



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 10 Issue 1

April 2015



What a wonderful turnout for our Annual Meeting on March 23. Over 40 members and guests were in attendance; I am sure it was because our guest speaker was Lauren Ritchie!

Continuing with columnists, we are looking forward to welcoming Beth Kassab as our guest speaker on April 27. If you are an *Orlando Sentinel* subscriber, you are familiar with Beth's writings. Her columns run the gamut and we are excited to hear what she will have to say when she joins us on the 27th.

The Legislative Session just has a few more weeks to go, and we are closely watching legislation on funding Amendment 1 and charter schools. Please watch for the Capitol Report which is published by the State League every Friday during the session. If you are not receiving it, please let me know.

For those who were not able to attend the Annual Meeting, you might be surprised, then again you might not, to learn that the Proposed Program for 2015-16 which was sent to all members prior to the meeting was adopted with changes. As you read the Adopted Program for 2015-16, you will see items in red. Those are the changes that were suggested and adopted as part of the program for the coming year. There are several items in the program which will require your help, e.g. research the impact of state funding on local school districts and research administration of Pre-K programs. This is the type of involvement that can be done at home using the computer. It doesn't necessarily mean that you will have to interrupt your day with meetings.

Many thanks to Judie Brown, Steven Cooper, Kathy Hansen, Carolyn Johnson & Carolyn Van Noy for their help with the meeting.

In League,

Joanne

Joanne M. Coen

P.S. Don't forget to invite a friend to the meeting on April 27!

April General Meeting

When: Monday, April 27, 2015

Where: Community Bank & Trust Company
CR466 & Parr Drive, The Villages

Time: 10:30 a.m. - 12 noon



Guest Speaker: Beth Kassab, *Orlando Sentinel*

Membership

Welcome to our newest members, **Janet Davis & Ann Winn** who joined at the Annual Meeting.

Just a reminder that dues are payable in the anniversary month you joined the League. You will receive an email reminder from **Beth Hicks, Membership Chair**, as your anniversary date approaches. Individual dues are **\$60** and household dues are **\$85**. Checks are payable to **LWVTRI** and mailed to **Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, FL 32162**. An updated membership list was recently sent to all members, and if you have not received yours, please contact **Carolyn Johnson, cgljohnson@comcast.net**.

Adopted 2015-2016 LWVTRI Program

Local Government-promote an open government that is responsive to the people of the tri-county area.

- Monitor Fruitland Park districting.
- Monitor privatization and outsourcing efforts in county governments.
- Research county and local Master Plan permitting on water usage.
- Support transparency in local government.

Voter Service-continue to provide information about elections, election process, redistricting, amendments, and changes in the election law regarding voter access.

- **Monitor** LWVF position to automatically restore voting rights for former felony offenders.
- Promote the Speaker's Bureau.
- Facilitate awareness of voter registration in high schools.
- Promote voting **especially** among 18-30 year olds.

Education-continue to focus on universal access to public schools with support for equality in academic requirements and funding.

- Keep informed about the local impact of Federal and State initiatives such as Race to the Top, No Child Left Behind, Common Core standards and FCAT especially those topics studied in the recent LWVUS Education Study.
- Monitor impact of charter schools and vouchers on public schools.
- Research the impact of state funding on local school districts.
- