



# Election Connection

**H**old on to your hats! The 2010 election cycle promises to be momentous and exciting. Not only will we be electing a United States Senator and a U.S. Congress member, but for the first time, every cabinet position, along with the Governor's race, will be on the ballot. All 120 state house seats are also up for election.

At the local level, we have races in two county commission districts, one county judicial seat, and three school board districts, as well as hospital board, charter review board, Sarasota Soil and Water and the Lakeside Plantation Community Development District.

Both cities of North Port and Venice will be electing commissioners and council members, respectively.

In the August 24 Primary Election, there will be charter amendments, both county and municipal, that will provide tax incentives to attract new business into Sarasota County. Finally, in the November 2 General Election, there will be nine state constitutional amendments to weigh in on.

On the legislative front, Governor Crist waited until the final day before signing House Bill 131 into law. Highlights in the bill include changes to the absentee ballot process for overseas and uniformed services voters in response to the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act); an extension of the 2010 paper ballot requirement for disability voters to 2016, saving \$45 million for the counties; recreated regulations for electioneering communication organizations with regard to disclosure of expenditures, and a preemption statement which will eliminate the need for two audits within a week of each other at great expense to the taxpayers of Sarasota County.

The staff and I are gearing up for both elections with just a few months left to prepare. I encourage each of you to also prepare for these elections by studying the candidates and issues and realizing that yes, a presidential election year is important, but mid-term elections are where "the rubber meets the road," here at the state and local level.

## 2010 Elections

Election	Election Day	Last day to register
<u>Primary Election</u>	<b>August 24, 2010</b>	July 26, 2010
<u>General Election</u>	<b>November 2, 2010</b>	October 4, 2010

## Three ways to vote in an election

Do you prefer to vote absentee ballot, early voting or at the polls on Election Day? Voting in your precinct on Election Day is only possible if you are assigned to work in your home precinct. Voting early has become a popular choice among all voters and will be available in six locations throughout the county for the August and November elections. Early voting starts 15 days prior to each election and ends on the Sunday before Election Day. By law, there is **NO early voting on the Monday before the election!**



Many poll workers like the convenience of using absentee ballots to cast their votes. Absentee ballots, unlike voting early or voting on Election Day, can be marked in the privacy of your home and eliminate the possibility of waiting in long lines at the polling place! Requests for an absentee ballot can be made by phone, in person or in writing. One request is good for all elections up to and including the next regularly scheduled general election, unless otherwise specified.

Voters who do not reside in Sarasota County year round are best advised to request an absentee ballot for each individual election. Be sure that the SOE has your correct mailing address on record for each election. Remember that the post office will not forward absentee ballots.

So if voting by absentee ballot is your choice, request your ballot today! Your request can be processed by phone at 941-861-8618 or online at [www.SarasotaVotes.com](http://www.SarasotaVotes.com). Click on "How to Vote/Absentee Voting". Whatever method you choose to cast your ballot, be assured it is your right and privilege to have a say in our county's democratic process!

### Mark your Calendars!

Classroom training for the August 24 Primary Election will start on July 27 and end on August 18. Training for the General Election will be held between October 12 and October 27. Our training locations may vary for each election due to availability, so please note the location listed on your training assignment letter when you receive it in the mail. If you are no longer interested in being a poll worker, please call Eileen at 861-8641 or Pam at 861-8640.

## Online poll worker training is under way in Sarasota County

Poll workers who worked the March 16 election, have a current email address on file with the elections office and indicated an interest in participating in online training will be eligible for the poll worker online training program for the August 24 and/or November 2 elections. Those who did not work in March but will work the August election will be able to participate in online training for the November election. Letters with log-in and procedure information will be mailed with assignment letters to those who are eligible. You will be able to access your training on July 19, 2010 and must complete it by August 10, 2010.

Are you a little nervous about doing the online training? No worries! We will have additional staff on hand to assist those poll workers, via phone or email, who have questions or issues as they get started. Training can be done from any computer, anywhere!

Online training will allow you to proceed through your training at your convenience and to review as often as you like up to election day. Upon completion of your training, our office will receive notification that you have finished. You will also have the capability to print out a certificate of completion.

Poll workers who have served their precincts as AutoMark inspectors will now be required to recertify their AutoMark designation by participating in online training and taking a one hour, hands-on class. You also are required to have worked the March election. If you are interested in becoming an AutoMark inspector and have worked the March election, email us at [Pollworker@SarasotaVotes.com](mailto:Pollworker@SarasotaVotes.com) or call 861-8648 and leave your name, number and a brief message.



The Supervisor of Elections is always on the lookout for new poll workers! Share your experiences with your family and friends and have them attend one of our upcoming orientations....

