



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF TALLAHASSEE

Tallahassee

Volume 24 Number 7

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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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Seen at the February Hot Topic

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LWVT Board of Directors



02 Monday 1:00 --3:00 p.m., CRPTA, City Hall, 2nd floor

04 Wednesday 9:00 a.m. Redistricting Hearing Supreme Court 500 South Duval Street

04 Wednesday 4:00 p.m. Tallahassee City Commission City Hall, 2nd floor

10 Tuesday 3:00 p.m. Leon County Commission

Why Solar Now?

Join us on March 25 for our Hot Topic Luncheon where we will explain the role of solar electric generation as a part of the energy mix. We will present the benefits of solar electric generation to society, the environment, to the economy and what is being done in Tallahassee now to explore and promote solar photo voltaic (PV) generation. We will describe how community solar works in cities now and how that could be an important element of the city's future plan for solar.

Three speakers will present this program: Steve Urse, Stew Parsons, and Tom Cordi.

Steve's recent focus the last 11 years has been climate action and clean energy. He is a founding board member of Sustainable Tallahassee currently serving with the Community Carbon Fund and Renewable Energy Advocates Committees. The Carbon Fund implements energy efficiency projects to help non-profits that serve the poor and disadvantaged. The goal is to reduce electric use, carbon emissions and save them money.

Stew Parsons graduated from University of Florida College of Law in 1966 and was in private practice in Tallahassee until 1974. He was the Forensic Program Administrator for Florida State Hospital from 1978 till 1991, then he had a private law practice Gadsden County from 1985 till 2000. He served as a Gadsden County Judge from 2001 to 2009. He is a Retired Senior Judge from the Second Judicial Circuit. He was the volunteer Executive Director for Sustainable Tallahassee from 2011 till October of 2014. He is currently serving as the Chair of Sustainable Tallahassee's Renewable Energy Advocacy Committee.

Tom Cordi is the Assistant Laboratory Director for Business Administration at the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory at FSU, and the President-elect of Sustainable Tallahassee. After completing his graduate work in Political Science at the

<p>County Courthouse, 5th floor</p> <p>10 Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. Leon County School Board, Howell Center 3955 West Pensacola Street</p> <p>12 Thursday, 10:00 a.m.--noon City Ethics Board Meeting City Hall, 2nd floor</p> <p>18 Wednesday, 5:00 p.m. Tavern Talk Backwoods Bistro 401 East Tennessee Street</p> <p>24 Tuesday 6:00 p.m. Leon County School Board, Howell Center 3955 West Pensacola Street</p> <p>24 Tuesday 6:00 p.m. LWVT Board Meeting United Church in Tallahassee 1834 Mahan Drive</p> <p>25 Wednesday 11:30 a.m.--1:00 p.m. Hot Topic Luncheon Capital City Country Club 1601 Golf Terrace Drive</p> <p>25 Wednesday 4:00 p.m. Tallahassee City Commission City Hall, 2nd Floor</p>	<p>University of California, Berkeley, he taught Political Science and Public Administration. Before coming to the Mag Lab, he served as the Administrative Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at Berkeley, the Executive Director of the Associated Students of the University of California, and as the Administrative Director at the FSU Florida Center for Reading Research. He also served as the first Executive Director of Sustainable Tallahassee, and is currently serving on the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Date March 25, 2015</p> <p>Time 11:30 a.m.--1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Location Capital City Country Club 1601 Golf Terrace Drive</p> <p>Menu Three meat lasagna or wild mushroom ravioli, salad bar, vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee and tea</p> <p>Cost Members - \$17 Nonmembers - \$20</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The first three student members to RSVP eat FREE!</p> <p>FOR RESERVATIONS please call 309-3005 and leave a message or email LWVTallahassee@gmail.com.</p> <p>Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after Saturday, March 21, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for the cost of their reservations.</p>
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President's Message



You are probably aware that members of the Tallahassee League are active as the State League's Lobby Corps, watching proposed legislation in areas of interest to the League. Here are some of the issues and bills that are being targeted:

Gun Safety: The League is opposing bills in the Senate and the House that would allow individuals with a concealed carry license to carry guns on state college and university campuses. These bills are Senate Bill 176 sponsored by Greg Evers of Crestview and House Bill 4005, an identical bill filed by Greg Steube of Sarasota. Meanwhile, Representative Alan Williams has sponsored House Bill 4019 addressing Florida's Stand Your Ground law.

