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## NOTICE

### Manual Recount

U.S. Senate

Commissioner of  
Agriculture

Where: Supervisor of Elections  
421 South Court Street  
Bronson, FL 32621  
(Side Entrance)

Date: Friday, November 16, 2018

Time: 1:00 p.m.

### Levy County votes counted manually; All Florida counties' votes are counted manually

This sign shows the date and time for the scheduled manual recount process to begin in Levy County. It started about 30 minutes after 1 p.m., because that is when County Commission Chairman John Meeks and County Judge Tim Browning arrived. They are two of the three persons on the Levy County Elections Canvassing Board. This process of a manual recount was required in all 67 Florida counties.

#### Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 17, 2018  
at 3:58 p.m.

**BRONSON** -- Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones continued Friday (Nov. 16) to work toward

determining final official results in Levy County from the Nov. 6 election.



**Kearston Andrews of the Levy County Supervisor of Elections Office prepares for the manual recount.**

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**Assistant Supervisor of Elections Jordan Lindsey prepares for the manual recount.**



**Levy County Canvassing Board members (from left) County Commission Chairman John Meeks, Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones and County Judge Tim Browning start the process.**

**Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones shows one of the test ballots put into one of the two machines used to count votes Friday. One machine was designated for the United States Senate race and one machine was designated to review ballots for the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture race.**



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**The Canvassing Board looks at the tape readout to prove the machine is working correctly. During the machine recount on Sunday (Nov. 11), the logic and accuracy tests for the machines took all morning because there were so many machines.**

Two state races are so close in the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties that Levy County Supervisor of Elections Jones, Gilchrist County Supervisor of Elections Connie Sanchez and Dixie County Supervisor of Elections Starlet Cannon followed the mandatory process, which included a manual recount Friday afternoon.

All 67 counties carefully reviewed the votes in the races in Florida for United States Senate, and Florida Commissioner of Agriculture.

United States Sen. Bill Nelson (Dem.) is running against Gov. Rick Scott (Rep.) for the United States Senate.

The second tightly-contested race is for Commissioner of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Democrat Nikki Fried is up against Republican Matt Caldwell for that position.

The 67 supervisors of elections first were mandated to conduct a machine recount last Sunday (Nov. 11). That took 12 hours in Levy County.

On Friday, the laws of the State of Florida demanded a manual recount, because the difference between votes cast for the two candidates was so close.

The official final counts are due to the Florida Secretary of State, Division of Elections, from all 67 counties on Sunday (Nov. 17) at noon (12 p.m.).

Supervisor of Elections Jones explained that during the machine recount over and under votes were outstacked in all races that were being machine recounted. Outstacked means they were put in piles outside the normal stacks of ballots.

These over and under voted ballots were sealed on Sunday (Nov. 11) and were unsealed and reviewed Friday (Nov. 16) manually.

That manual process took from 1:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. on Friday, Jones said.

Levy County Supervisor of Elections Jones and her staff were unable to attend the

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annual Thanksgiving lunch at the courthouse on Friday because of the manual recount, but Jones said everyone in her office knows they must do what must be done for the voters of Levy County.

As for the midterm election process, she remains pleased with the people who dedicated themselves to the preservation of this right in Levy County.

“We have wonderful poll workers,” Jones said. “My staff was amazing.”

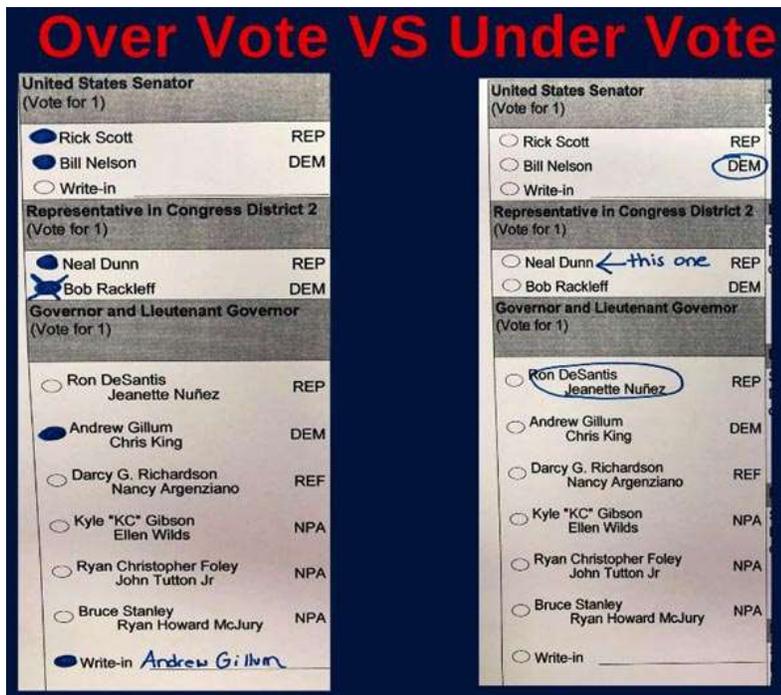
She feels the whole state of Florida deserves credit for its commitment to proper elections.

“We have a lot of great supervisors of elections,” Jones said. “Every one of them works very hard.”

