039 left in her account. Theodore "Pink Tie" Murray will appear on the ballot with No Party Affiliation (NPA). He has raised no money for the campaign.

For Additional Election Information:

Manatee County League of Women Voters Election Guide. - <https://lwvmanatee.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Manatee-County-2022-General-Election-Voters-Guide.pdf>

<https://www.vote411.org>



Source: <https://mci-maps.com>

Neunder & Kuether Face Off in District 4

BY BASIL PURSLEY, WSLR INTERN

In District 4, former Venice City Council member Joe Neunder handily won the Republican primary with 73.5% of the vote against challenger Mark Hawkins. Neunder will face Democratic candidate Daniel Kuether in the November election.

Neunder, 45, is hoping to succeed incumbent Alan Maio, who is precluded by term limits from seeking re-election. A Pine View School graduate,



Joe Neunder

Neunder operates a solo chiropractic practice as Sarasota Spinal Mechanics. In an interview with Jacob Ogles for Florida Politics, Neunder stated: “Sarasota’s

future is bright thanks to decades of conservative leadership at the county level,” Neunder said. “I’ll build on that legacy by keeping taxes low, protecting the natural beauty of the environment that surrounds us, supporting our brave law enforcement officers and first responders, and championing balanced, fiscally responsible budgets.”

Nuender believes that the housing crisis and environmental issues are also economic issues. While he acknowledges that rising prices can be good for current homeowners, he also specifies that “some of our most important neighbors are getting priced out of the market.”

Nuender has served on the Sarasota County Planning Commission, City of Venice Historic Preservation Board, and the Venice City Council.



Daniel Kuether

background, he has a particular interest in protecting Old Miakka, a historically rural area in Sarasota, from development.

Kuether moved to Sarasota County in 2018 from New York City. He currently works in UI/UX design for a real estate company. He is taking a leave of absence from his role as vice chair of the Sarasota County Democratic Party to run for County Commission. “The citizens of Sarasota need holistic development that benefits the entire county,” a campaign news release said. “If elected, Kuether will push against developers to force systematic change, support multiple forms of transportation, identify and implement affordable housing options, and establish more significant safeguards for the surrounding environment.” Kuether hopes to be the first Democrat to sit on the Sarasota County Commission in 50 years.

Daniel Kuether is running for elected office for the first time. Growing up in rural Ohio on a family farm, Kuether believes he is suited to represent the common person and understands issues relating to agriculture. Given his rural

Kuether takes strong stances on environmental issues, believing that protecting the barrier islands and water systems is crucial to maintaining Sarasota. VoteWater.org, an organization focused on profiling candidates on how their policies may affect the water ecosystems, has approved Kuether as a water friendly and “clean” candidate.

The County Commission is now elected by single-member districts - a change voters initially approved in 2018 and then re-affirmed in March 2022. Under single-member districts, commissioners are elected solely by the citizens of their district, instead of being elected by all county voters. That means these candidates can focus on the 70,000 voters in the district, rather than having to reach out to 346,000 voters countywide.

District 2 County Commission Race

Democrat Fredd Atkins will face Republican Mark Smith in the District 2 County Commission Race. You can learn more about these candidates in the April and July editions of Critical Times which you can find in our [online archive](#).

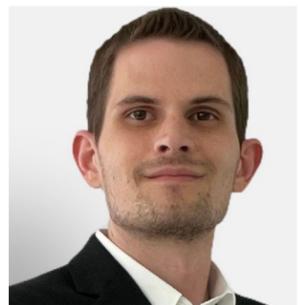
Sarasota City Commission Candidates

Debbie Trice, Dan Lobeck and Jennifer Ahearn-Koch were the top three vote-getters in the August primary. In the November election you will get to vote for two of them to serve in the position of at-large City Commissioner. All City of Sarasota voters are eligible to vote in this election. You can read more about these candidates in the [July edition of the Critical Times](#).