Amendment 1: How the approximately \$757 million in Land and Legacy Trust Funds dollars will be spent is likely to be a matter of considerable debate by the Legislature this session. More than land acquisition is likely to be included in any proposals since water policy and

springs protection are top priorities of many legislators. House Bill 7003 could be the first bill taken up this year and would increase Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam's role in water policy. Senate Bill 918 by Senator Charlie Dean of Inverness proposes to increase protections for many natural springs. Compromise will likely be required among the many voices championing endangered land purchases, storm water and septic tank projects and springs protection. Senator Dean's bill will be taken up by the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee on Wednesday, March 4, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 37 of the Senate Office Building.

Education: After the spirited presentation on testing in public schools at the January Hot Topics luncheon, many League members may be interested in bills that propose changes in the state and local testing systems. These bills include Senator Legg's bill (SB 616) which caps the amount of time spent on state and local tests. It will be heard on Wednesday, March 4, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 412 of the Knott Building. Also of interest is Senator Montford's SB 774 addressing educational accountability. League members might also watch the House Education Committee which is expected to produce a committee bill sponsored by Marlene O'Toole, Committee Chair, to increase standards for Florida's Early Learning Program. This program includes the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds and what used to be called subsidized child care.

Health Care: Senator Aaron Bean's Health Policy Committee will meet on Wednesday, March 4, at 1:00 p.m. to address health care coverage options, including the plan being proposed by Florida's business and hospital community entitled "A Healthy Florida Works." This might be just a discussion but could develop into a committee bill addressing the provision of health insurance to low-income Floridians, according to Senate President Andy Gardiner. The House has not had a similar discussion. The meeting will be held in Room 412 of the Knott Building. There is likely to be a \$1 billion hole in the state's budget if the federal government and the state cannot reach a compromise to continue Medicaid funding for the Low Income Pool Program. This program, which combines local and federal matching funds for uncompensated care by hospitals and other safety net providers, is set to expire on June 30. Acceptance of Medicaid expansion dollars is seen as one way the state could make up for some of these lost funds to hospitals.

Voting: We are watching House Bill 227 proposing online voter registration. This is Representative Alan Williams' bill.

And, if going to the Legislature with your League button on is not excitement enough for you, please go to the State League web site at [LWVF Capital Impact Days](#) and register to attend Capital Impact Days on March 10--12. A great evening event at the Old Capital features Senator Andy Gardiner as speaker and new legislators from around the State have been invited to attend. Members will be coming to Tallahassee from all around the state and will visit their representatives and senators to discuss League positions. Financial help to defray the cost of registration is available by contacting the League at [\(850\) 309-3005](tel:8503093005).

Kathy Winn

President, League of Women Voters of Tallahassee

Alina Bosanac

Andrea Russell

Kathie Emrich

Pamela Price

Antoinette Spears

Polly Johnson



LWVT's Annual Business Meeting in April

The League of Women Voters of Tallahassee will hold its annual business meeting and luncheon this year on April 18th at 11:00 a.m. at Capital City Country Club. The membership will vote on the following four items of business:

1. Officers for 2015--2016. The slate proposed by the Nominating Committee is:

President: Kathy Winn

Vice President: Ruth O'Donnell

Secretary: Jessica Lowe-Minor

Treasurer: Peggy Ramsey

Board of Directors: Rebecca Sager, Carol Weissert, and Linda Davis

2. Program for 2015-2016. The proposed LWVT Program for 2015-2016 is as follows:

Voter Service

Register and educate voters, e.g., during Saturday Downtown Market, at League activities, and by tabling at allied organization functions. Conduct outreach to community leaders and allied organizations in adjoining counties to facilitate collaboration on candidate forums, including Big Bend Environmental Forum and WFSU Bandwagon. Monitor Florida election reform law to assess the impact of key provisions on voters in Leon County. Work with Leon County Supervisor of Elections to advance election reform. Develop and promote Vote411Leon.org, including voter education on proposed constitutional amendments. Support the constitutional amendment to restore voting rights of convicted felons who have completed their sentences.

