



# THE VOTER

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF TALLAHASSEE

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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### Constitution Revision Commission



LWVT's January 27 Hot Topic Luncheon will spotlight the opportunities and challenges of the 2017-2018 Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) and how League members might be involved.

Carol Weissert, LWVT board member and FSU political science professor, and Martha Barnett, a Tallahassee attorney and member of the 1997-1998 commission, will be featured speakers. Professor Weissert will provide the basics of the CRC process and opportunities for participation.



Carol Weissert  
Ms. Barnett will talk about her experiences as a member of the commission and the importance of the selection process.



Martha Barnett

Every 20 years Floridians convene the CRC with the charge to review and recommend changes in the state's constitution. The proposals from the CRC go directly on the ballot for voter consideration. The next commission will be named in early 2017 and will meet in 2017-2018.

The League of Women Voters of Florida is a partner in a Partnership for Revising Florida's Constitution, headed by the LeRoy Collins Institute at FSU. Copies of a Citizens' Guide to the Florida Constitution Revision Commission may be found at [Constitution Revision Commission](#) and will also be distributed at the Hot Topic.

*Carol Weissert, Pat Curtis*

Date	Wednesday, January 27, 2016
Time	Lunch buffet at 11:30 a.m.; program 12:00 --1:00
Location	Capital City Country Club



06 Wednesday 2:15 p.m., Special City Commission meeting to choose Ethics Board Member, City Hall, 2nd Floor, For more info click on: [Ethics Commission Board Member](#)

January 9, Birthday in 1859 of Carrie Chapman Catt, who founded the League of Women Voters

12 Tuesday 5:30 p.m., Lobby Corps organizational meeting at LWVF's office, 540 Beverly Court, Tallahassee

12 Tuesday 6:00 p.m., Leon County School Board Howell Center 3955 W, Pensacola Street



18 Monday, Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday

18 Monday, 1:00--5:00 p.m. Voter Registration event Westminster Oaks

19 Tuesday 4:00 p.m. Tallahassee Ethics Board Meeting, City Hall 2nd Floor

19 Tuesday 6:00--8:00 p.m. LWVT board meeting, United Church in Tallahassee, 1834 Mahan Drive

20 Wednesday 9:00 a.m.,

1601 Golf Terrace Drive

Menu Chicken cordon bleu or grilled Italian portobello mushroom, tossed salad, vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee and tea

Cost Members - \$20 Nonmembers - \$23

The first three student members to RSVP eat FREE!

FOR RESERVATIONS please call 309-3005 and leave a message or email [LWVTallahassee@gmail.com](mailto:LWVTallahassee@gmail.com).

Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after Saturday, January 23, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for the cost of their reservations.

### President's Message



A new year is upon us and I would like to take a moment to recognize some of our local League's activities and achievements of the last year and the volunteers that made them happen.

Beginning in March of 2015, members of the League faithfully volunteered to set up the League table at the Downtown Market. While we have participated in the Market before, this past year we were present there virtually every Saturday helping folks register to vote or clarify the status of their registration. We also participated in Springtime Tallahassee and in the two-day Market activity on December 12 and 13, 2015. Credit for the organization of our participation goes entirely to Peggy Ramsey who solicited volunteers for each weekend and made sure that everyone had the help they needed to participate.

One of the major activities conducted at our Market table was the collection of signed petitions to allow proposed amendments to appear on the ballot during regular elections. We have collected hundreds of petitions supporting the appearance of the Solar Choice amendment on the 2016 ballot. Progress on the proposed amendment is reported elsewhere in this newsletter. We need to recognize Marty Monroe for her leadership in involving the Tallahassee League in collecting these petitions long before the State League decided to put its full support behind the initiative. We also have been collecting petitions to restore the voting rights of convicted felons who have completed their prison terms and other obligations to the State.