Teacher Challenges Incumbent in HD73

BY JOSHUA EPSTEIN, WSLR INTERN

State House District 73, which includes the barrier islands and much of the urbanized area of Sarasota County from the Manatee County line south to Venice, could prove to be one of the most competitive races in the area. Democrat Derek Reich, a schoolteacher, is challenging the incumbent, Republican Fiona McFarland. In 2020, statistics from MCI Maps show the district as having the closest margin in any Florida State House district; 49.7% of voters went for Donald J. Trump while 49.34% went for President Joseph R. Biden. However, current voter registration numbers show that the district is now home to 59,423 registered Republicans and 46,950 registered Democrats.



Derek Reich

As of September 9, McFarland had raised \$198,814 and spent only \$47,000, leaving her well ahead of her opponent in fundraising. Reich had raised \$42,705 as of 9/9/22 and has just under \$28,000 remaining in his coffers. Additionally, McFarland controls the political committee, Friends of Sarasota, where another \$118,000 remains available if needed.

Incumbent Fiona McFarland is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (2008) and the University of Chapel Hill’s Kenan Flagler Business School (2013). In her civilian capacity, Fiona worked as a consultant with the global business management consulting firm McKinsey and Company, where she served clients across media, consumer goods, manufacturing, and advanced technology industry. McFarland is a New York transplant who moved

to Sarasota a year prior to her election to the State House in 2020. In 2020, she defeated Democratic challenger Drake Buckman by more than 9 percentage points, re-gaining Republican control of the seat that Margaret Good held for two terms.

Fiona’s website spotlights her work to protect water quality & the environment, strengthen Florida’s economy, work towards affordable housing, support Florida families, fight for world-class education, and support safe communities and law enforcement. She has been endorsed by Associated Industries of Florida, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, and the Florida Realtors PAC.

Her website points to Fiona’s votes for a \$1.4 million for Spanish Point shoreline restoration, a \$1 billion sales tax rebate on items, and investments in school safety through improved emergency preparation and response policies among other votes as evidence of her work in the State House. She notably supported Florida’s 15-week abortion ban that includes no exceptions for rape or incest (HB5). Fiona declined WSLR’s request for an interview on September 12th, 2022.

Born in Sarasota, challenger Derek Reich was born in Sarasota County and graduated from Florida State University (2018). Reich is a 12th grade U.S. Government and Economics teacher at Sarasota High.

Derek states on his website that his “passion for education and the next generation” are the driving forces behind his run for State Representative. He added in an interview with WSLR that he couldn’t sit on the sidelines while his “own representative...

voted to cut 12 million dollars from Sarasota County schools in Florida’s record house budget because we had a mask mandate for a couple weeks.”

While a full-time college student he worked as a Publix cashier and subsequently began as a full-time teaching intern at Brookside Middle School in Sarasota in his final semester of college.

Following that he accepted a teaching position at Freedom High School in Orlando and taught 12th grade U.S. Government to a student body that was 80% non-white and majority ESL “to serve a student population most needing the support my teachers provided me”. Derek moved back to Sarasota County to finish his Master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction (2020) at Florida State University while substitute teaching part-time before returning to the classroom full-time for the 2020-2021 school year.

Derek told us that his priorities if elected are to: fight for public school funding (“make sure that there is teacher in every classroom and bus driver for every route”), prevent environmental disasters (“Stop Piney Point from ever occurring again”), champion affordable housing (“Stop cutting funds from the Sadowski Affordable Housing Fund”), and to “protect a woman’s freedom to control her own body.”

When asked about his position on HB7, “The Stop WOKE Act” and the “Parental Rights in Education bill” (HB1557) dubbed by critics the “Don’t Say Gay Bill” Derek expressed strong opposition to both bills and noted that Fiona McFarland voted in the affirmative both times.

He also noted that Sarasota residents with solar panels would’ve been “taken to the cleaners” had Governor Ron DeSantis not vetoed a bill that was co-sponsored by his opponent that would have established new regulations for renewable energy net metering programs (HB741).

