



# LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area

## Voter

Nationally Recognized! Locally Active!

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

The League encourages engagement and participation in the political process.

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Our Annual Holiday Luncheon was held on December 6, and we welcomed some former Lake County League members as well as other guests. The Auction was a success and the proceeds will help us to defray the cost of maintaining our website.

Speaking of our website, I am happy to announce that during the months of October and November, our site saw a marked increase in activity which only reinforces in my mind the need for nonpartisan information during the election cycle. At our last board meeting as we reviewed our voter service and education activities, it was agreed that we will continue with producing an online voters' guide and rather than wait for the general election, we will start with the primary election. During a statewide League conference call last week, it was announced that Leagues across Florida reached over 20,000 citizens while making amendment presentations. I am happy to say that our League, though small in number, reached several hundred people in the tri-county area. Again, thank you to all League members who participated in speaking engagements, Market nights, voter registration, etc.

If you are in the habit of making New Year's resolutions, I hope one of them will be to find your place in the League. We all have something to contribute and we have some interesting programs on the agenda. So think about helping with general meeting planning, Women's History Month in March, the Annual Meeting, Budget planning, possible local study projects, etc. Maybe you like to make calls. You can help us out by participating in a phone tree. The League can always find a place for you to contribute time.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of LWVTRI, I wish you and your families a Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas!

Joanne M. Coen

## January 28, 2013

### General Meeting



To kick off 2013, our guest speaker for the January General Meeting will be Com. Doug Gilpin, Chair of the Sumter County Board of Commissioners. In preparation for the upcoming legislative session, we have asked Com. Gilpin to discuss how counties may fare in the Florida legislature during the 2013 session, and what specifically Sumter County might be lobbying for and, if time allows, a brief question and answer period will follow. The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. at the Community Bank & Trust Co., CR466 and Parr Drive, The Villages. Whether or not you are a resident of Sumter County, you won't want to miss this meeting!

## Membership

We are happy to welcome back to local League membership, Mary Aneiro, who was a former member of the Lake County League.

LWVTRI's prolific dramatist, Nancy Bell, has just written, and will direct, "Memories of World War II: When We Were Children," which will be presented at the Readers Theater on Saturday, February 9, 4:00 p.m., at The United Church of Christ on CR 101 in Oxford. As may recall, Nancy also authored and directed "Women Get the Vote" which was taped for Lake Sumter State College and presented at our 2010 Women's Equality Day Celebration.

Congratulations to Com. Leslie Campione for being named chair of the Lake County Board of County Commissioners.

## Upcoming Meetings

In February, we are changing our meeting location from the Community Bank & Trust Co. to the Lady Lake Community Building on West Guava Street in Lady Lake. The meeting will be held on Monday, February 25, and begin at 10:30 a.m. We are very pleased that the Supervisors of Elections from the tri-county area will be joining us to give an overview of the recent elections as well as hearing from League members who were poll workers, poll watchers and observers during canvassing. We have heard calls for changes in election laws, and who better than the SOEs to address these issues.

At our November board meeting, the board discussed the Local Program for 2013-2014 which will be presented at our 2013 Annual Meeting to be held on Monday, March 25. In addition to voting on a proposed program and budget, we will be electing the following officers plus two directors for 2013-15: President, Vice President and Treasurer. If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact either Lucy Espey-Francis or Steven Cooper.

## News from LWVF

Following responses back from League members across Florida, the state Board has chosen the following as the League's priorities during the 2013 Legislative Session:

- Election reform, including two weeks of early voting, more early voting sites, and a registration system allowing address updates at the polls
- Ethics reform, including authority for the FL Commission on Ethics to initiate investigations, an anti-corruption hotline, expansion of the code to include all who touch public money, increased disclosure
- Taxation of internet sales to increase revenue and fairness to state businesses
- Education. Support for free, high quality, adequately financed public schools; opposition to the parent trigger and other policies that turn public schools over to private business; equal standards of testing and achievement for state-funded public, private, and charter schools

These issues will not only be addressed by the League during the Session, but also during Legislative Delegation Hearings and Legislative Interviews conducted by local League members.

League members from Florida will have an opportunity to lobby on behalf of the League at The Legislative Summit and 2013 Convention which will be held in Tallahassee beginning Wednesday, April 10, 2013 and ending on Saturday, April 13. The Legislative Summit begins with the Old Capitol Gala on Wednesday evening, and continues the next day with legislative briefings from elected officials in the morning and lobbying representatives and senators in the afternoon. Friday is the start of the LWVF Biennial

Convention with the wrap-up on Saturday afternoon. This is a great opportunity to meet with legislators and network with other League members.

## News from LWVUS

*The Path to Free, Fair and Accessible Elections for Every American*, a blog post by LWVUS Elisabeth MacNamara, can be accessed at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elisabeth-macnamara/path-free-fair-accessible\\_b\\_2278842.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elisabeth-macnamara/path-free-fair-accessible_b_2278842.html). In this piece, she lays out the four proactive priority areas of election reform LWVUS hopes to address through legislative action - secure online voter registration, permanent and portable statewide voter registration, expanded early voting, and improved polling place management.

Leagues across the US reported registering more than 35,000 voters through national LWVEF grant programs and National Voter Registration Day. In addition, more than 35,000 individuals utilized the VOTE411.org online registration tool.

The League joined with coalition partners to again call on President Obama to fix the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The FEC is currently operating with five commissioners serving expired terms and three commissioners that refuse to uphold campaign finance laws that they disagree with.