



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TALLAHASSEE

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Tallahassee

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OUR PURPOSE:

To promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected government issues

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02 Wed. 12:45 p.m. MAIG press conference on the plaza between the Capitol buildings

03 Thur. 8:30 a.m.--3:00 p.m. Leon County Commission, Dialogue to Enhance Access to Health Care, Health Dept. 872 Orange Avenue

08 Tues. 3:00 p.m. County Commission meeting,

Economic Justice

Dr. Jerry D. Parrish is the Chief Economist and the Director of the Center for Competitive Florida at Florida TaxWatch. Florida TaxWatch is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan taxpayer research institute. Dr. Parrish is also an Adjunct Instructor in the Masters in Applied Economics Program at Florida State University. He earned an M.B.A. from Bellarmine University, an M.S. in Economics from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and a Ph.D. in Economics from Auburn University. He regularly publishes articles on the Florida economy, Florida's competitiveness, Florida's property and casualty insurance system, and other economic topics of interest to Floridians.



Dr. Parrish previously served as the Associate Director of the Center for Economic Forecasting & Analysis (CEFA) at Florida State University. Prior to spending time at FSU, he spent several years in management roles for leading European motorcycle manufacturers including Ducati, Triumph, and KTM Motorsports.

Date & Time April 19, 2014 Saturday
10:00 a.m. **Business Meeting**
(vote on 2014-2015 Directors, Officers, Budget and Program)
11:00 a.m. **Membership Reception**
(libations, conversation and fun)
11:30 a.m.--1:00 p.m. **Hot Topic Luncheon**
(buffet followed by speaker)

Location Capital City Country Club
1601 Golf Terrace Drive

Buffet Menu Herb roasted pork loin or vegetable lasagna, salad bar, vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee, tea and a cash bar.

Cost Members - \$17 Nonmembers - \$20

The first three student members to RSVP eat FREE!!

FOR RESERVATIONS please call 309-3005 or e-mail LWVTallahassee@gmail.com

Please RSVP by Tuesday morning, April 15. Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after Tuesday, April 15, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for the cost of their reservations.

County Courthouse, 5th floor

08 Tues. 6:00 p.m.
Leon County School Board,
Howell Center
3955 W. Pensacola St.

08 Tues. 7:00 p.m.
Local Government Study
& Action Group
Ruth O'Donnell's house
3509 Trillium Court

09 Wed. 4:00 p.m.
City Commission
City Hall, 2nd floor

09 Wed. 8:30 p.m.
LWVF gun safety caucus
Doubletree Hotel

15 Tues. 6:00 p.m.
LWVT Board meeting
LWVF Office
540 Beverly Court

19 Sat. 10:00 a.m.--1:00
p.m. LWVT Annual Meeting
& Hot Topic
Luncheon, Capital City
Country Club, 1601 Golf
Terrace Drive

21 Mon. 2:00 p.m. Health Care
S & A Group at Kathy Winn's,
1006 Brookwood Drive

22 Earth Day



22 Tues. 3:00 p.m.
County Commission
meeting, County Courthouse,
5th floor

22 Tues. 6:00 p.m.
Leon County School Board,
Howell Center
3955 Pensacola Street

23 Wed. 4:00 p.m.
City Commission
City Hall, 2nd floor

Seen at the Last Hot Topic



Marjorie Turnbull



Abi & Patty Hatcher
with Abi's History Fair
project



Richard & Jan RuBino
with Commissioner Gil
Ziffer

President's Message

My favorite part of being LWVT President has been representing you and our shared consensus positions at public hearings, giving interviews to the news media, and addressing other organizations at community events. Citizens and officials listen to the League; they care what we have to say because they respect what we do.

For me personally, talking is easy (too easy?) and studying up on so many League issues to get the message right has really been fun (I'm a curious person, truly a researcher at heart). Then, because I'm LWVT President, to also be given the mic or be given the floor to speak clearly and truthfully to power--ah, wow!, that is always exhilarating...fun, fun, fun.

Speaking for the League is the only unique duty reserved for the League President. I've taken this duty very seriously and loved every minute of the privilege. Otherwise, my role has been essentially one of coordinating LWVT's strong core of highly capable leaders.

Thus, as a new president takes office on April 19th, just as when I stepped into office three terms ago, little will change. There will be a fresh and confident new voice speaking for the League, but the message--what we believe based upon study and consensus--remains the same. Moreover, the gifted members, mentors, and leaders who put our principles into action remain the same. Our membership is growing in number and in knowledge, and therefore in capacity to implement positive change in our region. It's a great time to be active in LWVT.