Sec. 6. Audit function

With regard to auditing, the duties of the city auditor and clerk shall include, but not be limited to, reviewing, investigating, and evaluating systems of internal control to promote adequate safeguarding of assets, reliability of financial and operating information and compliance with laws and regulations. The City Auditor and clerk shall have the authority to audit all operations, functions and divisions of the city and to recommend changes for improvements. The city auditor and clerk shall have full and unrestricted access to records, data, personnel and other information necessary to effectively carry out the auditing function.

The proposed change would broadly expand the audit and investigating power of the City Auditor and Clerk. An additional proposed change in the "powers and duties" of the City Auditor and Clerk would change the Clerk's audit comments from being limited to records and proprietary functions, to commenting on ALL functions of the City, all departments and divisions.

These proposed changes would permit the Clerk to take on the function of an in-house Inspector General. Do we need this change, and how would it work?

The need for an ombudsman, compliance officer or inspector general function was discussed in depth at the Charter Review Committee (CRC). Unprecedented abusive and meddling behavior by a City Commissioner prompted these discussions. However, at no time did the CRC suggest that such an investigative function be handled in-house. The CRC also did NOT discuss or recommend such a major expansion of the City Auditor and Clerk's audit role.

In order to effect these changes, the City Auditor and Clerk would need to hire more staff that report to their office. But such a sweeping in-house auditing function is unnecessary, as an outside audit is routinely conducted each year.

While this amendment does include some common sense updates to allow for digital notice, the changes in auditing are sound reasons to reject it. Voters deserve to know the full impact of any amendment, which the ballot language fails to communicate.

This very concerning amendment gets a definite NO from me.

Proposed amendment to increase the salary of City Commissioners to \$44,643.97. The current salary of Sarasota City Commissioners is just under \$30,000, which is two-thirds of the full amount authorized by Florida statutes. I supported this amendment as a member of the City Charter Review Committee. The CRC recommended increasing City Commission

salaries, as the position is demanding and the current compensation is low.

Proposed amendment to require that a referendum to approve amendments to the City Charter only be held during a general election in November. Currently it's possible to hold a special election for a City Charter amendment. Avoiding a special election does save money and requiring amendments to be on a November ballot does optimize the likelihood of higher voter turnout. However, this amendment seeks to solve a problem that doesn't exist. Special elections for City Charter amendments are extremely rare. The Supervisor of Elections website doesn't list results for any special elections for City Charter Amendments in the past 14 years. I don't recall any since I've lived in the City (2003). Prohibiting a special election for a City Charter amendment may remove an important tool in the citizens' and the City Commission's tool box to address a situation that won't wait until a November election. This amendment creates an unnecessary constraint for both citizens and the City Commission.

Proposed amendment to allow the City to purchase insurance to protect against dishonesty or theft by the City Manager, City Auditor & Clerk, City Director of Financial Services or (if hired as a full time employee) the City Attorney. Currently these employees are required to be bonded via surety bonds in favor of the City.

What is the difference between a surety bond and insurance? Surety bonds are a form of credit. They're often mistaken for insurance because they are purchased to protect an entity and involve payment when things don't go as planned. But with surety bonds, risk is always with the entity purchasing the bond (in this case, the City of Sarasota) - not an insurance company. Similar to paying interest on a bank loan, and akin to opening up a line of credit, a surety bond premium is a fee for borrowing money, covering pre-qualification and underwriting costs, and not a means of covering losses. A surety bond pays out to cover the City against financial harm, but the City must repay the bank over time. With insurance, the City pays a premium and if the City experiences damages, the City is paid by the insurance company.

The cost of a surety bond is impacted by the City employees credit score and background check. In general, applicants with high credit scores are offered lower bond rates, applicants with lower scores are offered higher rates, and a problematic background check may mean an employee can't be bonded. Requiring these employees be bonded raises the bar for the people you hire, rather than lowering it by permitting an insurance option.

