



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

IN THIS ISSUE

[Welcome New Members!](#)

[Board Bytes](#)

[An Invitation!](#)

[Free Trip to Washington, D.C.](#)

[Membership Renewal](#)

[My League Story](#)

[Fair Districts in Court](#)

[Local Government S & A Group](#)

[Health Care S & A Group](#)

[Climate Change & Sustainability S & A Group](#)

[Voter Deadline](#)

[Board Contacts](#)

Legislative Round-Up

The 2014 Legislative Session has ended without the Medicaid expansion and online voter registration. Some of the legislative changes supported by the League will have to wait for future sessions, in spite of the best efforts of the State League Advocacy Coordinator and the volunteers participating in the Lobby Corps.



Find out what bills did pass! Please join us to hear your locally elected representatives reflect on the outcomes of the 2014 Legislative Session and what to look for in future sessions. We have invited our entire local delegation: Senator Bill Montford (District 2) plus Representatives Halsey Beshears (House District 7), Alan Williams (House District 8), and Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda (House District 9).

We invite you, your friends, and your always thoughtful questions to this timely wrap up to the 2014 session.

COME A LITTLE EARLY AND LEARN HOW TO SIGN UP TO BE A VOTER REGISTRATION VOLUNTEER! At 11:00 a.m., League Member Marty Monroe will be presenting the State League process for becoming a volunteer conducting voter registration on behalf of the League.

Date & Time May 28, 2014 Wednesday (FOURTH WEDNESDAY)

11:00--11:30 a.m. Voter Registration Training

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 Chicken and broccoli alfredo or pasta primavera, salad bar, vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee and tea.

Cost Members - \$17 Nonmembers - \$20

The first three student members to RSVP eat FREE!!



11 Sunday all day
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

13 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County Commission meeting
County Courthouse
5th floor

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

13 Tuesday 7:00 p.m.

Local Gov't S & A Group
meeting, RuBinos' house
726 Ingleside Avenue

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

19 Monday 1:00--3:00 p.m.,
CRPTA
City Hall, 2nd Floor

27 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County Commission
meeting
County Courthouse
5th Floor

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

27 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
LWVT Board meeting
LWVF Office
540 Beverly Court

28 Wednesday
11:00 a.m.--1:00 p.m.
Hot Topic Luncheon
Capital City Country Club
1601 Golf Terrace Drive

June 2014

10 Tuesday
Leon County Commission
meeting

11 Wednesday
Tallahassee City Commission
meeting

16 Monday CRPTA

24 Tuesday
Leon County Commission
meeting

24 Tuesday
Leon County School
Board meeting

25 Wednesday
Tallahassee City
Commission meeting

July 2014

02 Wednesday
Tallahassee City Commission
meeting

08 Tuesday
Leon County Commission

FOR RESERVATIONS

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

Please RSVP by Saturday morning, May 24.

Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after Saturday, May 24, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for the cost of their reservations.

President's Message

Greetings from your new elected president! I am honored to serve you.

Here are the newly elected officers and members of your League Board of Directors for the 2014--2015 year:

Ruth O'Donnell is our Vice-President and former Secretary. Ruth chaired our Local Government Study and Action Group and will be heading up our Communications Committee. Peter Butzin is our new Secretary. Also the chairman of Common Cause Florida, Peter is relatively new to the board and did a great job chairing the committee that developed the Program (issues chosen for study and action) for this year. Peggy Ramsey continues on as our Treasurer. You meet her when you pay at the Hot Topics events. (She's a former LWVT President, too.)



