

## Property Appraiser

**Candidate Name:** John Glaser

**Election:** General

**Party Affiliation:** Democrat

### **Biographical Sketch/Qualifications:**

I'm a native Floridian, originally from Clearwater Beach. After studying Electrical Engineering at Drexel University and Business Administration at the University of Pennsylvania, I returned to Orlando where I made my home for 25 years until I moved permanently to the Ft. Myers area in 2004 to be close to my elderly parents. My parents are my greatest teachers, instilling in me their conservative values: the importance of family & friends, the responsibilities of management, good work ethics and the ability to identify & resolve conflicts.

I have been a self-employed Florida Electrical Contractor since 1990 with top revenues under \$6 million/43 employees. Prior to resuming the electrical trade, I headed up 46 offices for a multi-Billion dollar mortgage corporation and worked as a bank auditor for an international CPA firm. I have taught/ tutored for over 30 years and continue to teach apprentices and leadership/management courses.

### **How can you as Property Appraiser help the residents of Lee County in light of the recent real estate down turn?**

The incumbent has a history of over-assessing Lee County for many years. Lee County property owners never should have been taxed based upon a speculative bubble. State law requires "Fair Market" value assessments, not "bull run" appraising. A responsible Property Appraiser would have been conservative when valuing properties and reluctant to follow the vagaries of a runaway market to fill county coffers. I will work for Lee County residents, not Lee County government, to ease the burden of our taxpayers and restore stability by providing balanced, realistic assessments; not the inflated values of the current Property Appraiser, Ken Wilkinson.

### **What are your opinions regarding the "Save-Our-Homes" Amendment?**

Any legislation that limits rampant taxation is good, however the "Save-Our-Homes" Amendment falls short of protecting all taxpayers. Ask the thousands of Lee County residents losing their homes – many due to property taxes that doubled, tripled or more in just one year. Is that fair? Is it the American Dream to lose your home because the Property Appraiser went berserk in raising your taxes? I noticed that his "Save-Our-Homes" didn't protect us from him. Sellers can't sell homes when buyers can't afford the taxes. Why has the "Father" of "Save-Our-Homes", Ken Wilkinson, failed to "Save Lee County?"

### **What control would you have to prevent future artificial inflation of property values?**

Blame inflated property values on the incumbent, not the market. Ken Wilkinson had the power and the responsibility to serve Lee County with better judgment and he failed. It

was up to Ken to have a steady hand on the tiller, but instead he let the taxes “rise with the tide”. Inflated property values led to inflated tax bills. I would:

- 1) Value properties realistically, not speculatively.
  - 2) Assess properties over a 5-year cycle to minimize rollercoastering of values; thereby establishing a benchmark.
  - 3) Standardize the assessment process to minimize the wild fluctuations found in the current system – “Fair and Equitable For All”
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**Candidate Name:** Larry St. Amand

**Election:** General

**Party Affiliation:** No Party Affiliation

**Biographical Sketch/Qualifications:**

Having arrived in North Fort Myers in 1970 and to Cape Coral in 1990, my roots are firmly planted here. I’ve watched as Lee County has grown from a small community to a much larger, vibrant area where people of all ages choose to live and enjoy our wonderful year-round weather. I’m a part of the fabric of this community, both personally and professionally.

As a Lee County taxpayer and small business owner, I know first hand how the public feels right now. I have been passionately involved in the real estate market for many years. Having been a successful small business owner since 1983 I feel I have the leadership ability needed to properly run the Lee County Property Appraisers Office. I am also currently employed as a Realtor with Sun Country Realty.

**How can you as property appraiser help the residents of Lee County in light of the recent real estate down turn?**

I feel one of the biggest problems that we are currently facing is the fact that the incumbent property appraiser did not correctly create the 2007 tax roll. We all know that the down turn started at the beginning of 2006 and I feel that the property appraisers office did not reflect the true market values for assessment purposes concerning the 2007 tax roll.

The other major problem in the current property appraisers office is the attitude toward the taxpayers. I have many ideas to bring much needed improvement for customer service in the Lee County Property Appraisers Office.

**What are your opinions regarding the Save Our Homes Amendment?**

My opinion is that SOH creates disparity among taxpayers. This is something that the original framers of this amendment failed to take into consideration. In reality it has nothing to do with the operation of the Property Appraisers Office, whose job is to fairly, correctly and equally assess each Lee County parcel for tax purposes. I feel the current property appraiser has spent too much time on the SOH issue and therefore that contributed to the poor job he has done with the 2007 tax roll.

