

Oct. - Dec.  
2025



# FALL '25 NEWSLETTER



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## Message From Your Supervisor

# \$1,200 scholarships available

## Leslie R. Swan

As we ring in a New Year, the Florida Supervisors of Elections Association is pleased to announce three (3) scholarship opportunities for deserving Florida college students.

Each scholarship is valued at \$1,200. The scholarships are designed to support students who demonstrate academic achievement, financial need, and a commitment to fields related to public service and civic engagement.

Interested students may obtain the scholarship application and review eligibility requirements online at [VoteIndianRiver.gov](http://VoteIndianRiver.gov) or in person at the Indian River County Supervisor of Elections office, located at 4375 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Vero Beach. The deadline to submit applications is March 6, 2026.

### Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a registered Florida voter
- Have lived in Florida for at least the two (2) years immediately preceding the application
- Be majoring in Political Science, Public Administration, Business Administration, or Journalism/Mass Communication
- Be enrolled or accepted as a junior or senior at an accredited Florida college or university
- Maintained a "C" grade point average or above for the previous academic year
- Demonstrate financial need

### Selection Process

Applications will be accepted at the Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office for all students who are registered to vote in our county.

All applications will be reviewed and one finalist will be forwarded to the Florida Supervisors of Elections



2024 Scholarship Recipient: Indian River County resident Riley Kesterson, center, with her mother, Suzanne Curry, left, and Supervisor of Elections Leslie Swan. Kesterson received the 2024 Dorothy Walker Ruggles Scholarship from the Florida Supervisor of Elections.

Scholarship Committee for consideration.

“The Florida Supervisors of Elections Association is committed to promoting excellence in election administration and supporting civic education and engagement throughout the State of Florida. This scholarship program is a great opportunity to support students who are preparing for careers in public service, business, journalism, and leadership,” said Leslie Rossway Swan, Indian River County Supervisor of Elections. “All eligible students are encouraged to apply.”

For more information, students may visit [VoteIndianRiver.gov](http://VoteIndianRiver.gov) or call 772-226-4705.



# SOE staff continue tradition of helping place wreaths

The 2025 National Wreaths Across America Day was observed Dec. 13 in Indian River County.

Supervisor of Elections staff members joined other volunteers in laying 1,600 wreaths at Crestlawn Cemetery in Vero Beach.

A total of 3,600 wreaths were placed in cemeteries across the county, including Sebastian, Gifford, Winter Beach, West Wabasso, Oslo and John's Island. A ceremony also was conducted on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary in Vero Beach.

More than 500 volunteers participated in the wreath laying events starting at 10:30 a.m. and ending at noon Dec. 13.

Each December on National Wreaths Across America Day, wreath-laying ceremonies are conducted at 4,000-plus locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad. The mission of the Wreaths Across America organization is to remember the fallen, honor those who serve, and to teach our children the value of freedom.

This initiative pays tribute to the sacrifices made by our service men and women by adorning their final resting places with festive wreaths. The ceremony includes remarks from local organizers, along with a solemn wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate the dedication and service of those who served our country.

Wreaths Across America Location Coordinators work throughout the year with cemetery contacts and local governments to organize and promote the ceremony, coordinate wreath delivery and



Elections Administration Coordinator Katie Otto helps Emory Obergfell place a wreath on a grave at Crestlawn Cemetery in Vero Beach on Dec. 13.

manage the placement of wreaths. In addition to location coordinators, the assistance of community members, local businesses, civic groups and veterans organizations are relied upon to place wreaths on the day of the event.

Joe and Sue Crowley and Rick Lewis are three of the Indian River County Location Coordinators, who helped get the Wreaths Across America program started here in 2018.

Joe began his service at the Elections Office as a Poll Deputy before being recruited to work in the warehouse as Logistics and Equipment Manager. Sue serves as a Clerk on Election Day and assists the Vote-By-Mail Department. Rick is a Field Technician.