Even though Levy County's machine recount was 100 percent accurate, as proved on the previous Sunday (Nov. 11), there may be votes that were not read by the machine – because some voters did not fill out the ballots correctly.

The machine ONLY “sees” the oval on the left-hand side of each candidates’ names.

“It’s like taking an ACT or SAT test,” Jones said. “If you don’t fill in the bubble, then you could fail your test because the machine ONLY sees the bubble.”



Here are examples of over and under votes. Notice how the voters failed to follow directions. Vote for one candidate per race. Color in the bubble - don't circle the name, etc. Examples provided by Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones.

Levy County Elections Canvassing Board members Supervisor of Elections Jones, Levy County Commission Chairman John Meeks and Levy County Judge J.T. “Tim” Browning are the final deciders in regard to the review of ballot issues in this county, just as the

other canvassing boards serve that duty in the other counties.

On Friday afternoon, two of Jones’ staff were on the counting team for the Commissioner of Agriculture race. Assistant Supervisor of Elections Jordan Lindsey and Information Specialist Kearston Andrews were on that team.

Levy County Elections Office Customer Relations Specialist Carole Weins is the other member of the four-person team at the Levy County Supervisor of Elections Office.

Among the many people from the Democrat and Republican parties were two “leads.” The Democrat Party Lead was Zoe Brouns.

The Republican Party Lead was William McFetridge.

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**Republican George Lambka, an active member of the Levy County Republican Executive Committee, was part of the process on Friday.**



**Democrat N. Albert Bacharach, Jr. was part of the process on Friday. Bacharach is a well-established attorney in Gainesville. Democrat Brandon Peters of Williston, an attorney and former candidate for the United States House of Representatives, also helped assure fairness during the manual recount. Peters is striving to restart the Democratic Executive Committee in Levy County.**

All-told, there were 17,207 Levy County voters participating in this election. In the mail-in ballots, where 13 signatures did not match the voter cards, that caused 12 of them to be excluded. One person confirmed his or her signature.

There were 39 total provisional ballots in this election. Eight of those were cured and were counted. A provisional ballot is one that is not cast due to a problem. When the problem is cured, that ballot is counted. If the problem is not fixed, then it is not counted.

Jones said she and her team are very diligent. They have found people who “forgot”

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they voted early as they try to vote again at their precincts.

At least one person claimed they thought early voting at the Supervisor of Elections Office in Bronson was only for candidates and not the amendments; so, they wanted to vote again at their precinct.

This belief does not fit reality or logic, however, because some of the amendments were on the front of the two-sided ballot.

Jones said voters must take responsibility. Look at the instructions. This was a two-sided ballot.

For people who think they are going to vote by mail in 2020, it is not too early to go through that process now, Jones said. Do not wait until the last minute to seek to vote by mail.

Jones said any person can call the elections office or send an email for assistance in understanding any aspect of the elections, including how to assure their current signature matches what is on file.

As for the action from Friday (Nov. 16), between the races for the United States Senate and Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, there were a total of 431 undervotes and two overvotes in Levy County.

The counting team worked with both political parties and candidate observers to review each ballot.

Of those 433 total ballots reviewed manually by counting teams, only six ballots were referred to the canvassing board for a ruling. Below is a breakdown of the changes in Levy County to each candidate after review:

## **U.S. Senate**

**Rick Scott +1**

**Bill Nelson +2**

## **Commissioner of Agriculture**

**Matt Caldwell 0**

**Nicole "Nikki" Fried +2**

The official final counts are due from all counties at the Florida Department of State, Division of Elections at noon on Sunday. After those final numbers are posted, any candidate has 10 days to contest them. After that point, all of the uncontested races will be finished.

Jones has been in the elections' office for 24 years, and she has been the Levy County Supervisor of Elections for five years. She saw the hubbub of "hanging chads" in 2000, although there was none of that in Levy County.

This midterm election provided some unique challenges for Florida, she said.

Jones said she is happy there are rules in place to govern elections to assure the people of America that elections will be fair. In regard to the manual recount undertaken on Friday, she said there is a time for a recount – and that is when the elections are this close.

State law mandates when machine and manual recounts must occur.

In a race for County Commission in Levy County, there was one race decided by three votes. That had to be recounted, she said.

Looking at the Caldwell-Fried race, Levy County showed it added two votes for Fried as a result of the Canvassing Board's review and ruling.

Looking at the Scott-Nelson race, Levy County showed it added one vote for Scott and

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two for Nelson as a result of the Canvassing Board's review and ruling.

Supervisor of Elections Jones and her staff continue being diligent and practicing great care with every aspect of the process of voting.

Jones said that every eligible vote does count.

And with the passage of Amendment 4, there is another aspect that all 67 offices of supervisors of elections will see soon, and that is the restoration of voting rights for felons in Florida.

As noted in a story by Doug Mataconis in the *Outside The Beltway* website "About 1.2 million convicted felons in Florida will automatically have their right to vote restored, thanks to a ballot measure that received about 65 percent of the vote Tuesday (Nov. 6)."

At least 60 percent of active voters on Nov. 6, 2018 had to approve it for Amendment 4 to become law. And it became law.