

WE VALUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP!: [RENEW HERE](#)

The Tallahassee League's fiscal year began May 1st,
if you haven't already, then please renew now!



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TALLAHASSEE

www.lwvtallahassee.org 850.309.3005 lwvtallahassee@gmail.com

Tallahassee

Volume 22 Number 2

September 2013

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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Special EVENING Hot Topic in support of

The Voting Rights Act of 1965

Across America, citizens want to know what will be the impact of the US Supreme Court's recent decision that struck down a key part of the Voting Rights Act.

Discussing this issue at September's Hot Topic supper are two expert and dynamic speakers--Carolyn Thompson (of the Advancement Project) and Ion Sancho (Supervisor of Elections, Leon Co.). In a dialoguetgether, our speakers will educate us about the potential impacts of the Court's decision on voters around Florida and locally. Ways that we can take action to restore critical protections of the Voting Rights Act will also be discussed.



Carolyn Thompson will be traveling from Miami, FL to join us. As the Advancement Project's Florida Voter Protection Advocate, Ms. Thompson is well known and respected in Tallahassee and has spent 20 years as a political activist often focused on voting rights.

As Supervisor of Elections for Leon County since 1989, Ion Sancho is nationally recognized for his expertise in voting systems and election law. Mr. Sancho's passion for voting rights is equaled only by his knowledge of the law.



Please join us in learning what we need know to take action to ensure all citizens are protected under the Voting Rights Act.

CALENDAR

3 Tuesday 7:00 p.m.
Local Gov't S & A

Date & Time September 18, 2013 Wednesday
6:00 p.m.--7:30 p.m. Hot Topic Dinner

Group
Ruth O'Donnell's house
3509 Trillium Court

Location Capital City Country Club
1601 Golf Terrace Drive

10 Tuesday 12:00 p.m.
Leon County
Commission Workshop
Bond Community Health
Center, County Court
Bldg., 5th floor

Dinner \$23 Wild Mushroom Ravioli tossed in a leek cream sauce,
salad, vegetable, rolls and butter, iced tea and coffee.

or FREE The first three student members to RSVP eat
FREE

10 Tuesday 1:30 p.m.
Chief Walt McNeil
Maguire Center
Westminster Oaks

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

Please RSVP by Saturday morning, September 14.

10 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County
Commission, County
Court Bldg., 5th floor

Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after Saturday,
September 14, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for
the cost of their reservations.

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

(Special thanks to our speakers and to Rev. Jabari Paul, member of the
Tallahassee Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, for their
commitment to making this event a success!)

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

President's Message

If you would like to be more active in League through
volunteering, chances are really good that what you would
like to do (to learn or share) is needed! Please take two
minutes to let us know more about your interests, skills,
and availability by [clicking here](#).



16 Monday 1:00 p.m.
CRTPA Meeting
City Hall, 2nd floor

Now I have some great news to share!

17 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
LWVT Board Meeting
LWVF Office
540 Beverly Court

Last year, nationwide, the League of Women Voters grew in
membership for the first time in 30 years! The Florida
League's phenomenal growth had an important role in the national increase. Our
own League in Tallahassee grew by more than 25 percent!

17 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
Leon County
Commission hearing
five-cent sales tax
County Court Bldg., 5th
floor

Membership numbers are one indicator of a healthy grass roots organization. A
more important indicator may be the positive change that we bring about. Here
again, our League in Tallahassee is effecting positive change and showing great
strength thanks to our active Study and Action Groups for local government,
education, health care, and climate change/sustainability.

18 Wednesday
6:00 p.m.
Hot Topics **DINNER**
Capital City Country

Let's imagine for a minute how much more our League could do if our
membership were twice as large, how about ten times as large? Imagine how
great our community would look if the League reached its fullest potential to
inform voters and to advocate for efficient, responsive government?

In Lakeland, FL, last weekend, five of us participated in a training for the
national League's Membership Leadership Development (MLD) program. The

Club, 1601 Golf Terrace
Drive

24 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County
Commission, County
Court Bldg., 5th floor

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

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

MLD program exists to help Leagues reach their fullest potential.

The MLD program teaches local Leagues how to work more efficiently and how to capture every opportunity for membership growth. For example, if we are putting on a Hot Topic, then MLD training shows how to maximize media attention to draw larger audiences as well as how to engage members in putting on the event while mentoring members so that we all continue learning and growing in our leadership capacity.

Many exciting ideas were hatched at the training last weekend, and you'll be enjoying the fruits of our brainstorming and new education over the next couple years: including much greater publicity for League events, more collaboration on event planning with allied organizations, a FaceBook page and Twitter.

