

# Elections get down to nuts, bolts

**Our position:** Republican Mercedes León and incumbent Democrat Donna Bryant can work efficiently and effectively.

**T**he job of supervisor of elections is critical. It is particularly important in light of how close the presidential race of 2000 was in Florida and how many questions arose about the integrity of the vote.

County elections supervisors take charge of the nuts and bolts of conducting an election, handle disputes and even select the method of voting.

The supervisor's post requires an administrator, not a politician.

## Republican

Two political newcomers have done their homework for the job, but Kissimmee attorney Mercedes León is a little better prepared. Of the three challengers seeking to unseat a longtime incumbent, Ms. León is the only one who has looked at the office's budget. That's a key matter for anyone who wants to run an office.

Ms. León has done a better job of preparing to handle an office that requires the utmost in public trust. She has good ideas to improve the Web site and provide more information for voters and candidates. She says incumbent Donna Bryant has followed the requirements of a settlement with the U.S. Justice Department that came about after the 2000 elections but hasn't done more than the minimum.

Donny Shroyer is a schoolteacher with an interest in

politics who says he would follow elections law as set out by the state, while offering a friendly and professional office. If unsuccessful in this race, Mr. Shroyer should look for future opportunities to run for office.

## Democrat

Incumbent Donna Bryant is a steady hand who is much more qualified to continue running the office compared with her primary challenger.

Mrs. Bryant has more than two decades under her belt heading Osceola's elections and understands the laws governing voting and the intricacies of running such an important office.

She is fair and considerate of candidates from all parties and functions as a nonpartisan in her office. That's what the community needs in a supervisor. After the 2000 election, when some problems were found, Mrs. Bryant corrected them. Mrs. Bryant says she has increased poll-worker training, kept abreast of voting technology and done more to reach out to the community.

Challenger Armando Ramirez thinks the office needs to involve all segments of the community. Unfortunately, Mr. Ramirez is ill-prepared to manage a department as important as the elections office.

The *Orlando Sentinel* endorses Republican Mercedes León and Democrat Donna Bryant in the Aug. 31 primaries for supervisor of elections.