



League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area

Nationally Recognized & Locally Active

www.lwvtrifl.org

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From the President's Pen!

My daughter recently shared a graph she found on "reddit". People were asked to vote as if the choices were **Trump**, **Clinton**, or **Nobody** in the recent election. **Nobody** would have won with over 400 electoral votes! What a sad commentary on the American psyche and our frustration with "business as usual". This is the challenge the League faces.

Our recent upturn in membership, hits on our **Facebook** page, (we are there as **League of Women Voters of The Villages Tri County**), and questions to our website (www.lwvtrifl.org), and attendance at our monthly meetings shows that the tide might be turning! Our speaker's bureau ALREADY has 15 engagements for the fall season.

Now is the time to energize the group. It is time to register to vote, take part in a rally, help plan a meet the candidate night, write a letter to the editor, or any other type of political activity. **We need to engage and work towards an informed electorate that will elect quality candidates!**

You have joined us because you care about democracy and an informed vote. Find where you fit in and join a committee. Tell us your talent and we can fit you into our ideas.

Our monthly meetings, the last one being **Monday, May 21**, will take a summer hiatus, but issues won't. The board is planning **Food for Thought** sessions this summer. We could meet in June and July for an afternoon for coffee, goodies and conversation. Possible time and location is some afternoon around 2:30 at Panera's in Spanish Springs. There is usually room at that time so no planning would be necessary. We will keep you posted.

Lastly, we have firmed up the date of our **Annual Women's Equality Day Tea**. We will gather at **Churchill Recreation Center, 2375 Churchill Downs, The Villages, on Friday, August 17**, from **2-4**. Once again, we are pleased to be joining with **AAUW Lake/Sumter** as we celebrate the ratification of the 19th amendment. Details in further emails and on our website.

I look forward to seeing you at the May meeting where we will discuss all the amendments that will be on the fall ballot. And don't forget to invite a friend!

In League,
Beth Hicks, President

May General Meeting

When: 10:30 a.m., Monday, May 21, 2018

**Where: Community Bank & Trust Co.
CR466 & Parr Drive, The Villages**

Topic: The 13 Amendments on the November Ballot!



Presenters: LWVTRI Speakers Bureau

Membership

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest members: **Linda Carpenter, Joan Fitzgibbons, Emily Foster and Cathy Thompson.**

Just a reminder that dues are due on the anniversary month of your joining the League. You will receive an email reminder prior to your anniversary date. When you do, please make your check payable to LWVTRI and mail it to **Bernadette Aley, 1106 Monterey Lane, The Villages, Florida 32159.**

League Name Badges

League name badges are now available to all members for \$5 with either a magnetic or pin backing. If you would like to order one, please contact **June Webber, budweb@comcast.net** for details. The turn around time is quick!



Upcoming Dates!

May General Meeting

Monday, May 21, 10:30 a.m.

June & July

Food for Thought Sessions

Dates to be announced

Women's Equality Day Tea

Friday, August 17, 2-4 p.m.

Churchill Recreation Center, The Villages

First Woman

A gift for a young woman you may know--*First Woman* recognizes American suffragists who worked successfully for women's civil rights. The wealth of detail included here irrefutably shows the growing contributions women have made to our national life. These courageous women smoothed the path that led our nation to where it is today. The cost is \$14.95. This would make a great graduation gift for a special young woman.

For information contact **Charlene Allmen charallmen@gmail.com.**

Education

Data collection for the VPK project has drawn to a close, and we are now working on analysis of the data we collected. The team of site visitors went to 17 VPK programs in the tri-county area to interview the directors and the teachers and to observe in the classrooms. Judy Bonn, Linda Carpenter, and Carolyn Johnson are analyzing the interviews, and Char Griffin will be entering test scores and other quantitative data into the database she created for the project. We anticipate finishing data analysis and generating a final report by the



end of the summer.

Our next steps are to increase our advocacy on behalf of VPK. Toward that end, our League came to consensus in support of the VPK project and will work towards statewide concurrence in the coming months. Local consensus offers us an official position about VPK and recommendations for actions to improve the program:

To ensure that all 4-year-old children in Florida have access to high-quality pre-Kindergarten programming, as mandated in the Florida Constitution.

Toward that end, to advocate for a substantial increase in per-child base allocation and allocation of new monies for State-provided, intensive, on-site in-service training for VPK teachers in instructional design, lesson planning, and other teaching skills.

