



LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area

www.lwvtri.org

Nationally Recognized! Locally Active!

**The League of Women Voters does not endorse or oppose
political parties or candidates.**

**The League of Women Voters encourages
engagement and participation in the political process.**

Volume 8 Issue 8

March 2014

President's Letter

It is time for our Annual Meeting, and I hope you have the date marked on your calendar. We will be meeting on **Monday, March 24, 10 a.m.**, at the Community Bank & Trust Col, CR466 and Parr Drive, The Villages. At that time, we will be electing officers and directors, approving our budget and adopting our local program for the coming year. Your participation in this meeting is important to us. The Annual Meeting packet will be sent to you electronically prior to the meeting. Our guest speaker will be the Hon. Alan Gold who will be addressing the timely topic of campaign financing reform. As this is an election year, fundraising by candidates is in full swing. See the Membership section for further information about this meeting.

I would also like to bring to your attention our May General Meeting. We will be departing from our usual format in that League members from Yalahala will be hosting a covered dish luncheon provided by League members. In addition, we have a very special guest speaker, J.T. Glisson, who is the author of The Creek. Mr. Glisson grew up in Cross Creek, and is the son in the Glisson family who are mentioned in Marjorie Kinnan Rawling's Cross Creek. Whether new to Florida or not, you won't want to miss this wonderful opportunity to hear first hand what it was like growing up in an area not even a hour away when most of what we see around us did not exist. Copies will be available for purchase at the luncheon. If you have not read Cross Creek, you might want to do so before the meeting. Because of limited parking, we will be providing carpools, and further information about this is contained in the Member section. Mark your calendars and bring a friend.

Please read the article on water in this issue written by members of the Water Committee. If you are a new resident of Florida, this will help you understand the background and history of the issues we are now facing. At our April 28 General Meeting, we will be welcoming Chuck O'Neal, LWVF Director Natural Resources as our guest speaker. He will be speaking about water issues statewide as well as in our local tri-county area.

With the start of the 60-day legislative session this month, you will be receiving weekly updates about the League's priority issues for the session. In addition, you might be called upon to contact a representative or senator about a particular piece of legislation. It is very important that you respond when asked to do so.

The next several months will be busy ones for our League, and I hope you will participate not only in our remaining general meetings, but also on one of our committees: *education, local government, natural resources and voter service*. We cannot succeed without your help.

See you at the Annual Meeting.

Joanne

Joanne M. Coen

P.S. Don't forget to invite a friend!

Celebrate Women's History Month



As recently as the 1970's, women's history was virtually an unknown topic in the K-12 curriculum or in general public consciousness. To address this situation, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women initiated a "Women's History Week" celebration for 1978. **In February 1980, President Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th, 1980, as National Women's History Week.** That same year,

Representative Barbara Mikulski, who at the time was in the House of Representatives, and Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsored a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week 1981. This co-sponsorship demonstrated the wide-ranging political support for recognizing, honoring, and celebrating the achievements of American women. By 1986, 14 states had already declared March as Women's History Month. This momentum and state-by-state action was used as the rationale in lobbying Congress to declare the entire month of

March 1987 as National Women's History Month. In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity. A special Presidential Proclamation is issued every year honoring the extraordinary achievements of American women.

Once again this year, our League was a cosponsor of the Women's History Month Celebration on February 26 at Lake-Sumter State College. Participating in the discussion were:

- Rosann Brandenburg, Exec. Dir. LSSC Institutional Advancement/Founder and r of the Lake County School Board Member.
- Emily Lee, Bates Avenue Community Facilitator, Member LSSC Board of Trustees
- Donna Miller, Lake County Judge.

Unable to participate because of illness was Phyllis Baum, VP Central Florida Health Alliance. Even though the weather was not the best, the turnout was excellent, and it was heartening to see many young women and men in the audience. Each of the participants spoke about the mindset women faced in their various fields, and in one case, the applicant's height was considered a significant factor! Women's History Month gives us all an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments women have made and to applaud them for their dedication and determination.

Membership

Welcome New Members

Marjorie Barrett

Mary Hampton

Updated membership rosters have been forwarded to all members. If you have not received one, please contact Carolyn Johnson, cgljohnson@comcast.net. In addition, just a reminder especially for those members whose anniversary month is January or February, **your** dues must be paid in order to vote at the Annual Meeting. If you are not sure of your status, please contact Carolyn Johnson.