So while I'm happy to be stepping back to refocus on Voter Services as co-chair with Janet Findling, I think the next President, and the next after her, and the next after him, are very lucky individuals indeed.

What an honor it has been to serve as your spokesperson! I say thank you in all the ways I know best:

Dude! It's been so awesome!

Çok Tesekkürler!

Mèci anpil, anpil, anpil!

Muchisimas gracias!

[eight bar intro, in key of F] Thanks--for the memory-

Fondly,

Rebecca



May 6 Tues. 7:00 p.m.
Local Government Study
& Action Group
Ruth O'Donnell's house
3509 Trillium Court

Linda McCarthy
Betty Steffens
Rhonda Work
Betty Schmidt
Julia Arthur
Steve Arthur
Alex Arthur
Adam Arthur
Carol McCormick

Connie Sauer-Adams
Len Adams
Marcia Warfel
Judy Entemadi
Juanda Beck-Jones
Jacqueline Beck
Elizabeth Jones
Patsy Palmer
Talbot D'Alemberte

Cheryl Bouyer
James Bouyer
Jessica Bouyer



Board Bytes

(from the Board meeting on March 18th)



- LWVT's treasury now has a total of cash and investments of \$17,334.26. We lost a little money on the February Hot Topic, so we will keep a close eye on this area.
- The **BIG NEWS** is that the Board voted to move the date of our Hot Topic events from the third Wednesday of the month to the fourth Wednesday. The Capital City Country Club could no longer guarantee a room large enough to accommodate our group on the third Wednesday. The change will take place with the May Hot Topic. We realize there will be a problem in November with the fourth Wednesday being the day before Thanksgiving and we will deal with that appropriately.

Membership Renewal

The Tallahassee League's new Fiscal Year will begin on May 1. This marks the beginning of our membership renewal campaign, so a few explanations may be helpful.

Membership levels are as follows:

1. INDIVIDUAL / \$60.00 per year: A single person
2. FAMILY / \$90.00 per year: Two persons living at the same address
3. STUDENT / \$30.00 per year: An individual enrolled full time in college or high school, eligible to vote. (NOTE: LWVT has scholarships available for up to 10 students)
4. SUSAN B. ANTHONY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP / \$100.00 per year: Includes dues (\$60) and a donation (\$40) to the Board of Directors Fund
5. SUSAN B. ANTHONY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP/ \$150.00 per year: Two persons living at the same address, includes dues (\$90) and donation (\$60) to the Board of Directors Fund

Most of the dues collected will be used to pay national and state PMP (Per Member Payments). Specifically, for each member, LWVUS (national) will receive \$31.00 and LWVF (state) will receive \$15.00. The second member of a family or a student costs us \$15.50 for LWVUS and \$7.50 for LWVF.

The LWVT Board of Directors Fund is used for voter services-related projects that are approved by the Executive Board.

Persons who joined after January. 2, 2014, are paid up through FY (fiscal year) 2014/2015 per LWVT by-laws.

If you have any questions about this, please contact Peggy Ramsey, Treasurer, at 386-7589

or ramsey020@comcast.net.

- Peggy Ramsey

My League Story by Peggy Ramsey

My name is Peggy Ramsey and I wish I could remember how long I have been a member of the League of Women Voters! I first joined when I lived in Raleigh, NC, my children were small and I needed to talk to adults occasionally.

The children grew up, I moved to Tallahassee, and resumed membership about 15 years ago, this time because I remembered that the League educates, inspires and expands my world.

I am always proud to be identified as a Leaguer, whether it is sitting in a Legislative Committee meeting or registering voters at the Renaissance Community Center.

I strongly encourage members to get involved with some aspect of the work of the League, because you will find it truly broadens your horizons!

- story gathered by Martha Stewart

The League Goes Kayaking

What's red, black and white with blue in the middle? A bank of mangrove trees full of Great Blue Herons.

That was the view as we got closer to the lagoon on the St. Sebastian River--thick mangrove trees with a big ol' Blue Heron every 20 yards or so. If you haven't been on one of the League's eco adventures, you should try one. Novice or seasoned camper-hiker-kayaker, you will be well cared for and have a great time. I spent a weekend down at the Donald McDonald Park for the kayaking trip on the St. Sebastian River and Indian River Lagoon.