Other SOE staff and family who participated were Supervisor Leslie Swan, husband, Mike and grandsons, Bennett and Hartley; Chief Deputy Maureen Houssell and husband, Andy; Elections Administration Coordinator Katie Otto; and Election Worker Coordinator Jenny Obergfell and daughter, Emory.

For more about Wreaths Across America, go to [WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/fl0500](https://WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/fl0500).

## REGISTERED VOTERS IN INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

(As of Dec. 30, 2025)

DEMOCRAT - 25,988

REPUBLICAN - 61,701

NPA - 24,644

OTHER - 4,727

TOTAL - 117,060

## LET'S GET SOCIAL

Be sure to like and follow us on social media to receive frequent updates and accurate information from your trusted source of voting and election information in Indian River County.



#VOTEINDIANRIVER



### COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Supervisor of Elections staff, spouses, children and grandchildren volunteered to place wreaths for National Wreaths Across America Day on Dec. 13 at Crestlawn Cemetery in Vero Beach. For more about Wreaths Across America, go to [WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/fl0500](https://WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/fl0500).

 **SOE Community Outreach**

# Dementia simulation ‘awful’

SOE’s Anita Wheeler takes part in Mobile Dementia Experience

**By Elections Staff and Alzheimer & Parkinson Association of Indian River County**

Supervisor of Elections Candidate Coordinator Anita Wheeler, who is in the United Way’s Loaned Executive Program this year, participated in the Mobile Dementia Experience on Oct. 29.

The Alzheimer & Parkinson Association of Indian River County brought the mobile van to the United Way for a high impact, dementia simulation experience.

It can be difficult to understand what it is like for a person who suffers from a memory disorder. The simulation helps caregivers better understand what their loved one is experiencing.

When asked about the experience, Wheeler said, “It was awful! It was awful realizing what they’re going through, but a great experience to help understand and empathize.”

The Association representative said Wheeler’s reaction is common and what they’re looking for from the participants.

The exercise immerses participants into life with dementia, resulting in a deeper understanding of what it’s like to live with cognitive impairment and sensory change. Caregivers, professionals and individuals get a better understanding of the hardships and confusion that occurs for a person with dementia.

The Dementia Live® training provided by the Alzheimer and Parkinson Association helps many

**Continued on Next Page**



ABOVE: Candidate Coordinator Anita Wheeler gestures as she prepares to go into the Alzheimer & Parkinson Association’s Mobile Dementia Experience on Oct. 29. AT LEFT: The exercise immerses participants into life with dementia, resulting in a deeper understanding of what life is like with a memory disorder. Photos provided by Alzheimer & Parkinson Association.

 **SOE Community Outreach**



## Proud to wear pink

Elections Office staff wear pink Oct. 24 in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Pictured, from left, Paul James, David Cruz, Lori Lansing, Angela Harvey, Katie Otto, Supervisor Leslie Swan, Maureen Houssell, Anita Wheeler, Daisy Zamora, Katherine Bauman and Jenny Oberfell.

## United Way Loaned Executive Program

The United Way Loaned Executive Program is a corporate partnership where companies, in this case the Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office, temporarily “lend” employees to the United Way to assist the organization in boosting community fundraising and awareness of local needs. The Loaned Executive, typically a “high-potential employee,” is given the opportunity to develop leadership skills through the experience.

Loaned Executives act as community ambassadors, learning about ALICE populations, delivering presentations, and managing workplace campaigns, gaining valuable experience in public speaking, networking and community engagement, benefiting both the individual, the company and the United Way’s mission. The United Way initiative known as ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, identifying working families who earn above the federal poverty level but still can’t afford basic necessities like housing, food, and health care.

## Dementia simulation

Continued from Previous Page

local organizations and groups better understand the emotional and physical challenges that a person with dementia is faced with every day.

It was emotional, eye-opening, and helped me better understand the challenges faced by those living with dementia, said Anita.