General Meetings

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings take place on the fourth Monday of the month at the Community Bank & Trust Co., CR466 & Parr Drive, The Villages.

March 24, 10:00 a.m.

Annual Meeting-See Below

April 21, 10:30 a.m.

State and local water issues will be discussed. Our guest speaker will be Chuck O'Neal, LWVF Director Natural Resources.

May 19, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.,
Waterwood Community
Clubhouse, Yalaha

June 23, 10:30 a.m.

Guest Speaker: Karen K. Krauss, SOE Sumter County

8th Annual Meeting

Monday, March 24, 2014
10:00 a.m.

Community Bank & Trust Co.
CR466 & Parr Drive, The Villages
Guest Speaker: Hon. Alan Gold

Election of Officers & Directors
Adoption of Budget and Program

Luncheon to follow at
Bamboo Bistro,
700 N. Hwy US441, The Villages

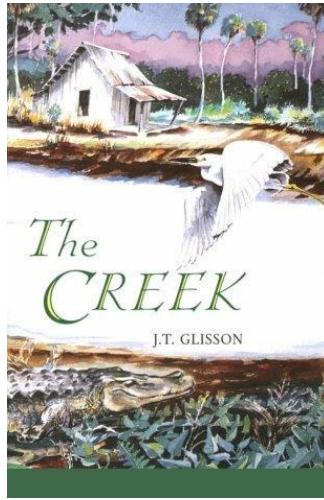
Luncheon Reservation can be made by contacting
Beth Hicks, ethicks71@gmail.com
no later than Wednesday, March 19.

May General Meeting

Monday, May 19, 2014
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Clubhouse, Waterwood Community, Yalahala
Covered dish luncheon hosted by Yalahala League members

Guest Speaker: J.T. Glisson, author of The Creek



Mr. Glisson's family were neighbors of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and his book recaptures his growing up in Cross Creek.

Carpooling is a must and will be available at the following locations:
Laurel Manor Recreation Center, The Villages
Parking lot at the Barnstorm Theater in Brownwood
Belk's parking lot on 44127.
Please plan to arrive at 9:30 a.m.

Luncheon and carpooling reservations can be made by by contacting

Pam Ibrahim, pam2321@gmail.com or [248-736-3042](tel:248-736-3042) or
Lynne Klaczak, lynne0316@yahoo.com or [772-834-3789](tel:772-834-3789)
no later than Monday, May 12.

Local Government Committee

The Local Government Committee will monitor the Lake, Marion and Sumter County Commissions, by reviewing the Agendas and Minutes of those entities meetings, on their web sites. In the tradition of the "League Observer Corps," - volunteers who went to every meeting of the local government entity, we will be there virtually to ensure that the conduct of County business is transparent and in the interest of County residents. If you want to learn more about County Government, to make sure that it is open and accountable, and if you have access to the Internet, we urge you to join us. Contact Carol Van Noy at denny.carol@gmail.com or at 352-633-5353. Below are the County websites. We look forward to your eager participation in making democracy work.

Lake County:
https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/board_agendas/index.aspx

Marion County:
<http://www.marioncountyfl.org/about/agendas-and-minutes>

Sumter County:
<http://sumtercountyfl.gov/index.aspx?nid=70>

Natural Resources Committee

Water Wars: We are among the many guilty parties!



The St. John's River Water Management District's (SJRWMD) decision to approve Niagara's request to withdraw more water from the Floridan Aquifer is just the latest in a long list of disastrous environmental rulings. Florida's natural springs are in serious trouble because of groundwater over pumping, pollution, and regulatory neglect. Our League did **send** a letter to the SJRWMD outlining our opposition to this request based on our State League water policy positions which state:

To support public policies that promote conservation of freshwater and its availability for environmental, public supply, agricultural, industrial and mining uses on a priority basis.

Further Positions cover issues such as consumptive use permitting stating that permits should reflect the true cost of the application, monitoring and enforcement including meters for those using more than 100,000 gallons per day. There should be a priority order among interests competing water. The environment and public supply should be first in priority, followed by agriculture, industry and mining, in that order.

Factors to be considered in allocating water among competing interested are ranked as follows: first-environmental benefit; second-reasonable beneficial use; third-economic benefit. Prior use should not be a consideration.

Lakes and wetlands are drying up or becoming polluted due, in part, not only to industry and agriculture, but also from run-off of fertilizers and insecticides used by homeowners. Use of water at an alarming rate is leading to catastrophic conditions for all our water resources.