I brought this issue before the Charter Review Committee, as I was made aware of a prior situation

where a Charter official did not qualify to be bonded and the City purchased insurance instead (which was out of compliance with the City Charter). The CRC was advised to add the insurance option to the Charter. It seems a reasonable hiring requirement that City employees at this high level qualify for a surety bond. This amendment is a toss up for me, with a lean against it.

County Charter Amendments

Proposed amendment to require that citizen-initiated charter amendments must gather the signatures of at least 10 percent of all registered voters in EACH (emphasis mine) of the county's five districts. You might think of this as the sour grapes amendment. Currently, the public must gather 10 percent of all registered Sarasota County voters. Now the County Commission wants citizens to gather 10% of registered voters' signatures in each district. This kind of nit-picking doesn't make sense as Charter amendments aren't passed by districts, but are passed by all County voters, or at-large. The County Commission is allowing their Single Member Districts defeat to cloud their judgment. They want to impose a signature bean-counting requirement. This amendment is clearly designed to unnecessarily burden citizens. It gets a "No" from me.

A bit of relevant history: Citizen initiated County Charter amendments used to only require gathering 5 percent of registered voters to qualify for being put to referendum. In 2018, County voters actually made it harder on themselves by passing an amendment increasing that burden to 10 percent of registered voters. Had the ballot language clarified the change from 5 percent to 10 percent, or 15,000 signatures to 30,000 signatures, citizens would have understood better that they were being further burdened. But the language was unclear about the change, and the amendment making it harder for citizens passed. Sarasota voters would do well to vote "No" and not let themselves be bamboozled by elected officials who want to impose senseless bureaucratic hurdles on their ability to shape their own local government.

The City and County Charters function as local constitutions. Amendments must be carefully considered, with an eye toward potential unintended consequences. It's our government, and these Charters are intended to make sure citizens' interests are put first.

3 Constitutional Amendments on November Ballot

The Florida State Legislature referred three constitutional amendments to the 2022 ballot during the 2021 and 2022 state legislative sessions. One would abolish the Florida Constitution Revision Commission and the other two relate to property taxes. Amendments require a 60 percent vote of electors to be approved.

Amendment 1 would authorize the state legislature to pass laws prohibiting flood resistance improvements made to a home from being taken into consideration when determining a property's assessed value for property tax purposes.

Amendment 2 would abolish the Florida Constitution Revision Commission. The Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) is a 37-member commission provided for in the state constitution that reviews and proposes changes to the Florida Constitution. The CRC refers constitutional amendments directly to the ballot for a public vote, which makes the commission unique amongst the

states. Florida is the only state with a commission empowered to refer constitutional amendments to the ballot.[2] The CRC convenes every 20 years on the following schedule: 1977, 1997, 2017, 2037, 2057, and so on. The 2017 CRC received 2,013 proposals from the public and 103 from the commission's members. In 2018, the CRC referred eight constitutional amendments to the ballot, combining multiple proposals in some of the amendments. One of the amendments was blocked from appearing on the ballot, but the seven remaining measures referred by the CRC were approved by voters.

Amendment 3 would authorize the Florida State Legislature to provide an additional homestead property tax exemption on \$50,000 of assessed value on property owned by certain public service workers including teachers, law enforcement officers, emergency medical personnel, active duty members of the military and Florida National Guard, and child welfare service employees.

**American Veterans
Fought For
Your Right
To Vote!
Don't Lose It!**



"The Right of Voting for representatives is the Primary Right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another"
- Thomas Paine, *Dissertation on First Principles of Government* (1795)

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For Common Sense Sarasota, Florida 34230
www.floridaveteransforcommonsense.org

Florida Veterans for Common Sense, Inc. is a non-partisan/non-profit 501(c)(4) corporation. Dues are 45.00 annually. Contact FLVeterans@aol.com

Opinion: The Boa Constrictor of Proto-fascism

BY GENE JONES, FLORIDA VETERANS
FOR COMMON SENSE

As a patriotic veterans group, Florida Veterans for Common Sense has two priorities this year, protecting our democracy and combating climate change.