Members of our local League have been instrumental in supporting the State League efforts to enhance gun safety in Florida. League members attended press conferences and committee meetings of the Legislature to oppose bills relating to carrying guns on campus and other gun-related issues. Linda Davis should be recognized for coordinating with State League leaders and for her efforts to get messages concerning gun safety activities out to our membership using Constant Contact. In February, the Local Government Study and Action

## Tallahassee City Commission Retreat

25 Monday 1:00 p.m., CRTPA Meeting, City Hall 2nd Floor

25 Monday 5:30 p.m., Southside Community Task Force Meeting, Jack McLean Community Center, 700 Paul Russell Road

26 Tuesday 3:00 p.m., Leon County Commission, County Courthouse, 5th floor

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

27 Wednesday 11:30 a.m.-- 1:00 p.m., LWVT Hot Topics, Capitol City Country Club, 1601 Golf Terrace Drive, Tallahassee

27 Wednesday 4:00 p.m., Tallahassee City Commission, City Hall 2nd Floor, 28 Thursday 9:30 a.m.

CRA Meeting, City Hall, 2nd Floor

February 15, 2016, 6:00 p.m.-- 8:00 p.m., LWVT board meeting, United Church in Tallahassee

February, 18, 2016, February Hot Topic, Capital City Country Club

Group organized an outstanding Hot Topic dinner followed by a panel discussion presenting opposing positions on gun safety. Joan Kanan and the Study Group should also be recognized for organizing a Hot Topic luncheon on the South Side Study in October of 2015.

Speaking of Hot Topics, there were some interesting and informative presentations this past year including a presentation on preschool education organized by Margie Thomas and the members of the Public Education Study and Action Group. The presentation was moderated by our own Liz Holifield. A spirited discussion of the high stakes testing environment in the public schools was one of the most popular Hot Topics of the year.

Dot Skofronick, Rebecca Sager and other members of the Climate Change and Sustainability Study and Action Group collected postcards supporting solar energy and organized a Hot Topic luncheon on the issue.

Marty Monroe and Ann Lucas deserve recognition for their efforts to help students at FSU and FAMU organize Leagues at their respective universities. The FSU League regularly helped students register to vote and organized an event opposing proposed legislation that would allow the carrying of concealed weapons on campus.

And, all this happened in an "off year" for the League - a year between elections. Look for even more activity in the coming year as we gear up to make sure that everyone in our community has the opportunity to vote and information on the candidates and issues that will appear on the ballot. I encourage you to be involved in League activities to the extent that you can and sincerely thank you for your past participation.

Your President,

*Kathy Winn*

## Have a Question for LWVFlorida?

You'll have an opportunity to ask it at the **February Hot Topic**. Mark your calendars now for **Thursday, February 18, 2016**. We moved the February Hot Topic to a different week of the month and a different day of the week to accommodate new LWVF President Pamela Goodman who will be our guest speaker.

## Seen at the Holiday Luncheon



Amanda Stringer of TSO



Peggy Meserve  
John and Barbara Donaldson  
Ellen Holbert  
Ellen Sloyer  
Kimberly Simpkins



### **Norene Olson Chase 1924--2015**

Lillian Norene Olson Chase, 91, died Monday, December 14, 2015.

Environmental protection and conservation, voter education and community engagement, abolishing the death penalty, and uplifting the lives of migrant workers were just some of Norene's causes. The National League of Women Voters recognized Norene in 2012 with a 50 Year Lifetime Achievement Award.

Norene's spirit will live on if the communities she touched continue sharing their time and talents on social and environmental justice, engaging and educating voters, good governance and conflict resolution, or wherever your heart takes you to help create a more just, peaceful and sustainable future for all.

*(Reprinted from Norene's obituary in the Tallahassee Democrat)*

### **Ever Wanted to Run a Marathon?**

#### **How About the Next Best Thing?**

The League of Women Voters Tallahassee is going to sponsor a water table that will be set along the Marathon race course in town on February 7, 2016. We may be able to secure some decent prize money depending on how much fun we have and how the runners vote for us.



We need eight to 10 fun-loving members to help us set up a red, white and blue stand, fill water cups, make signs, pass out cups to the passing runners, keep the patriotic music going, and one delightful person to dress like Susan B. Anthony. "VOTE" signs along the road will be a nice attraction. I have about six or seven push-in-the-ground type sign stands. It will be from before 8:00 a.m. until possibly sometime in the afternoon depending on where we are set up. We are open to

other creative ideas. If there are enough volunteers we may be able to break into two shifts. Let Dot Skofronick know at [dsjs@embarqmail.com](mailto:dsjs@embarqmail.com) or 222-8544.