You can expect our League to continue working harder and having more fun while we educate ourselves and change the world for the better.

- *Rebecca Sager*
President, League of Women Voters of Tallahassee
(850) 219-9966
rsager@music.org

Welcome New Members

Sally Combs Vegic Sheppard
Chris Kite Sheri McInvale
Steve Urse

Speaking of Members . . . A Banner Year for our League

The fiscal year that ended on April 30 demonstrates how awesome our members and friends are!! The Board of Directors Fund, made up of Susan B. Anthony donations, member donations, memorials and other gifts, added a total of \$4,569.00 to our bank account. Donations were received from:

Joseph Ashcraft who declared we were his "heroines"
American Association of University Women for help with the voter forum
Westminster Oaks for a presentation on the ballot amendments
Carol and John Findling in honor of Janet Findling
Shirley Ellis in memory of M.L. Baker
Carlos Boueres
Theresa Chase
Marilynn Wills

Poll Workers: Janet Findling, Linda Davis, Rebecca Sager, Kathy Winn, Sanford Safron, Rob Weissert, Doris Partridge, Peggy Ramsey, Carol and Bill Weissert, Ruth O'Donnell, and Marilyn Wills

Susan B. Anthony membership level members: Ruth O'Donnell, Peggy Ramsey, Marilyn Wills, Gaynell Waldo, Doris Partridge, Fran Campbell, Rebecca Sager, Linda Davis, Dot Mann, Kay'd Selden, Janet Findling, Erin Edwards, Peter Butzin, Natholyn Harris, Peggy Moore, Linda Williams, Mary Anne Price, Christy Crotty, Marty Monroe, Zana Raybon, Tabitha Frazier, Laura Cook, Fran Conaway, Alan Williams, Paula Saunders, Onieda Monroe, Carmen Nelson.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

- Peggy Ramsey, your grateful Treasurer

A Sad Good-Bye

One of our member stalwarts, George Dewey Knight, passed away in August. George was a steadfast member of the Local Government committee for many years. A great student of history and an excellent writer, George's reporting on commission meetings was both accurate and amusing. He also proofread the Voter every month. When George became too ill to carry on, his family moved him to Atlanta, Georgia, where he lived for the last two years. Mary Knight, George's late wife, was also a League member and served as President of the Tallahassee League. We were fortunate to have known both of these wonderful people.

- Marilyn Wills

A Big Thank-You to Margaret Ausley Stalvey

The League of Women Voters of Tallahassee received a generous donation from Margaret Ausley Stalvey for the Know Your Candidate/Gadsden County Project. We are very grateful for this contribution for our civic and voter services efforts.

My League Story by Peter Butzin

Having been active in Common Cause for over 40 years, I always recognized the League as a strong ally. In the 1970s I worked with Nan Waterman, then President of Common Cause and formerly the head of the League of Women Voters. More recently, respect for Ben Wilcox encouraged me to make the commitment to become an active member. He tells the story that I inspired him when he worked for the local NPR affiliate, and he certainly inspired me with his dedicated work for Common Cause, and, subsequently, the League.

Also, by her example as a League member, my mother championed support for voter rights, access and education, and especially its powerful consensus-building process on public policy issues. (She also taught me not to be threatened by powerful, opinionated women!)

So, respects to Nan Waterman, Ben Wilcox, Henrietta Butzin and all the good work of the League!

- story gathered by Martha Stewart

Engaged Not Enraged

Civility, Politics and Civic Engagement

In a society where public issues are becoming increasingly polarized and political debates pull us left or right, how can we as a country work towards moving forward?

LWVT collaborated with The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc., and the Florida Historic Capitol Museum on August 27th to bring an amazing speaker and a moderator to the Florida Historic Capitol Museum. There they led local citizens in a productive community dialogue about civic engagement, how to connect with other citizens of diverse perspectives, to find consensus, and to take positive action through democratic government.

The speaker was Nate Garvis, founder and author of Naked Civics and former Vice President of Government Affairs and Senior Public Affairs Officer for Target Corporation. The event was moderated by Michael Allen, Professor of Law at Stetson University College of Law, where he teaches courses in Constitutional Law, the federal courts, and the federal system. He is also the Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Strategic Initiatives and the Director of the Veterans Law Institute.



Pictured at left and participating at the event with about 65 other people, are Liz Joyner, Executive Director of Village Square, with the microphone, next to Liz is Erin Crowe of Florida Law Related Education Association, and on the right is our own LWVT President Rebecca Sager.

Quincy Police Chief Walter McNeil to Speak on Being Smart about Crime!

