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LEFT: Yudy Barbera, 52, is chairwoman of the Collier County Democratic party.

CENTER: Marlin Alexander, 86, served in the Marine Corps from 1952-60.

RIGHT: Madeline Dawson, 20, is second vice president of the Women's Republican Club of Naples Federated.

PHOTOS BY DOROTHY EDWARDS/ NAPLES DAILY NEWS

INDEPENDENCE DAY

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN

Southwest Florida residents show their patriotism

Callie Schmidt Naples Daily News | USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

From a Marine veteran of the Korean War, to the youngest member of the Women's Republican Club of Naples, to an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, residents of Southwest Florida share what it means to be an American.

Yudy Barbera's mother grew up in the Dominican Republic and received a third-grade education, but she always stressed the importance of participating in politics to her children.

So it's no wonder Barbera found a career in that field.

Barbera, 52, moved to Naples in 2002 and started volunteering to write postcards and make phone calls to Hispanic voters in Collier County. She became treasurer and eventually chairwoman of the Democratic Executive Committee in Naples, in addition to being the Collier County

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ONLINE

Watch videos of what it means to be an American.

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