In our view, domestic threats present more danger to our Constitutional Republic than at any time since the Civil War. Many indicators now evidence a protofascist slide.

What we mean by this esoteric term is that America is not a fascist state, as yet, although the MAGA political movement is intent on taking us into full-blown, goose-stepping fascism.

Fortunately, most citizens recognize the danger. If the majority stands up, we can stamp out the proto-fascist slide before it takes us further down the road of chaos and restricted freedoms.

Some may say that we exaggerate the threat; we do not. Like a boa constrictor, protofascism doesn't kill immediately although, over time, it squeezes the life from democracy. Already, it has a firm hold. As Jennifer Dresden, an expert on democracies and co-author of *The Authoritarian Playbook*, describes the process, "authoritarianism doesn't happen overnight." It develops from the slow drip of infringements on freedoms and breaches of long-standing democratic rules and traditions.

We are confident our fellow citizens will rip away the boa once they recognize how far it has entangled itself in our culture and government. If we're wrong, our democratic freedoms will end.

The boa is insidious. At first, it weakens its prey before the kill. This weakening is exactly how the protofascist movement proceeds. Already, many citizens do not trust government. This sad state of affairs is largely attributable to misinformation campaigns. The lies started in earnest with the falsehood that President Obama was not born in America. And now, the most audacious is that President Biden lost the 2020 Presidential election.

The MAGA protofascists' misinformation campaign has dire consequences.

On January 6, 2021, thousands of Americans fell for the lie that the election was illegitimate. Acting on their false belief, they attacked the Capitol and tried to stop the routine congressional certification of the election. The boa tightened its grip.

We feel the boa's squeeze in Florida. Our governor refuses to repudiate the lie about the presidential election. He also passes legislation and

consolidates his power to tighten the boa's hold. Here are examples of how he and his rubber stamp legislature are chipping away our democratic norms:

- Passed a voter suppression law. A court ruled it in part unconstitutional.
- Passed a law that established stand-alone election police. This outfit already may have violated citizens' civil rights by arresting people inappropriately.
- Passed a law that limits peaceful political demonstrations: A court found it unconstitutional.
- Passed an "anti-woke" law to limit the free speech rights of businesses and educators: A court found it unconstitutional.
- Passed a law that gerrymandered legislative districts: A court found it in part unconstitutional.

Citizens challenged these freedom-limiting laws in the courts because the laws were contrary to our Florida Constitution and law. Some cases continue in litigation.

As for the courts, the boa has a grip too. Most judges still follow the Constitution and law although recent decisions evidence that some judges support the MAGA protofascist movement as well.

Nevertheless, we can still rip the MAGA boa from the body politic. We the people have the power at the ballot box to throw out the protofascists before we're crushed. Vote in November so we can untangle the boa's stranglehold on Florida and the nation.



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The Origin of Retention Votes for Judges

The highest Court in Florida is the Supreme Court, which is composed of seven Justices. At least five Justices must participate in every case and at least four must agree for a decision to be reached.

To be eligible for the office of Justice, a person must be a registered voter who resides in Florida and must have been admitted to the practice of law in Florida for the preceding 10 years.

For most of Florida's history, all judges were chosen by direct election of the people. The only exception was when a vacancy occurred on a court between elections. In that case, the Governor appointed a replacement to serve until the next election was held.

This election of appellate judges led to many problems. They had to raise campaign money, which often was donated by the same attorneys who practiced before the Court. By the mid-1970s, the problem became even more serious after several Florida appellate judges were charged with violations of ethics. A scandal resulted, creating a public call for reforms.