We will use the League's position and recommendations as we advocate for VPK with stakeholders and legislators. Interestingly, two recent news articles – one on CNN.com and the other on HeraldTribune.com – lament the same concerns we have expressed about VPK in our state. Both articles refer to current data reported by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) which shows, yet again, that Florida leads the nation in children's access to pre-K but is near the bottom in funding.

On April 5, **Gail Formanack** hosted a pot-luck lunch at her home where we formally thanked our **League** and **AAUW** volunteers and they had the opportunity to share their experiences with others who have worked on the project. We would like to recognize and thank all of them here:

Sharon Albrecht

Diana Bishop

Barbara Blatchford

Judy Bonn

Judie Brown

Linda Carpenter

Joanne Coen

Gail Formanack

Susan Gold

Char Griffin

Beth Hicks

Carolyn Johnson

Ann Koziol

Barbara Maloney

Lu Michaels

Ginny Rivera

Terri Roher

Laurel Rowen

Ginger Ryan

Patti Schmidt

Liz Schweers

Marilyn Sundstrom

Carol Wesley

Karen West

Voter Service

Speakers Bureau Coordinator, **Jeannie Hamilton**, reports that we have had 15 requests for speakers, in the last two months. Most want us to present the Power Point presentation that is being developed to explain the proposed Florida Constitutional Amendments that will be on the 2018 General Election Ballot, and the pros and cons of voting for them. We continue to speak to groups, about the Constitution Revision Commission (CRC), which has announced the 8 proposed Constitutional Amendments that they will place on the 2018 General Election Ballot; and the Restoration of Felon Rights, which will be on the 2018 Ballot, after a Coalition of non-profits, including the League, gathered sufficient signatures. We hope to have a Power Point Presentation for the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, which is an initiative in the development stages, to urge states to agree to instruct their Presidential Electors to vote for the candidate who received the most votes, nationwide, instead of in their state. **Helen Kelly** is our representative to a coalition of non-profits that is supporting this initiative. If you belong to a group who would like to have a speaker on one of these topics, please contact **Jeannie Hamilton**, 303-817-9988, jeannie@jeannierealtor.com. Or, if you have speaking experience and would like to volunteer to speak for the League, please contact **Carol Van Noy**, 352-633-5353, denny.carol@gmail.com.

Florida is one of the States in the Public Advocacy for Voting Rights (PAVR), which is researching compliance with the Motor Voter Laws. In 2017, **Janis Dorgan** and **Janet Duncan**, interviewed the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), in each of the three counties, Lake, Sumter and Marion and found them all working hard to implement the State's Motor Voter Law. The PAVR now wants us to send members whose licenses are due for renewal to their local DMV Office, and report back whether they were offered the opportunity to register to vote. If your drivers' license is due for renewal, and you are willing to go to your local DMV Office, please contact **Carol Van Noy**, 352-633-5353, denny.carol@gmail.com.

Ellen Dugan is implementing a Voter Registration Drive, to ensure that all Sumter County qualified voters are registered. Florida State Voter Statistics show that Sumter County has the lowest percentage of qualified voters, in the minority community, registered to vote. If you are interested in Voter Registration, please contact **Ellen Dugan**, 352-633-5241, ellen.dugan@gmail.com.

Five League member volunteers: **Joanne Coen**, **Gail Formanack**, **Sara Rich**, **Terri Roher**, and **Kathy Williamson**, are compiling the names, email addresses and phone numbers of all of the candidates who will be on the Lake, Marion and Sumter County 2018 Primary Election Ballot. With this information, Webmaster **Charlene Griffin** and **Carol Van Noy** will set up the process on the **VOTE411** software program to contact all of the candidates and give them a link to input their photo, bio information and response to League questions. We are in the process of developing those questions. Because the Florida League will cover the Federal and State Candidates, we will work exclusively with County and Local candidates. Therefore, if you have suggested issues that you believe will give the public insight into the County or other local candidates' thought process, please contact **Carol Van Noy**, 352-633-5353, denny.carol@gmail.com, with those issues. After filing ends,

on June 22, 2018, we will invite all County and Local candidates to participate. We will send you an email notice, when the Guide is available, probably in July. The Guide will offer the voter a ballot specific to their address, the ability to compare candidates for the same office, and a sample ballot that they can print, text or email.

Thank you to all League volunteers; we could not provide these great services, without you!!

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization.

The League neither supports or opposes political parties or candidates.

*The League promotes active participation of citizens in their government
through education and advocacy.*



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