Want your team to experience it too? Contact the Alzheimer & Parkinson Association of Indian River County at (772) 563-0505.



The Alzheimer & Parkinson Association of Indian River County brought the mobile van to the United Way for a high impact, dementia simulation experience in October.

# Training essential for municipal elections too

By Elections Staff

The Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office conducts Election Worker Training in preparation for all elections, and 2025 was no different.

Training for the Nov. 4 Municipal Elections got off to a great start in October with EViD Operators completing training on how to process voters on the electronic poll books. Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Deputy and Field Technician training also was successful.

Election Worker Coordinator Jenny Obergfell leads the training. This year she incorporated a fun game that enhanced the training process. The game tested election workers on how to set up the polls, contents of the Blue Transfer Carts, forms workers need to be familiar with and how to open the polls.



Election Worker Coordinator Jenny Obergfell, standing, reviews with Municipal Election Day workers how to operate the electronic poll books and ballot printers.



Logistics and Equipment Manager Joe Crowley, above, right, talks with election workers on how to help voters cast ballots. Workers also were tested on how to process voters on the electronic poll books and ballot printers.





# Voting equipment election ready

By Elections Staff

Indian River County Supervisor of Elections staff conducted a Logic & Accuracy test of the voting equipment on Oct. 10 in advance of the Municipal Elections on Nov. 4.

Members of the City of Vero Beach and Fellsmere canvassing boards were on hand to witness the tests. All equipment tested ready for the 2025 Municipal Elections.

Vero Beach Canvassing Board members were City Clerk Sherri Philo, City Attorney John Turner and Chief of Police David Currey.

City of Fellsmere Canvassing Board members were City Clerk Maria Suarez-Sanchez, City Attorney Warren Dill and Mayor Jessica Salgado.

The Elections Office recently upgraded its electronic pollbooks, also known as EViDs, to the new state-of-the-art tablet pollbook. Ballot on Demand (BOD) printers accompany each EViD.



Members of the City of Vero Beach and Fellsmere canvassing boards listen as Supervisor of Elections Logistics & Equipment Manager Joe Crowley, right, explains the Logic & Accuracy testing of elections equipment in advance of the Nov. 4 Municipal Elections.



Left photo: Joe Crowley, IT Manager David Cruz and IT Specialist Paul James conduct the Logic & Accuracy testing of the DS200 ballot tabulating machines on Oct. 10 as members of the Vero Beach and Fellsmere canvassing boards watch with Supervisor of Elections Leslie Swan. Right photo: Cruz explains the Clear Audit process on Oct. 10.

# SOE employees take time to give thanks



Supervisor of Elections staff and family members gathered Nov. 24 to share lunch and to celebrate Thanksgiving. Employees cooked their favorite Thanksgiving dishes to share with each other.

 **Captured on Camera**

**Doing good for the Salvation Army**



SOE employees, clockwise, top left, Katherine Bauman, Lori Lansing, Paul James and Daisy Zamora ring the bell for the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign on Dec. 5 in front of the U.S. Post Office on Cardinal Drive.



**Sun rises on 2025 Turkey Trot**



Voter Services Manager Katherine Bauman participated in the 2025 Thanksgiving Day 5K Trot Against Poverty at Riverside Park in Vero Beach. This annual event raises money and awareness for the nonprofit United Against Poverty.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

- Jan. 5-Feb. 5: TCCH Outreach: Health Check. Voter Check. Elections staff will be at Treasure Coast Community Health locations to offer clients opportunity to register to vote or request mail ballots.
- Jan. 9: St. Edward's School students tour SOE office.
- Jan. 15: Initial mailing of Vote-By-Mail ballots for Town of Orchid Special Election.
- Feb. 6: 9 a.m., Logic & Accuracy Testing of Voting Equipment for Town of Orchid Special Election; 9:45 a.m., Open, process and duplication of mail ballots from Special Election.
- Feb. 24: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Town of Orchid Special Election; 4 p.m., Open, process and duplication of mail ballots; 7 p.m., Canvass provisional ballots, cure affidavits and canvass election returns.
- Feb. 26: 5 p.m., Canvass provisional ballots, cure affidavits and official results from Town of Orchid Special Election.
- Feb. 27: 9 a.m., Town of Orchid Special Election recount (if necessary) and Post-Election Audit.