And, your Board members are:

- Teri Cleeland, formerly with the National Forestry Service in Washington, D.C., and new member with the League. She jumped right into watching bills concerning the environment in the Florida Legislature.
- Christy Crotty works at FSU and is the mother of a young gymnast. She's interested in making sure we know what Facebook is.
- Linda Davis is the intrepid editor of our Voter. Enough said.
- Liz Holifield is that calm voice you hear on WFSU radio discussing issues that concern teens. She is also a FAMU professor and she recently served as a member of both our Nominating and Program Committees.
- Janet Findling coordinates our involvement in Bandwagon, the candidate forum on FSU television every election, as a co-chair of Voter Services.
- Maggie Lawrence is a graphic artist and came to us via the Florida League. She's helping design our written materials.
- Marty Monroe, educational consultant, will be heading up our outreach efforts which include registering voters and providing information to the public wherever our League of Women Voters table can be set up.
- Richard Polangin, advocacy coordinator for the Florida Alliance of Retired Americans, is active on our Health Care Study and Action Group and knows a lot about the Florida Legislature and the Florida Statutes.
- Sharon Russell is interested in education and has been involved with our Membership Committee.
- Rebecca Sager is our former president and is our Voter Service Co-Chair. She developed our online voter information website: [Vote411Leon](http://Vote411Leon.com).
- Margie Thomas is the chair of our Education Study and Action Group. They participated in a statewide study of charter schools this past year and coordinated two Hot Topic events concerning the Common Core Standards.
- Carol Weissert of the Collins Center at FSU knows everything there is to know about conducting studies.

meeting

09 Wednesday
Tallahassee City
Commission meeting

22 Tuesday
Leon County School
Board meeting

We are here to serve you and invite you to help us accomplish great things during this League year. You can find us in the Membership Directory, an updated version of which will be coming to you soon. We are all looking forward to seeing you at an upcoming League event.

Kathy Winn
President, League of Women Voters of Tallahassee

Seen at the Last Hot Topic



Future Leaguer
Madeline Minor



Dr. Jerry Parrish



Rebecca and her gift
from the Board

Dr. Holifield Wins First Annual Making A Difference Award

At the Annual Meeting on April 19, Dr. Edward Holifield was presented with the first annual Making A Difference Award for his work to reduce infant mortality.

The new award is an effort to recognize League members whose actions have made a difference in our community. Dr. Holifield has been working tirelessly for a decade to address the problem of infant mortality (infants who die before their first birthday) in Leon County. Leon County's infant mortality rate is higher than the state average and African-American babies die before their first birthday at a rate almost three times higher than that of Caucasian infants.

When the infant mortality rate spiked again in Leon County in 2012, Dr. Holifield decided to take action. He contacted Tallahassee Memorial Hospital to see what the hospital was doing to encourage new mothers to breastfeed, since breastfeeding is recognized as one factor affecting infant mortality. The League's Health Care Study and Action Group supported his efforts which resulted in the appointment of an advisory group to look into seeking the designation of Baby Friendly for the hospital. The Baby Friendly designation requires a number of actions to improve the rate of exclusive breastfeeding of infants until the age of six months. The hospital is now moving toward becoming Baby Friendly, largely because of the actions of Dr. Holifield. The Health Care Study and Action Group is proud to claim him as a member and we are looking forward to working with him until the designation is achieved.

Kathy Winn



Rebecca, Kathy, Dr. Holifield

Joan Kanan
Kitte Carter
Jimmy Carter
Walter Dartland
Diana Dartland
Larry Lesko
Tina Nye

Veronique Tolliver
Billie Coleman
John Hedrick
Megan Doherty
Nancy Linnan
Linda Vaughn



Board Bytes



The League of Women Voters of Tallahassee is one of nine Leagues in the League of Women Voters of Florida that has grown by ten percent or more since LWVF began its recent campaign to increase membership. Your Board is very happy to report the LWVT membership has topped 200!!!

An Invitation!

Tallahassee League Members are invited to meet our state President Deirdre Macnab and Vice-President Pam Goodman at a reception in their honor on May 19. We'll meet at the home of Peter & Sally Butzin, 1628 Woodgate Way, between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m.



So, join us for light hors d'oeuvres and a glass (or two) of wine. Please R.S.V.P. to peterbutzin@mac.com or call him at [850-524-9946](tel:850-524-9946) by May 17. (If Peter isn't available via phone, just leave a message.)