**September 10, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
in the Maguire Center at Westminster Oaks**

Is the United States becoming an increasingly violent and dangerous place to live? How can we ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens, our children, and our law-enforcement officers? These are some of the questions that Quincy Chief of Police Walter McNeil will address.

Chief McNeil has served in law enforcement for more than 30 years. He has a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice, was Chief of Police for the City of Tallahassee, and served for several years as Secretary of Corrections under Governor Charlie Crist. In 2012 he was elected by his colleagues to serve as President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and for the past two years he has been a member of United States Department of Homeland Security Advisory Council under the direction of the Honorable Janet Napolitano.

Mr. McNeil is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for his outstanding work in progressive law enforcement as well as other civic and humanitarian activities. He is a member of many local councils and boards including Boys and Girls Town of Tallahassee, Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, and Refuge House of Tallahassee.

In light of recent events, concern for our safety and the safety of our children has become increasingly important to all of us. We are anxious to hear what Chief McNeil has to say.

This event, sponsored by the Forum of Westminster Oaks, located off Dempsey Mayo Road, is free and open to the public.

- *Stuart Baker*

Health Care Study and Action Group



Issues that are being addressed by the Health Care Study and Action Group include the statewide issues of Medicaid expansion and the operation of federal insurance exchanges in Florida, local access to health care for the uninsured, food insufficiency in our community, and infant mortality.

Members of the group are scheduled to meet with Representative Halsey Beshears, the only member of Leon County's Legislative delegation that voted against expanding Medicaid coverage to low income, uninsured Florida residents at 2:00 p.m. on September 10. Other members of the group will be attending a workshop of the Leon County Commission from 1:00 -- 3:00 p.m. on that same day. The workshop will address questions raised by Commissioners concerning future funding for Bond Community Health Center, a federally qualified health center that serves over 16,000 poor residents of Tallahassee. Please feel free to attend the workshop in the County Commission Chamber of the Leon County Courthouse and wear your League button to show your support for health care access for our uninsured neighbors.

Dr. Ed Holifield attended our August 26 meeting and gave us suggestions about how League members might address the problem of infant mortality (infants dying before 12 months of age) in our community. One solution is to encourage breast feeding by all new mothers, but especially among minority moms. The group plans to write a letter to Tallahassee Memorial Hospital expressing support for breastfeeding and requesting removal of formula from the discharge package provided to mothers giving birth at the hospital. Dr. Holifield will be explaining the problem at a Hot Topic luncheon soon.

In cooperation with the state League and the Oasis Center for Women and Girls, the Health Care Study and Action Group will be developing a one-page handout designed to help people find and use the federal exchange to purchase health insurance. Look for copies of this to hand out at the Downtown Market by October 1 when the exchanges will be online at Healthcare.gov.

- *Kathy Winn*

Local Government Study and Action Group



Local Government Study & Action Group Coordinates August Hot Topics Event About Ethics in Government

Well over 50 people heard Phil Claypool, former Executive Director and General Counsel of the Florida Ethics Commission speak on Florida's newly revised ethics in government law at the August 21st Hot Topics event coordinated by the Local Government Study & Action Group. Attendees included Tallahassee City

Commissioner Scott Maddox and Leon County Commissioner Nick Maddox as well as representatives from local civic and political groups.

Before Mr. Claypool spoke, attendees took an ethics quiz which asked them to match the name of an elected official to ethics offenses. It was a tough test -- only a few got all the correct answers -- but it made very evident the kinds of ethics problems alive and well in Florida. During his talk, Mr. Claypool gave his view of the good and the not so good of the revised ethics law, saying that it made steps forward but didn't go as far as he and the Ethics Commission would have liked. It gave more enforcement power to the Ethics Commission but still does not allow the Commission to initiate complaints against government officials on its own.

Another point of concern is a change to the financial disclosure part of the law which now allows what Mr. Claypool described as "do-overs." Officials can now revise forms in a two-month period after the July 1st filing date. That allows them to change their forms if anyone points out inaccuracies or other problems. Mr. Claypool also said the legislator-to-lobbyist-to-legislator revolving door was not fixed in the revisions to the law.

Ethics in government will be the topic of a handout our group will use when we are responsible for the Downtown Market in November.

Have you Voted on the Imagine Tallahassee Action Initiatives?

As we reported last month, Local Government Study & Action Group is tracking the work of Imagine Tallahassee, a joint private/government effort to develop possible actions that could be supported by extension of the additional one-cent sales tax currently in place. Linda Davis and Ruth O'Donnell attended an open house on August 27th where a proposed vision statement for Tallahassee and associated strategic directions and action initiatives were presented. They voted on initiatives in five strategic directions and you can, too. Go to imagineallahassee.com by September 10th to cast your votes.