**2026 CANDIDATE WORKSHOP**

If you're interested in learning what it takes to be a candidate for public office, the Elections Office is hosting a Candidate Workshop:

**When:** Thursday, March 12  
**Time:** 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.  
**Where:** Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office, 4375 43rd Ave., Vero Beach  
**Register:** To register or for additional information, call 772-226-4700.



# Making Christmas bright



The Supervisor of Elections Office was honored to partner with two organizations this year in an effort to spread holiday cheer.

SOE staff donated more than \$450 worth of gifts, shared between the Gifford Youth Achievement Center and the Hibiscus Children's Village.

TOP PHOTO: For the fifth year, SOE staff supported the Gifford Youth Achievement Center and Gifford Historical Museum's annual Gifford Community Toy Giveaway.

RIGHT PHOTO: Staff partnered with Hibiscus Village for its "Santa's Elves Christmas for the Hibiscus Kids!" program.



## PRECINCT MAPS AVAILABLE

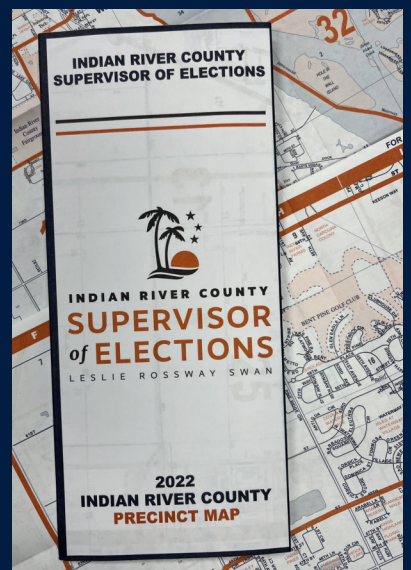
Hot 🔥 off the Press!

Indian River County's voting precincts were redrawn in 2022 based off 2020 Census data.

Maps depicting the new precinct boundary lines are now available online and in print.

An interactive digital Dolph Map is online: [voteindianriver.gov](http://voteindianriver.gov).

Printed precinct maps are available at our office from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The first map is free; additional maps are \$5 each.



# Creative outlet: Holiday cookie trays



Employees at the Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office come together for one day each December to decorate Christmas cookies and make scrumptious holiday treats.

It's a toss up which one is everyone's favorite, but the Rice Krispies Treats is a top contender.

Once all the cookies are covered in sprinkles, pretzels dipped in icing, brownies decorated as reindeer, and popcorn and candy bagged up, the goodies are placed on trays, wrapped in plastic and adorned with a bow and holiday card. The trays go out to each voting precinct as a "thank you."