Deirdre Macnab

Pam Goodman

The Butzins' home is on Woodgate Way, which is between Thomasville Road and Centerville Road before I-10. The address is about 1/3 mile from Thomasville Road and 1/4 mile from Centerville Road. There is plenty of on-street parking.

Peter Butzin

Wanna Free Trip to Washington, D.C.?

The League of Women Voters of Florida is offering an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C in September 2014 to a League member who is willing and able to serve as the trip leader. The ideal candidate will be: energetic, a real people person, extremely organized, knowledgeable about Washington, D.C. and able to problem solve on the spot. If you or someone you know is interested, please send a letter of interest that describes your qualifications to the LWVF Office at: 540 Beverly Court, Tallahassee, FL 32301. You may also submit your letter via email to: LWVFoffice@gmail.com.

Jessica Lowe-Minor, Executive Director
League of Women Voters of Florida
Office Phone: [850.224.2545](tel:850.224.2545)
Cell Phone: [850.228.3646](tel:850.228.3646)
Fax: [850.222.4485](tel:850.222.4485)
Email: LWVFExecutiveDirector@gmail.com

Membership Renewal

The Tallahassee League's new Fiscal Year began 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 oramsey020@comcast.net.

- Peggy Ramsey

My Life in the League by Betty Kozumplik

My membership in the LWV means that I can become an informed voter and help others toward that same state. In a family of immigrants, world and local affairs were always important: they were the impetus that brought us here. Because many close relatives remained in the "old country," we followed world events in order to determine how to help them. That need to know continued when I married and moved to Hinckley, Ohio, where I was a member of the Hinckley Voters League. The HVL held candidate forums and provided information to the community which the metropolitan newspapers did not cover. Subsequent moves found me in similar organizations with the same purpose. My belief that a thoroughly informed electorate insures our freedoms and the nation's strength means that I continue to ask questions; I look to the LWV to help me find many of the answers. Or you could just say I'm nosy.

Story gathered by Martha Stewart

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](tel: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



Local Government Study and Action Group

City of Tallahassee Finalizes Ethics in Government Decisions

The Local Government Study & Action Group has been reporting on City of Tallahassee efforts to design a means of assuring ethical conduct at all levels of city government and we finally have some good news. Although not quite the approach recommended by the city-appointed Ethics Panel, the Commission made decisions that include much of the panel's list of suggestions for best practice. Some of the more important decisions were:

1. City Attorney and City Auditor are to jointly hire a full time Ethics Officer for the city. The Ethics Panel had strongly recommended, and your Local Government Group agreed, that this be an independent position which would not report to anyone in the city government. That would have meant amending the City Charter. The reporting structure for the new position avoids that but does make whomever fills the position vulnerable. It's notable that this decision was made on a 3--2 vote of Commissioners.
2. An appointed five-member citizens advisory committee on ethics will be created. The role of this group will be to monitor the implementation of this new program focused on ethics in city government.
3. Use of the Florida Commission on Ethics' form for reporting financial interests will be continued. In addition, elected officials will be required to disclose some additional information, but not specific dollar amounts, for a specified time frame.
4. Two ordinances will be adopted which will be similar to or reference existing state ethics law and cover circumstances under which elected officials must abstain from voting.
5. Lobbying firms engaged to lobby on behalf of the City of Tallahassee at the state or federal level must disclose on a continuing basis a complete list of their clients.
6. Requirements for ethics training for elected officials and employees will be expanded.

Many other recommendations were accepted as well. With these decisions the City of Tallahassee became a leader in Florida regarding efforts to ensure ethical government at the local level. Although it took quite a few months for the City Commission to arrive at their conclusions, the end result is mostly positive. It will be interesting to follow the actions of the new ethics officer to see if the compromise regarding that position's independence impacts this new staff member's ability to function.

