



LWV of the Villages/Tri-County Area

March 2012 Vol. 6 Issue 8

www.lwvtri.org

Nationally recognized! Locally active!

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Be Ready to Vote!



**Join us on Monday,
March 26, 2012, at 10 a.m.,
Meeting Room A,
Leesburg Library
Main Street, Leesburg.**

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Charles Mojock
President, LSCC

Topic:
**Future of Community
Colleges
in Florida**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization.

We do not endorse political parties or candidates.

We encourage informed and active participation in government and work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

President's Message

What an interesting and informative meeting we had on February 27th with former **Governor Buddy Mackay** as our guest speaker. In light of the fact that March is recognized as **Women's History Month**, his recognition of **Marjorie Carr, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas** and **Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings** was most appropriate. While the "Three Marjories" did not hold elective office, they made valuable contributions to the state of Florida in the areas of conservation and literature. After recognizing the work of the League of Women Voters over the years and challenging the League to keep up its good work, Mr. Mackay expressed the hope that there were some "Marjories" in the audience. Let us hope so. Thank you to League member, **Nancy Bell**, for making the arrangements for this program. Thank you also to **Judie Brown, Carol Dodds, Janet Duncan, Lucy Espey-Frances, Johnsons** and **Cynthia Oatley** for their help in setting up and breaking down the room.

In preparation for our **Annual Meeting in April**, the **Proposed Program** and **Slate of Officers** is on page 3. The **2012-13 Budget** will be available shortly.

Mark your calendar for our **Women's History Month Celebration** on **Tuesday, March 20**, and our **General Meeting** on **March 26**. Note that we will be meeting in Leesburg. Carpools will be arranged. Don't forget to invite a friend!

Joanne

MEETINGS

MEMBERSHIP

We extend a warm welcome to **Leslie Campione** who joined our League at the February meeting.

Get well wishes to **Betsy Brody** who is "nose above toes" after foot surgery. **Frances Spedding** is now at Summerfield Suites and loves hearing from League members.

Dues for **March**: **Beverly Epstein & Luth Tenorio**.

March

Friday, March 2, 3 p.m.
Voter Service & Ed. Committee Mtg.
Panera's Bread Co., Spanish Springs,
The Villages

Tuesday, March 20, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Women's History Month Celebration
Lake-Sumter Community College, Leesburg

Monday, March 26, 10 a.m.
Dr. Charles Mojock, President
Lake-Sumter Community College

April

Monday, April 16, 10 a.m.
LWVTRI Annual Meeting
Location TBA

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS **2012-14**

Judie Brown	Treasurer
Bernice Cozewith	Director
Charlene Walker	Director

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR **2012-13**

Voter Service & Education-Continue to provide information about elections, election process, redistricting, amendments and changes in the election law and promote the Speaker's Bureau.

Issue for Action

Continue to keep informed about the Citizens United decision and issues relating to the funding of elections.

Education-Research school funding for capital expenditures and operations and when appropriate take action based on LWV positions.

Transportation-Participate in transportation studies, and when appropriate take action based on LWV positions.

Natural Resources-Study local water issues and continue to oppose offshore drilling based on LWVF positions.

VOTER SERVICE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee had several speaking engagements in February, and will be meeting on **Friday, March 2, 3 p.m.**, at **Panera's in Spanish Springs**.

The latest issue of LWVF's "Capitol Report" is on our website, www.lwvtri.org. The Legislature is expected to adjoin on March 9 so there will only be two more issues.



Just a reminder, if you, or someone you know, want to check their voter registration status, the League of Women Voters has made it easier for you to do so. Just go to <http://bereadytovote.org/> and you can instantly find out your status. If you have a smartphone, you can scan the Be Ready to Vote Tag shown here:

Because local Leagues across the state are under a self-imposed moratorium with regard to registering voters, this is a fast and easy way to make sure your information is up-to-date. If you need to make a change, you will then be connected to your local Supervisor of Elections via phone, email or website link to register, change party affiliation, address, name, signature or renew your absentee ballot request.

Redistricting update: The **Florida House** and **Senate** maps, passed by a joint resolution of apportionment, were approved on February 9; on February 10, the Florida Attorney General petitioned the Florida Supreme Court to determine the validity of the joint resolution that apportions the Florida House and Senate; on February 29, the Florida Supreme Court heard oral arguments from all parties. The Florida Supreme Court must enter a judgment in this matter no later than March 11, 2012. They can either approve the maps or send them back to the Legislature with guideline for changes.

The **Congressional** maps were signed into law with the signature of Gov. Scott on February 16. Because there is no automatic court review for Congressional maps, the League of Women Voters of Florida and other named parties filed suit challenging the map. This matter is currently pending.

Richard Coen



2012 LWVF Legislative Summit

February 21-23, 2012

After arriving in Tallahassee on Tuesday, February 21, Leaguers were informed that because the League is involved in the redistricting lawsuit, several invited officials had to decline an invitation to speak. Both Ben Wilcox and Marilynn Wills gave us our primer on legislation, i.e. material for interviews with our legislators, committees to attend and how to be as effective as possible during our short stay in Tallahassee.