Promote Political Responsibility

Continue to inform members and the public about civic responsibilities and issues through monthly Hot Topic meetings as well as through sponsoring tables at a variety of community events. Promote League positions taken on proposed constitutional amendments.

Local Government

Engage with elected and appointed officials and staff members of local governmental entities in order to be informed of and investigate issues related to the League program that are of interest to members. Monitor City of Tallahassee and County Commission agendas and minutes to be alert to evolving issues and to promote efficient and responsible local governments. Participate in related state and national League studies.

Education

Maintain observation and research of Leon County Schools to assess the extent to which students in the county have access to a free public school system, in keeping with LWVUS and LWVF policy and position statements. In 2015-2016, this would include monitoring standardized testing reduction efforts, the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program (vouchers), the privatization of public education, and early childhood education.

Health Care

Support, monitor, and take action for ongoing national, state, and local physical and mental health care policies with educational and legislative initiatives that promote socio-economic, racial, ethnic, age and disability equity in accessing affordable, quality health care for all and control of costs. Provide information concerning the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Advocate for the expansion of Florida's Medicaid Program. Support funding for providers of health care for the uninsured and initiatives to prevent infant mortality and food insecurity. Support accreditation of local hospitals and birthing centers as Baby Friendly.

Climate Change and Sustainability

Educate League members and the community on climate and environmental sustainability issues. Work to promote local and regional changes to ameliorate climate change and enhance long-term sustainability.

Economic Justice

Promote existing League positions and activities that address economic disparity. Seek to enhance educational and economic opportunity, education reform, progressive taxation, support for farm workers, children and families, juvenile justice and access to health care in the local area.

Lobby Corps

Continue to support the LWVF's legislative advocacy effort at the Capitol by training volunteers in citizen advocacy, including monitoring and reporting on state legislative action of specific interest to the LWVF, such as health care, education, energy, land use, natural resources (especially water), taxation, and election law.

3. 2015-2016 Positions. The proposed 2015-2016 LWVT Positions are as follows:

Transportation

July 1994, the LWVT supports a transportation system that protects the environment and neighborhoods and gives incentives for multi-person transit. To this end, LWVT supports parking limitations, dedicated high occupancy vehicle lanes, Transportation Demand Management strategies such as flex-time, telecommuting and ride-sharing. The LWVT agrees that consideration should be given to a light rail system.

The LWVT supports establishment of a countywide bicycle and pedestrian system of bike lanes, bike paths and sidewalks to facilitate motor-free transportation. The LWVT supports creation of a balanced transportation system that emphasizes protection of the environment and underscores the need for alternatives to single occupancy vehicles. Emphasis is placed on accommodating people who cannot or choose not to drive an automobile.

April, 2012, the LWVT supports a safer environment for pedestrians and bikers on Tennessee Street. The League supports a reduction in the number of lanes for cars to four, with turn lanes, where the remaining two lanes are designated as bus lanes also available to bicycle traffic that separate pedestrians from fast-moving automobile traffic.

The League supports "Moving Tallahassee: Cars Optional," the creation of an eighteen-square-mile area in the heart of Tallahassee dedicated to creating a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

Charter Government

July 2000, LWVT supports charter governments in Leon County. We support charter review committees that review charters periodically and that have the power to propose amendments to the charter for direct placement on the ballot at the next general election. We believe all amendments to the charter should be accomplished by a simple majority vote. We support "an achievable percentage" of registered voters to bring about citizen petitions (we oppose requiring 10 percent of registered voters from each district for citizen initiatives.) We support establishing oversight of constitutional officers. We oppose allowing county ordinances to supersede city ordinances.

In 2002, Leon County became a charter county; LWVT supported the amendment. We support a nonpartisan election of the Supervisor of Elections, city and county commissioners. We support fair and equitable representation. We support the removal of nonjudicial functions from the Clerk of the Circuit Court position.

In 2010, both the city and the county appointed charter review committees; LWVT was represented on both committees.

Comprehensive Plan

In 1960-1961, LWVT supports measures in the Tallahassee Comprehensive Plan leading to long range City and County planning.