Invasive species were the topic of the afternoon; the Brazilian pepper was on everyone's lips. An invasive plant that quickly displaces native plants is taking over the forest, river banks and just about any open space that is not constantly maintained. While we were discussing vegetation, I asked about the gorgeous pine I saw while driving down Hwy 1. It had fine, furry needles that looked like bushy green Persian cat tails. "Oh . . . you mean the Australian Pine. That's another invasive we are trying to get rid of." Oops, won't be looking for that at the nurseries but I can see how it got started.



Amy on far right

As we launched on our first paddle, Steve, one of our guides and owner of Adventure Kayaking (find it at paddleflorida.com), discussed the problem with the nutrients running off the surrounding lawns, and the fresh water dumps that come from Lake Okeechobee. He described the resulting fish kills that clogged the canals on St. Sebastian, made the river animals sick, killed off sea weed that left the dolphins, manatees and other creatures with nothing to eat but vegetation that had soaked up the toxins released by the dead vegetation. In short--a disaster.

But not everything was doom and gloom. Through changes, large and small, problems are being understood and slowly corrected. After taking one of Steve's kayak trips, a client called to say he instructed the gardener to stop fertilizing the lawn. There have been great improvements made by the cattle industry and some by Big Sugar to clean up Lake Okeechobee. But there is much more work to be done.

As we got further down river, closer to the lagoon, the banks of the river were covered with Red Mangrove and you could sometimes see the Black Mangrove higher and further back on the bank. Beautiful Sandhill Cranes (they remind me of Kabuki dancers with their red feathers around the eyes), a mother dolphin with her calf, followed by another member of the pod feeding were a few of the wildlife on show. There were also huge Great Blue Herons and nesting Osprey (they put Osprey nest stands on the phone poles down there to steer the birds away from transformers and large power line structures which is very cool).

At some point Steve told us about some septic tank innovations that are being tried down their way. The idea is to take the overflow waste to the main sewer system rather than have the expense of bringing the main line to each and every household. I've e-mailed for more information on this and will forward the details to folks in Wakulla--might be helpful.

Back at camp, some of the hardier (and I have to admit, older) souls went for a walk while light-weight me flaked out in the tent for a nap. Dinner was a treat: grilled pork tenderloin with spinach salad and other goodies. This was followed by an evening bonfire which was a chance to get to know what others were working on in their Leagues. As I mentioned earlier, we had several state board members with us. Elizabeth Pines gave us an update on her work with immigration and the difficulties with the different visas and the needs of foreign workers who would like to work here for the season (doing jobs we don't or won't do) then return to their own country for a break. Debbie Harrison Rumberger discussed water issues facing this region south of Lake Okeechobee. She is our new lobbyist, but you will have already heard from her at the February Hot Topics by the time this is in print.

I shared a tent with Jeanette Hartzell and Kathe (pronounced Kathy). Kathe is getting ready to do the March for Climate Action that starts on March 1. This is a cross country walk from L.A. to D.C. and that's not Lower Alabama. I can't imagine walking from Los Angeles to Washington DC, but they are starting out with about 225 leaving L.A. She thinks there are about 70 folks making the entire eight-month walk and they hoped to be joined by League members along the way. Check out the route on climatemarch.org and while you are there, make a donation to Kathe. If you're planning a vacation up their way, see if you can make a connection with the march.

We were treated to a late night, moonlit serenade by a couple of rowdy raccoons but were still rested for the Sunday morning paddling. This time we were in the Indian River lagoon with more dolphins in the shallow, windy water. They were feeding with pelicans in their wake hoping to catch free eats. The panorama of mangroves allowed us to see the difference in the layer of trees (short red, medium height black and the whites on dry land). We also saw a flock of wood storks building their nests. We cleared the channel, safely, bringing the two-day trek to an end.

Go for the experience or to get your stuck-in-a-rut-but back in gear but do give one of these trips a try. You'll be in great company because League members are truly special people. I've been fortunate throughout my life to join groups that were full of exceptional, caring and gifted people: Capital City Cyclists, Quilters Unlimited, UUCT (Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee) to name a few. LWV is no exception. I feel very privileged to be a part of this organization.

- Amy K. Mann



Pat, Jeanette, and Kathe



Fair Districts in Court

The League's litigation against the Legislature's apportionment of Congressional Districts is set to go to trial for two weeks beginning May 19th. This is the important lawsuit brought by the League and Common Cause that challenges the Legislature for drawing district lines that violate the Fair District amendments we helped add to Florida's Constitution in 2010. While we have had important procedural victories, this is the first trial that will address the substance of the issues before the court.