The vision statement developed by Imagine Tallahassee is:

"Imagine Tallahassee, inspired by our unique heritage and beauty, empowers and rewards entrepreneurship and innovation to create and sustain a vibrant community where businesses, individuals and families thrive. Our success will be achieved through targeted initiatives and investment on three fronts, setting in motion progress to ensure that:

- Tallahassee Works -- with a vibrant, diversified economy and quality employment;
- Tallahassee Inspires -- with a unique character, natural beauty, vibrantly diverse culture and energy, warm hospitality, and
- Tallahassee Connects -- with a balanced and sustainable pattern of development and supporting infrastructure, a range of mobility choices and effective and efficient governance."

Take a few minutes to look at the strategic direction and action initiatives online. Cast your vote to be part of the process that will guide Tallahassee and Leon County's future for years to come.

Citizens Ethics Panel Recommendations Tabled until October

Jan RuBino, our local government activity tracker reports that the Tallahassee City Commission delayed action on the report and recommendations presented by their ad hoc citizens ethics panel until October.

Let's hope this is not a sign that the Commission is split on approving the recommendations! Local Government will keep an eye on this one -- we strongly support the recommendations and want to see some action soon.

Next Meeting Date

Please join us at our next meeting on Tuesday, September 3 at 7:00 PM. We meet (with refreshments!) at Ruth O'Donnell's home at 3509 Trillium Ct. (off Timberlane Road).

- Ruth O'Donnell

Climate Change and Sustainability Study and Action Group

The LWVT Climate Change/Sustainability study group has been active this summer. We finalized the set of questions which we presented to selected City of Tallahassee persons who work with or issue solar installation permits.

After a little coaching (thank you Marilyn Wills and Jan RuBino) we set off to get our answers. A couple of us e-mailed the questions prior to the interview. Some of the queries were sent back that way. The most successful, it seems, was the e-mail, then an in person interview.

We have been together for one small meeting and expect to evaluate everyone's responses at the next scheduled meeting August 28th at 4:00 p.m. at ReThink Energy's office. We will plan our next step at that time.

- Dot Skofronik

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.

Sustainable Thinking

This column was started a couple years ago in order to help readers learn more about what they can do to make a difference. As of this writing, LWVT's Climate Change/Sustainability Study & Action Group has been working to determine the most effective way that League members can impact climate change and the local environment. As part of these efforts, the committee will take over writing the Sustainable Thinking column in the Voter. This, the first of these articles, introduces a new group to League Members: **Transition Tallahassee**.

Transition Tallahassee is a community organization that focuses on three issues: peak oil, climate change, and the economic crisis accompanying peak oil. The organization works to raise awareness in the Tallahassee community about these three pressing issues, as well as to aid and initiate local alternative infrastructure that will help smooth the transition away from fossil fuel energy, mitigate climate change and ease economic hardship in the process. They work at the community level, and believe that re-localizing economy and building strong local communities is the best way to meet the coming challenges.

Sunday, September 8th, from 1:30 to 4:00, **Transition Tallahassee** invites League members to a World Café at the FSU Center for Global Engagement Auditorium. (For directions to event location: fsu.edu/aboutus/directions, Free, public parking is available off Woodward Ave.) A World Cafe is a

discussion process that aims to address a central question by breaking out into smaller groups that each address a smaller facet of the question, and then reconvening and reporting back to the larger group. The central question of this World Cafe will be: How can we best make the transition away from the fossil fuel economy and towards a re-localized, resilient, and tight-knit Tallahassee community? The event will be facilitated by Martha Lang, Leon Soil and Water Conservation Supervisor, and will feature Keynote Speaker Susan Cerulean. Breakout discussions will include Building a Local Maker Economy, Let's Talk About Food: Building a Healthy Local Food System, Solar Cooperatives & Collectives, The New Economy & Time Banking, and Fossil Fuel Divestment & Local Reinvestment. Coffee and refreshments will also be provided. In the spirit of sustainability, please bring your own plate, cup, and fork. More information can be found at: transitiontallahassee.org.

- *Kim Ross*

OPT OUT - go Green!

If you would like to opt out of the traditional paper Voter (the one that arrives by regular mail), then please send an email to lwvtallahassee@gmail.com with "Opt Out" in the subject line.

VOTER DEADLINE

The next Voter will be the October Voter. The deadline for submission of material is Friday, September 27. Please e-mail your articles to lgdavis75@gmail.com.