Watching and working a marathon from this perspective is exciting; you can just feel the runners' energy!

Come join us!

*Dot Skofronick, Chair of Climate Change and Sustainability Study & Action Group*

## Volunteers Are Needed!

### Help Register Voters at Westminster Oaks

The League has been asked to register voters at Westminster Oaks (Oak SouthBreezeway area) on Monday, January 18 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day), from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Marty Monroe has volunteered to organize the League members who are willing to register the voters. If you have taken the LWVF training and are eligible to register voters and you have an hour or two to spare on January 18, please let Marty Monroe know. You can reach her by email at [martymonroe@me.com](mailto:martymonroe@me.com) or by phone at 228-8882.



### Want to Help Write Questions for Candidates?

Every election year a committee is formed to develop questions for the Online Voter Guide/Vote411Leon.org. We come up with three questions for each position on the ballot except President and U.S. Senator. If you are interested in helping develop these questions, let me know what Saturdays in January and February you are available to meet and in which races you are interested--such as County Commission, City Commission, State House, School Board, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, etc. Start thinking of questions the public would want answered by each candidate. You can offer ideas for more than one race. I look forward to hearing from you soon by phone (942-2291) or by email ([janetfindling@comcast.net](mailto:janetfindling@comcast.net)).

*Janet Findling*  
*Voter Services Co-chair*

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## Lobby Corps

### Join the Lobby Corps! Support League Positions at the Capitol!

Every year, members of the League of Women Voters of Tallahassee help the State League monitor bills proposed by the Florida Legislature as a part of the Lobby Corps. To participate, you do not have to be knowledgeable about the issues or the legislation being proposed (but it helps). Nor do you have to speak on behalf of the League.

Several levels of participation are available:

- You can agree to attend a committee meeting or a press conference wearing your League button to demonstrate League presence.
- You can agree to observe what happens with proposed legislation by attending a committee meeting (or watching on television or by computer), then report to the State Advocacy Coordinator what happened with the bill and where it will be heard next.
- You can attend a committee meeting and stand up and waive your speaking time in support or opposition to a particular bill.



To find out more, attend an organizational meeting of the Lobby Corps scheduled for the first day of the 2016 Legislative Session. Come have wine, cheese, fruit and spirited discussion concerning the priorities of the League during the upcoming session!

When: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Office of the League of Women Voters of Florida  
540 Beverly Court  
Tallahassee, FL 32308

For further information, contact Kathy Winn at [kathywinnclan@embarqmail.com](mailto:kathywinnclan@embarqmail.com)

*Kathy Winn, President of LWVT*

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## Health Care Study & Action Group

Members of the Health Care Study and Action Group continued to attend meetings of the steering committee overseeing the Leon County Health Assessment sponsored by the Department of Health in Leon County. Kathy Winn, Chair of the Study and Action Group, participated in subcommittee meetings to develop the questions for the door-to-door surveys that will take place in high risk neighborhoods. The surveys are scheduled to begin in February of 2016. The subcommittee will next tackle the identification of existing data sources that should be considered as a part of the overall assessment.



Two members of the Study and Action Group met with Gabe Landry, a representative of the Healthy Food Florida initiative of the American Heart Association. Mr. Landry was seeking support from the League for legislation proposed in the Florida House and Senate addressing the problem of food deserts in the State: areas where the nearest full-service food store is more than a half-mile away. According to the Healthy Food Florida campaign, more than 2.5 million Floridians live in food deserts where it is difficult and sometimes impossible to buy fresh food: fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains, seafood and lean meats. Without access to healthy foods, a nutritious diet and good health are out of reach, says the campaign. HB 153 and SB 760 would "direct the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to establish a Healthy Food Financing Initiative program to provide specified financing to construct, rehabilitate, or expand independent grocery stores and supermarkets in underserved communities in low-income and moderate-income communities." Mr. Landry was referred to the State League for consideration of support for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative and, if the State establishes a position on the issue, the bills will be tracked by the Lobby Corps during the upcoming session of the Florida Legislature.