Tragically, the world-renowned Silver Springs have experienced a significant reduction in flow and a devastating increase in nutrient pollution over the last several decades. Now, a massive cattle operation, Adena Springs Ranch, is seeking a permit to withdraw millions of gallons of water each day from the aquifer that feeds these springs.

In a letter to Florida Rep. Jimmy Patronis, the Honorable Bob Graham to Florida writes: *The Florida Conservation Coalition, which represents over 50 environmental organizations from around the state, has reviewed your recently filed bill (HB 703) which deals with nine separate and important provisions of Florida statutes... As it is currently drafted, the Coalition will have to oppose the bill.*

In 2011, the Florida Legislature reaffirmed home rule as part of the Community Development Act, but otherwise decimated growth management legislation in Florida. This bill is an attempt

to reduce even that authority by limiting local government's rights to conduct their land-use business, or by telling them what they can or cannot do in rather specific circumstances.

Additionally, as the scramble for scarce water continues, many entities are attempting to circumnavigate the careful review required for new and/or renewed consumptive use permits, effectively privatizing the water resources of our state. Those provisions have found their way into this bill.

In our local area, Lake County Commissioner Sean Parks is proposing to have a very large mixed-use development in SE Lake County added to the County Development Plan. The South Lake County Water Initiative (SLCWI) is a cooperative effort headed by Parks to establish a plan to provide adequate water for this new mega-development. The Consultant to SLCWI, Alan Oyler, is a deeply committed environmentalist and Professional Engineer. At the Lake County Legislative Delegation's briefing on Water Issues, Oyler outlined the possible water sources, none of which is an easy or necessarily cost effective option.

In addressing Niagara Bottling's promise to use water from the Lower Floridan Aquifer, Oyler discussed the problems with making this brackish water potable - again, not easy or necessarily cost effective. He said there is a new process just released by the U.S. Military for dealing with this sort of water. He will evaluate this process as he receives more information and sees a demonstration. But the bottom line is, how safe is the Upper Floridan if the Lower reaches are being withdrawn?

Here are links to some resources you might find helpful:

- The organizational structure of the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection - <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/info/org/default.htm>. Herschel T. Vinyard Jr. is the Secretary of the DEPDEP has organized responsibilities into four primary areas, all of which affect water policy:Water Policy and Ecosystems; Water Quality Assessment & Restoration; Permitting, Compliance & Enforcement; Financial Assistance.
- The Office of Water Policy oversees the 5 water management districts and is responsible for The Florida Water Plan which provides information on the goals, guidance, and activities of the Department's water resource programs. <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/contacts.htm>

Government groups responsible for the management of Florida's water:

- <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/watman/> Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- <http://floridaswater.com/> St. Johns River Water Management District
- <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/> Southwest Florida Water Management District

Web sites of some of the citizen groups that focus on water issues:

- On our local League website, www.lwvtri.org, go to League Publications and click on Study and Action 2013-2015 - beginning on page 68 you will see the League's positions relative to natural resources, including water
- <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/> Florida's Water and Land Legacy
- <http://wewantcleanwater.com/> Florida's Clean Water Campaign (includes a list of participating orgs. and businesses-many more web sites)
- <http://www.conservefloridawater.org/> Conserve Florida Water Clearinghouse
- <http://www.silverspringsalliance.org/> Silver Springs Alliance
- <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/florida/index.htm> The Nature Conservancy
- <http://www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org/> St. Johns River Keeper

This article is a compilation of material from many websites, articles, and from the LWV TV/TCA Water Study Committee: Charlene Walker, Chair, Joanne Coen, , Kathy Hansen, Karen West, Pat and Al Wichman.

Voter Service & Education Committee

We had our first speaking engagement of the year at the Golden Triangle Democratic Club in Mount Dora on Saturday, February 9. Kudos go to our Carol Van Noy who made an excellent presentation on the League's 2014 priorities.

At our next presentation, we will be discussing voter's rights. This is a very appropriate subject as concerns exist about the suppression of those rights.

The League is always looking for members who want to help register new Florida residents or help update the records of voters who have moved within the state or have changed their name.

Along with the Local Government group, we will be putting together an on-line voter's guide in time for the primary elections scheduled for August 25, 2014.

If you are interested in joining our Speakers Bureau or helping register voters, please contact Richard Coen at joannejon@aol.com.