**What control would you have to prevent future artificial inflation of property values?**

I do not feel that the Property Appraisers office has any control over this situation. The job of the property appraisers office is to fairly assess taxable value. Appraisals that were prepared for loan purposes are some of what has contributed to the artificial inflation of property values.

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**Candidate Name:** Kyle Lee

**Election:** Primary

**Party Affiliation:** Republican

**Biographical Sketch/Qualifications:**

I am a life long Lee County resident, and graduated from Florida Gulf Coast's Lutgret College of Business with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management.

My first thoughts of a political career were inspired through a college accredited class I attended at Florida State (Boys State). The class was sponsored by The American Legion and provided intense, hands on learning about government operations and politics.

I am President of Lee Research and Development Inc. a company I established in college, with an alternative interment process (patent pending). I am also Vice President and partner in Ride Green Inc., a new motor vehicle franchise business. In addition, I have worked for our family business since the age of 13 which includes Real Estate and an auction business.

When elected I will take the necessary course to become a Florida Certified Appraiser. I possess the same qualifications that the current property appraiser maintained when taking office in 1980.

**How can you as Property Appraiser help the residents of Lee County in light of the recent real estate down turn?**

First and foremost I plan to immediately and legally reappraise every Lee County Property back to the 2002/04 assessed values. Which according to current conditions is where they ought to be. In addition, I will implement changes to the appraisal system to prevent future boom and bust situations. This will include market trends, foreclosures, economy, unemployment and other pertinent information. It will also prevent the necessity for thousands of appeals as occurred last year.

**What are your opinions regarding the "Save-Our-Homes" Amendment?**

The Save-Our-Homes amendment is a double-edged sword. While it restricts homestead property to a three percent per year increase, it also increases taxes by three percent per year in a down market. In addition, all over assessed property means the property owner, homestead or otherwise is subject to over taxation by the many taxing authorities. Even Save Our Homes properties are over assessed, causing many people with homestead to pay more than their fair share of taxes.

**What control would you have to prevent future artificial inflation of property values?**

To prevent the present and future problems of over assessments I will implement the aforementioned controls including trends in the economy, foreclosures, unemployment, building permits, and other pertinent information used by MAI appraisers to determine values. This will also remove the necessity of appeals to the Value Adjustment Board whereby last year over eight-thousand property owners were told, "They were wrong!" Today's market clearly proves that they were NOT wrong! The appraisals were wrong.

**Candidate Name:** Kenneth Wilkinson

**Election:** Primary

**Party Affiliation:** Republican

**Biographical Sketch/Qualifications:**

- Governor Appointee Tax & Budget Reform Commission; President, Save Our Homes/Portability, Inc.; Organizing Chairman - Enough is Enough - State Spending Limitation Initiative; Senior Bank Examiner, State of Florida, Division of Banking; Senior Vice President, Charter Bank of Lehigh Acres; Professional Property Appraiser with Richard Webster & Associates

- Awards:

Republican Party of Florida "Local Government Statesman of the Year"; IAAO Most Distinguished Assessment Jurisdiction Award; Rotary 4-Way Test Award; Kiwanis International Foundation "Tablet of Honor" Award; IAAO Public Information Award

- Education:

Florida Atlantic University Bachelor's Degree - College of Business and Public Administration; Certified Florida Appraiser Designation; Nationally accredited instructor of Assessment Administration

- Past President:

Lehigh Acres Jaycees; Lehigh Raiders "Pop Warner" Football; Lehigh/East Lee County Chamber of Commerce

- Service History:

Four years active duty in the Army Security Agency with a one year tour of duty in Vietnam

**How can you as property appraiser help the residents of Lee County in light of the recent real estate down turn?**

By using the most conservative approach in complying with Florida Statutes and Department of Revenue Rules and Regulations and continuing to promote taxpayer friendly constitutional and statute changes.

**What are your opinions regarding the Save Our Homes Amendment?**

As the principal author of Save Our Homes, I hate to think how many of our residents would have been taxed out of their homes if we did not have Save Our Homes. It worked beyond our expectations. Government should never be in the business of taxing people out of their primary residence.

**What control would you have to prevent future artificial inflation of property values?**

A property appraiser cannot control market forces. Only buyers and sellers determine values. The appraiser records and reports the market activity using the prior year's sales to the different taxing authorities who alone set the tax rate ergo set the taxes.

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