For further information concerning, either of these initiatives or the activities of the Study and Action Group, contact Kathy Winn via email at [kathywinnclan@embarqmail.com](mailto:kathywinnclan@embarqmail.com).

*Kathy Winn, Chair of Public Health Study and Action Group*

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## Status of Solar Choice Petitions

The Tallahassee League of Women Voters has been busy in 2015, gathering over 289 signed Floridians for Solar Choice amendment petitions. However, as you may have heard, the Floridians for Solar Choice group is facing some financial hurdles at this time. So they are now planning to put this amendment on the 2018 election ballot instead of the 2016 ballot, which gives us more time, and that is good news on many levels. The general public is confused on this issue, and is unaware of the limitations for solar in our state due to the influence of the utility companies.

Deirdre McNab, our current statewide chair of this initiative, said recently, "Now more than ever, it is critical to keep this petition drive going strong, and keep our solar amendment in the forefront for 2018. The petition drive shows the legislature the desire of the people and holds a threat over them to pass a bill, so that the issue can be dealt with legislatively versus constitutionally. If it is placed in the Constitution it is very hard for it to be adjusted or changed by Legislators, and they would far prefer to have a statute rather than an amendment to the Constitution."



Teri Cleeland & Marilyn Wills getting petitions signed and registering voters at the Downtown Market

I want to thank all the volunteers who have helped this past year. We know it will take a continuous effort of education and advocacy to reach citizens. Fortunately this new year brings new opportunities to do what we do best: voter education.

For more information please go to this link: [thefloridavoter.org/Fact-SheetSolar.pdf](http://thefloridavoter.org/Fact-SheetSolar.pdf).

*Marty Monroe*

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## **Downtown Marketplace 2015**

The Downtown Marketplace, operated by the Downtown Improvement Authority in Ponce de Leon Park, is the site of weekly education events provided by LWVT on Saturdays from March to December. Allen Thompson, Downtown Events Coordinator, gives us free space for our volunteers to provide voter registration and other specific educational materials to the community.

Thanks to 33 LWVT members who volunteered at least three hours of their Saturdays in 2015, we were able to have a presence at the Market on all but two Saturdays, and at the special two-day Market event in December.

I would like to say THANK YOU to the following members -- many present multiple times: Kathy Winn, Peggy Ramsey, Sharon Pollock, Cynthia Williams, Marilyn Wills, Janet Findling, Linda Davis, Joan Kanan, Sandra Kendall, Jan RuBino, Peter Butzin, Carol Weissert, Bill Weissert, Pat Ramsey, Ruth O'Donnell, Danielle Gutierrez, Erin Edwards, Crystal Jones, Daniella Fernandez, Cathy Barrios, Sarah Pariseau, Marty Monroe, Pam Price, Martha Stewart, Ann Parker, Margie Thomas, Carter McMillan, Linda Oaksford, Susan Fleming, Mimi Jones, Linda McCarthy, Teri Cleeland, and Donna Erlich.

This group (and I hope I did not miss anyone) helped 90 people in register to vote, change their address, name, political party, etc. They also collected hundreds (sorry, I did not count them) of petitions for solar energy and civil rights restoration, provided a postcard and opportunity to contact their public officials, distributed "Know Your Public Officials" brochures, and interacted with the public needing information about voting, etc. Oh, and provided candies for people and treats for puppies!!!



**Thank  
You**



Again, thank you each and every one of you for your participation in our efforts to educate the voters. We will resume this activity in March 2016 and provide additional information about the election in November. LET ME KNOW IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE!!!!

Thanks again! YOU GUYS/GALS ARE AWESOME!

*Peggy Ramsey*

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## **Voter Deadline**

The next Voter will be the February Voter. The deadline for submission of material is January 28. Please e-mail your material to [lgdavis75@gmail.com](mailto:lgdavis75@gmail.com).

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