February 1964, LWVT advocates continued attention be paid to community planning with support of measures that will provide the best long range comprehensive planning for the community.

1979, LWVT commits to actively participating in the Comprehensive Plan decision making process and commits to encouraging citizen input.

We support full implementation of the official comprehensive land use plan.

Consolidation

October 1971, LWVT reaches consensus in support of the consolidation charter. (Charter failed)

April 1973, LWVT supports the new Charter for Consolidation including changes made by the Charter Commission. They include: (1) addition of a Department of Planning; (2) procedural change in the recall of elective officials, by increasing the percentage of qualified officials electors who must sign a petition from 10 percent to 20 percent; (3) accountability for county officials (all officials would be required by the commission to submit "uniform estimates or budgets for the operation of their offices..."); and (4) taxation rate: "The commission shall provide and maintain a fair and just differential between the tax levy in city and county". (Charter failed)

September 1991, LWVT supports the concept of consolidation if it provides for efficient and accountable government, including support for citizen initiative, referendum, and recall. Under consolidation, we support: a reduction of duplication of services; an appointed, qualified administrator with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility and the power to appoint and fire department heads; coordinated countywide law enforcement; adequate and equitable revenue sources with tax in proportion to service provided. (Charter failed)

Summary: LWVT has supported consolidation of city and county governments since 1968. However, public support has never reached the threshold needed to adopt the consolidation measures on the ballot. While the two governments have never merged, there has been some functional consolidation in the areas of storm water, growth management, planning, parks and recreation, animal control, fire departments, and a joint dispatch center for emergency services. LWVT continues to support functional consolidation that provides for efficient and accountable government, that reduces duplication of services, and improves coordination of law enforcement countywide.

4. Budget for 2015-2016. The projected Budget for 2015-2016 is as follows:

Income Category

Member dues	900 0	
Meetings with meals	800 0	Includes annual meeting, holiday brunch, hot topics
Fundraiser; miscellaneous	300	
Voter service publications	0	
US Education fund	300	
State lobby fund	300	
Member donations	100 0	Moved from board of directors fund
Board of directors fund	150 0	
Susan B. Anthony members hips	120 0	
Memorials	100	
Other	200	
Interest income	25	
Carry forward	579 5	Funds in existing bank account (CD at rollover \$5469 & board of directors \$326)
Total Income	262 20	

Expense Category

Administration	282 0	
Board expenses	720	Postal box, voice mail, uniform business report, D & O insurance
Advertising	2100	WFSU contract
Communications	1200	Voter mailing, printing, Constant Contact, web site
Meetings with meals	8700	Hot topics, student meals, annual meeting & holiday brunch
Membership recruitment/retention	800	Membership events, orientations, packets and renewal expenses
State/national meetings	2500	State convention/council, legislative seminar, national convention
Per member payments	7000	
National	4400	
State	2300	
US education fund	300	
State lobby fund	300	
Outreach	600	
Tabling & materials	300	Bandwagon, voter service outreach & publications, kids' voting
Student scholarships	300	
Committees/Study & action groups	700	
Study & action	400	
Membership	100	
Communications	100	
Voter service	100	
Intern stipend/expenses	1100	For two three-month periods
Board of directors fund	500	State & local program activities
Total expenses	2622 0	

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Can you believe it is time for the Downtown Marketplace to resume? This means we need two volunteers for three hours on any Saturday morning from March through November.

The city provides a canopied space and the League provides a table, chairs and materials to register voters, get petitions signed, talk about the League and have a Saturday morning in the lovely Tallahassee sunshine! (OK, sometimes it is hot and sometimes it rains.)

To register voters you will need to take a short, easy test on the LWV of Florida website. Here is the link: <http://thefloridavoter.org/members/voter-registration/>.

I am coordinating volunteers for this event and will bring the materials, etc., to you or to the Park before 9:00 a.m. Please let me know when you can help in March or any other month!

Peggy Ramsey at 386-7589 or ramsey020@comcast.net

Voter Deadline

The next Voter will be the April Voter. The deadline for submission of material is Friday, **March 27th**. Please e-mail your material to lgdavis75@gmail.com.