# Democracy Days goes school to school

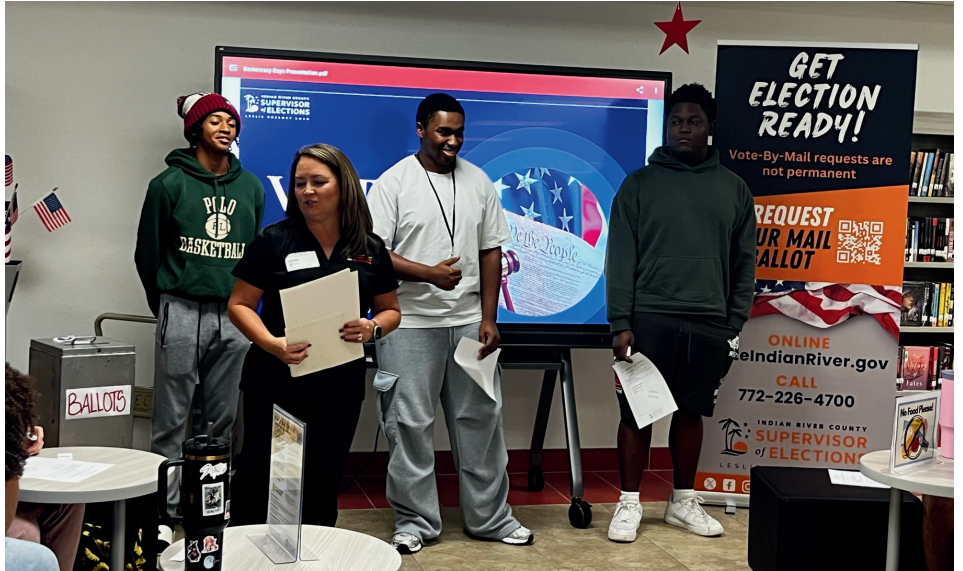
Democracy Days is an innovative program aimed at actively engaging children, students and adults in the elections process.

Indian River County Supervisor of Elections staff visited Vero Beach High School, Indian River Charter and Sebastian River high schools this fall to conduct Democracy Days.

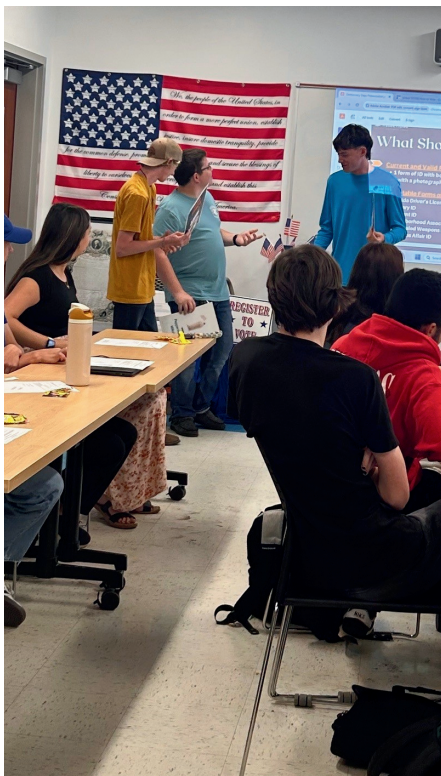
Democracy Days is a 45-minute program, which includes a mock election and voter registration opportunities. A video about the history of voting in America also is available.

The Elections Office strives to ensure all residents are informed about the voting process and office operations through a diverse collection of voter outreach initiatives.

For more information or to schedule a Democracy Days presentation, contact the Elections Office at 772-226-4700.



Elections Office Candidate Coordinator Anita Wheeler, second from left, talks to students about the election process. A mock election also was conducted. Visits were made this fall to Vero Beach High School, Indian River Charter and Sebastian River high schools.



## 2025 Winter Conference

Supervisor of Elections Leslie Swan and Chief Deputy Maureen Houssell attended the Florida Supervisor of Elections 2025 Winter Conference in Daytona from Dec. 14-17.



 Captured on Camera



## Holiday celebrations

ABOVE: Supervisor of Elections staff gather in front of the office Christmas tree to take a picture for the 2025 Christmas card. Supervisor Leslie Swan, seated center, reads "Twas the Night Before the Election." AT LEFT: Supervisor Swan and her husband, Mike, participated in First Methodist Church's Trunk or Treat on Oct. 24. Attendees were able to vote on their favorite decorated trunk. BELOW: Supervisor Swan was one of the judges in the Pumpkin Decorating Contest conducted at the Property Appraiser's office in October. Pictured with Swan, from left, Sheriff Eric Flowers, Tax Collector Carol Jean Jordan, Executive Assistant Adria Espich and Property Appraiser Wesley Davis.