In 1971, Governor Reubin Askew took the first

step toward reforming the system. That year he instituted a system called "merit selection." Under this system, the Governor referred a Court vacancy to an impartial panel, which suggested names of possible appointees. The Governor then selected a name from the list. In 1974, Justice Ben F. Overton became the first Supreme Court Justice chosen by this method.

Leaders knew, however, that a more complete change still was needed, because judges still faced periodic elections after appointment. The effort to do this was spearheaded by Governor Askew, Chief Justice Ben Overton, and State Rep. Talbot "Sandy" D'Alemberte, among others.

As a result, Florida voters amended the Constitution in 1976 to create a "merit retention" system for Florida's appellate judges. This system was meant to eliminate the many problems caused by judges running for office in an election.

When there is a vacancy on the Court today, this system means that the Governor chooses the next Justice from a list of between three and six qualified persons recommended by the Judicial Nominating

Commission. There is no Senate confirmation in Florida, so that person becomes a Justice after taking the proper oath. When Justices' terms expire, their names will appear on the general election ballot for a merit retention vote, if they wish to remain in office.

Under this system, the voters have eliminated contested elections in which appellate Justices and judges campaign against other candidates. Instead, the question on the ballot is: "Shall Justice _____ be retained in office?" No one runs against the Justice. Voters simply decide whether or not they will remain in office after the end of each term.

If a majority of the votes cast are not in favor of retaining the incumbent Justice, the Governor appoints another person to fill the vacancy. This person is chosen from a list of individuals whose applications have been reviewed and who have been found qualified by the Judicial Nominating Commission.

Source: www.FloridaSupremeCourt.org

The terms of five Supreme Court justices will expire in 2023. All five seats are up for retention election on November 8, 2022. Learn more about the 5 justices up for retention below.



Charles Canady
Canady has been on the court since 2008 and has served as Chief Justice since 2018.



Jorge Labarga
Labarga was appointed by Charlie Crist in 2009.



Ricky Polston
Appointed by Charlie Crist in 2008, Polston is the 2nd longest serving justice.



John D. Couriel
Couriel was appointed by Ron DeSantis in 2020 and sworn in last fall.



Jamie Rutland Grosshans
Grosshans was appointed by Ron DeSantis in 2020.

- Opposed the Florida Supreme Court's opinion that abortion is covered by Florida's privacy clause
- Voted with 4-1 majority that all fines and fees must be paid to restore felon voting rights
- Voted against requiring a unanimous verdict in death penalty cases

- Only justice who voted to put the assault weapons ban amendment on the ballot
- Voted with the majority in 2017 Supreme Court of Florida ruling reaffirming abortion is covered by Florida's privacy clause
- Opposes weakening protections in death penalty cases

- Dissented from the Court's majority opinion that abortion is covered by Florida's privacy clause
- Voted with 4-1 majority that all fines and fees must be paid to restore voting rights
- Opposed requiring a unanimous verdict in death penalty cases

- Cuban American - Father came from Cuba as part of Operation Pedro Pan
- Member of the Federalist Society since 2000

- Active in extremist Christian legal groups, particularly the Alliance Defending Freedom. ADF is a national organization which opposes abortion, same-sex marriage and LGBTQ rights. Central Florida Federalist Society officer



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As a listener-supported organization, the WSLR+Fogartyville *depend on YOU* to continue bringing you the programming you enjoy - both on-air at WSLR 95.5 (and streaming at www.wslr.org) and live at Fogartyville. We'll be kicking off our **Fall Membership Drive** this year with an **Open House** to celebrate our newly renovated patio. Then our programmers will take to the air from **October 19 -25** to ask for your support. We hope that you will give generously to help us continue **carving out a space for community** here in Sarasota.

If you'd like to get more involved, the Membership Drive is the perfect time to do so! We'll have a **New Volunteer Orientation on October 6th** at 6pm - sign up to attend at WSLR.org or call the office at **941-894-6469**. We're also looking for different local restaurants to supply lunch for our volunteers during each day of the Membership Drive. Please give us a call if you would like to offer support in this way.