**Orientation Calendar 2010**

- Gulf Gate Library \_\_\_\_\_ Monday, July 12, 6 pm
- Fruitville Library \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday, July 13, 11 am
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday, Sept 14, 2 pm
- North Sarasota Library \_\_\_\_\_ Monday, Sept 13, 2 pm
- Jacaranda Library \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday, July 14, 11 am
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday, Sept 15, 11 am

**Sarasota Mentoring Initiative...**  
By Liz Brennan

I am so excited to share with you something that has been going on here in the elections office! No, I'm not talking about an election, although we all know the 'hustle and bustle' of the elections process keeps us all very busy. What I'm talking about is the Sarasota Mentoring Initiative.

This program is a volunteer experience in which a local adult volunteer is paired up with a local school-aged child for mentoring at one of our area schools. Mentoring can consist of tutoring, helping with homework or a school project, or just talking with and "listening" to your student. With the approval and encouragement of Supervisor of Elections Kathy Dent, who invited the local mentoring representative to speak with our staff, many elections office employees have been mentoring at least one hour a week through the school year.

I personally decided to get involved because I believe in giving back to my community. We all recognize that, with the fast pace of day to day life, the idea of volunteering your time can seem down-right overwhelming. But the effort and the results are so well worth it.

Cheryl Banning in our Sarasota office said, "Mentoring is such an incredible resource we all have within ourselves to guide others through life, especially today's teens that struggle with life issues. If we can give a little of our time to help a teen better their circumstances then both of you benefit from the experience. Remember, LOVE is spelled T-I-M-E."

Patrick Van-Cooten of our Voting Equipment Facility concurred when he said, "...Now I can get involved by helping a kid out just by being there. That alone is exciting for me. Trading experiences, finding out main interests, and complimenting their work, gives them a boost. When your mentee shows interest, it is the most gratifying feeling about the program. That is why I am enjoying being a mentor."

If this is something that interests you, I encourage you to call for more information. North county residents call Kathy Chamberlain at 941-468-7582, south county representative is Beverly Miller, who can be reached at 941-922-8788.



From left: Kathy Chamberlain, Beverly Miller, Liz Brennan

**REGISTRATION STATISTICS**

(As of May 26, 2010)

Republican	115,771
Democrat	85,354
Other	59,636
Total	260,761



**Why wasn't I called upon to work the March election?**

Were you wondering why you weren't called for the March election?

The Special Referendum Election called by the Sarasota County School Board, was held on March 16, 2010. In an attempt to control expenses, one goal was to consider the anticipated voter turnout when determining the poll worker numbers. Consequently, we had a smaller poll worker staff in many of the precincts. Also, to prepare and train for our larger elections this fall, recently recruited poll workers and students were some of the first selected to work the polls.

We also find ourselves short of available poll workers during the summer months as our seasonal residents head north to visit friends and family. Poll workers who were available to work the August and November elections were also given preferential consideration in working the March election.

So, does this mean you will be passed over in the future? Absolutely not! We expect to have most of our "regulars" back to working the polls in the upcoming August Primary and November General elections. If you have not been called upon and are available to work, you can contact us at [Pollworker@SarasotaVotes.com](mailto:Pollworker@SarasotaVotes.com)

**HURRICANE SEASON'S BREWING!**



Visit our Web site  
[www.SarasotaVotes.com](http://www.SarasotaVotes.com)  
for up to the minute election information.

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***Supervisor of Elections joins with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice***

By Terrina Powell, South County Coordinator

The Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections office and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) have teamed up to turn a negative past into a positive future for area youth.

To kick off this new partnership I traveled to Tallahassee during “Children’s Week” in April to participate in a number of educational activities and events. Accompanying me were four local teens, wanting to learn more about how to reach out to and advocate for at-risk youth.

We toured the old and new Capitol Buildings and Florida State University and observed a House and Senate session. We also attended youth advocacy workshops, a “kid’s only” town hall meeting, and the Children’s Capital for a Day luncheon. Finally, we had the opportunity to meet the Florida Children & Youth Cabinet Members and spent time talking to and having our pictures taken with Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp and FDJJ Secretary Frank Peterman.

It was interesting to hear the views of these young people about the challenges they face and the different ways that we can help with these challenges. That is what this partnership is intended to do! It was a great learning experience for all.

We will be bringing at-risk youth into our offices as volunteers to provide them an opportunity to be involved in the election process and to experience the workings of their government. We are also planning several events outside the office where SOE staff and the youth will volunteer together in our community.

If you have any suggestions or ideas for making this partnership a great success, please contact me in our Venice office at 861-3760.



**From Left, Sarasota teens David, Denise, Timothy and Jason pose with Lt. Gov Jeff Kottkamp during Children’s Week in Tallahassee.**

Help turn a negative past into a positive future and put a smile on one young person’s face!