Local Government S & A Group Seeks New Leadership

I have been Chair of the Local Government Group for several years. Now that I am the newly elected Vice President of LWVT, Local Government needs a new chairperson. Please contact me at ruthodonnell6@gmail.com if you are interested. Chairing a study and action group isn't a lot of work because the members, especially in Local Government, are self-starters. They just need someone to call meetings, report their activities in The Voter, and coordinate with the LWVT Board on their behalf. Step up to the plate to work with a terrific group of people!

The next meeting of the Local Government Study & Action Group will be May 13, Tuesday, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Richard and Jan RuBino. The address is 726 Ingleside Avenue. All are welcome.

Ruth O'Donnell

Health Care Study and Action Group

The Health Care Study and Action Group met on April 21 to discuss the results of the Day of Dialogue to Enhance Access to Health Care. Six of the Leon County Commissioners were present to discuss the changes likely to result from recent decisions by the federal government to fund Neighborhood Medical Center as a Community Health Center and to remove this designation and funding for Bond Community Health Center. Leadership of the two providers of health care for the uninsured assured the stakeholders in the community that they were working closely together to ensure that people in need of health care could still receive services. A number of gaps in services were identified including a lack of funding for specialty care under the Capital Medical Society's We Care Program which coordinates provision of care by physicians who volunteer their services. Funding for mental health and dental care services were also mentioned as needs. There was some discussion of revisiting the role of the Health Care Coordinating Council appointed by the County Commission to perhaps take a more active role in ensuring the delivery of health care. And, a number of attendees mentioned the



refusal of the Florida Legislature to expand Medicaid as a factor in the availability of care. Members of the Health Care Study and Action Group plan to attend a workshop of the County Commissioners scheduled for 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. on May 13 in the County Commission Chambers on the 5th floor of the Leon County Courthouse. The Leon County Commissioners should receive a report on the Day of Dialogue and an update of the status of Bond and Neighborhood. Any League member is invited to attend and wear a League button signaling our support for the provision of quality health care for all of our residents.

The Health Care Study and Action Group also discussed how to continue our support for the designation of Tallahassee Memorial Hospital as Baby Friendly. We suggested to the hospital that we would include educational materials concerning the benefits of breast feeding in the materials distributed by the League at the Downtown Market. Peggy Ramsey has gathered together the necessary materials and placed them in the box containing items to hand out at the Market. At future meetings of the group, we will address further actions that can be taken to encourage breastfeeding in our community.

League members are welcome to join us. Contact Kathy Winn, Chair of the group, at 766-2612 or via email at kathywinnclan@embarqmail.com for further information.

Kathy Winn

Climate Change and Sustainability Study and Action Group

Sustainability is a thousand small choices you make every day. Like reading a blog.

Consider: Just 14 plastic bags contain enough petroleum to drive a car for a mile.

A look at paper bag manufacturing, usage, and even disposal problems, and you will see why they are not a better choice. Compared to plastic, making a paper bag:

- emits 51 percent more global warming gasses
- creates 50 times more water pollution
- uses 4 times more raw materials
- consumes 2 times more energy

Once used, paper bags are unlikely to be re-used. They tear easily and are made for one time usage. Although paper bags are biodegradable, about 80 percent of all paper bags end up in landfills. There, they do not biodegrade because of a lack of oxygen. They also cost more to landfill because they take up much more space by weight and volume than plastic bags do.

Every study done shows reusable bags are by far the best choice for the environment. Help keep our forests green and use reusable bags!

By Save the World 1 Bag at a time
www.1Bagatatime.com

- Dot Skofronick

Look on the [LWVT web site](#) for the sea level change flyer created by the Climate Change and Sustainability S & A Group. The group has been handing out the flyer at the SaturdayDowntown Market to aid in educating the public on the dangers of climate change.

VOTER DEADLINE

The next Voter will be the August Voter. Have a great summer, everyone!

The deadline for submission of material is Saturday, August 2nd. Please e-mail your material to lgdavis75@gmail.com.