Visiting and lobbying our legislators began early Wednesday morning, and I had an 8 o'clock appointment with Sen. Hayes. I thanked him on behalf of the League for his support of the Elections Bill, the Energy Bill and Public Meetings Bills. His opinion on the Ethics Bill, which the League supports, was that it would not pass. I was not able to meet with Rep. O'Toole as she was on the House floor. In the afternoon, we gathered in the Cabinet Meeting Room where we heard from some of our elected representatives as well as others. Topics ranged from funding of charter schools, the disparity in public school funding, funneling of public school funds to private and religious schools, healthcare and cutting taxes without touching the many tax exemptions allowed under Florida law. In addition, we heard of the latest attempt to pass an even worse TABOR (Taxpayer's Bill of Rights) that would never allow any added tax revenue.

On Wednesday evening, the LWV of Florida recognized some of the newest elected officials from around the state. Good food and company made for an enjoyable evening.

After breakfast on Thursday morning, there was a local League Presidents' meeting followed by a workshop on Constant Contact and Twitter 101. Both were excellent presentations. There was an Open House as the League office. Congratulations to the new staff on a great job.

As always, attending the Summit is a great experience to meet other League members from across the state and to speak with our elected representatives about the League's priorities. Treat yourself next year to a great experience. Attend the 2013 LWV Florida Legislative Summit.

Charlene Walker



*Celebrate Women's History Month
With the
League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area
American Association of University Women, Lake/Sumter Branch
Business and Professional Women, North Lake
Democratic Women's Club of Lake County
Lake-Sumter Community College's New Directions Program
and
Lake-Sumter Community College's Equity & Diversity Committee
on
Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 5 - 7 p.m.
at
Lake-Sumter Community College - Magnolia Room
Guest Speaker: Ms. Jakki Perry,
Women's Education - Women's Empowerment
Human Resources Director for the City of Leesburg
For further information, contact Joanne M. Coen.*

FROM LWVUS

League and Partners Surpass FEC Petition Goal

On February 9, the League of Women Voters announced they had surpassed their goal of **25,000 petition signatures** on the White House "We the People" website that asks President Obama to appoint new commissioners to the malfunctioning Federal Election Commission (FEC). The League and partners Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy21 and Public Citizen launched the petition drive on January 11 in order to get a response from the Administration on this critical issue that, to date, it has ignored.

"The Obama campaign's decision this week to allow surrogates to assist Super PACs in raising funds illustrates how broken the system is and that the FEC is asleep at the switch," said Elisabeth MacNamara, national League President. "The only reason that the leading presidential campaigns of both political parties are able to work with the Super PACs is that the FEC is not enforcing the law. Indeed the FEC says this is acceptable. Our democracy needs a fully-functioning FEC," said MacNamara.

The FEC is supposed to be the agency that enforces campaign finance laws, but it is dysfunctional. Of the six commissioners at the agency, three of them staunchly refuse to enforce the law, and five of the six are serving despite expired terms.

"It is time for the President to step up to the challenge, just as he promised he would in his campaign four years ago," said MacNamara. In September 2007, candidate Obama said, "As president, I will appoint nominees to the Commission who are committed to enforcing our nation's election laws."

"Right now, this ball is in the President's court. He needs to make nominations to the FEC," MacNamara said.

"We eagerly await the response from President Obama to our petition. We expect to hear his plans for the government agency charged with enforcing the law and stopping illegal coordination by candidate Super PACs," MacNamara concluded

League Supports DISCLOSE 2012 in Congress

The LWVUS Lobby Corps is visiting House offices, asking Representatives to cosponsor H.R. 4010, DISCLOSE 2012, introduced by Rep. Chris Van Hollen. The legislation provides essential new disclosure requirements to cover the hundreds of millions of dollars in secret contributions being injected into federal elections by non-profit groups and other entities. The legislation also ensures that there will be timely disclosure by Super PACs. The League and coalition partners also sent a letter to the House in support of H.R. 4010.



LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area
Be a Voice for Citizens! Be a Force for Change!
Be Involved in the Process!
www.lwvtri.org

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Address _____

Email _____

Zip Code _____

Village, if applicable _____

Community, if applicable _____

Former League Member: Yes _____ No _____ Where: _____

Your active participation is needed. Are you interested in?

Government in Florida
 Justice in Florida
 Natural Resources

Education in Florida
 Social Policy in Florida
 Growth Management

Could you help with:

Newsletter (Electronic) Membership Public Relations Fundraising

Dues are paid annually on the anniversary of joining:

Individual	\$ 50.00 + Local Dues of \$10	_____
Household	\$ 75.00 + Local Dues of \$10 per person	_____
Student	\$ 25.00	_____
Susan B. Anthony	\$100.00 Membership Dues +Donation	_____

A check should be made payable to **LWV of Florida** for the applicable amount. In addition, the check for **Local Dues** should be made payable to **LWVTRI**. Both checks should be mailed to **Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, and FL 32162**. Your dues include membership in the LWVUS and LWVF as well as a subscription to the *Florida Voter*.