The exact time and courtroom have not yet been announced, but the trial will be heard by Judge Lewis, and details will be available at <http://2ndcircuit.leoncountyfl.gov/>. Or, call or email Peter Butzin at 850-524-9946 and peterbutzin@mac.com a week prior to the trial.

This is arguably the most important League litigation in a decade, and local members have a unique opportunity to witness Florida history in the making!

- Peter Butzin

Health Care Study and Action Group

Many members of the Health Care Study and Action Group participated in the March 5 press conference, encouraging our legislators to take federal funding and expand Florida's Medicaid Program to serve the low-income uninsured. On Wednesday mornings since the press conference, League members have "picketed" outside the Capitol and inside in the rotunda waving signs and handing out flyers.



The Study and Action Group had our most recent meeting at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital where we were provided with a presentation on the hospital's Baby Friendly initiative. The initiative is part of a national effort to encourage breast feeding. We are interested in supporting this initiative as a part of our local efforts aimed at preventing infant mortality. The infant death rate in Leon County is higher than the state average and there is a huge disparity between the rate for Caucasians and the rate among African-Americans.

On April 3 (this week!), the Leon County Commission has scheduled a Day of Dialogue to Enhance Access to Health Care. Tallahassee was one of only six communities chosen by the National Association of Counties (NACo) to hold a community dialogue addressing health care access. The event is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Leon County Health Department located at 872 Orange Avenue and is open to the public. Members of the League are encouraged to attend in light of recent events involving the two providers of health care for the uninsured in Leon County (Bond Community Health Center and Neighborhood Medical Centers) and the potential impact of the Affordable Care Act on services to the uninsured in the county. The event is intended to promote coordination and cooperation and to make recommendations to the County Commissioners who have scheduled another workshop on primary healthcare funding for May 13, 2014.

Feel free to join us at our next meeting which is scheduled for April 21 at 2:00 p.m. in the home of Chairperson Kathy Winn. That address is 1006 Brookwood Drive. We'll be discussing follow-up on the Baby Friendly initiative, the outcome of the Day of Dialogue, and attendance at the May 13 workshop of the County Commission.

- Kathy Winn

Press Conference on Medicaid Expansion

Kudos to the Tallahassee League from LWVF President Deirdre MacNab for providing an impressive audience for the March 5th press conference! Dressed in red and blue, League members wore their buttons and waived signs touting the economic benefits of taking federal dollars to expand Florida's Medicaid Program to serve low-income Florida residents. We were joined outside the House of Representatives by Senator Rene Garcia and Representative Amanda

Murphy, sponsors of bills in the Senate (SB 710) and the House (HB 869) calling for the expansion.

Our own small business owner, Miguel Jiminez, of Harvest Printing also spoke on behalf of the expansion, calling it a "no-brainer."

The speakers called for the Republican leadership of the legislature to reverse course and accept the almost \$7 million dollars a day that could be coming to Florida to provide health care. Last year, Governor Rick Scott endorsed the expansion, which was approved by the Senate but failed to gain traction in the House. Little mention has been made of the topic during this year's legislative session although Democratic legislators, and a few Republicans, continue to advocate for it.

President MacNab said, "There are \$51 billion in Florida tax money that we have paid that needs to come and go to work in our state. These dollars will make our workers healthier, add 121,000 good-paying jobs and create the largest economic stimulus this state has seen since the advent of air conditioning."

- Kathy Winn



Deirdre MacNab, Rep.
Amanda Murphy, Sen.
Rene Garcia



Dr. Mona Mangat of
Doctors for America



Miguel Jiminez owner
of Harvest Printing



LWVT members help
out!

Climate Change and Sustainability Study and Action Group Solar Permitting

The Climate Change and Sustainability Study and Action Group has had a chance to further discuss the process of obtaining a solar panel (PV) permit. We met February 25th with Ms. Karen Jumonville, Director of the Growth Management Office, Tallahassee, and with several other City of Tallahassee persons who are involved.

Clean Water Rally

On February 18, some of us took part in the "Floridians Clean Water Rally" in front of the Old Capitol. The League of Women Voters was one of the sponsors and some League buttons from other counties were visible in the crowd. There were over 100 sponsors of the rally.

- Dot Skofronick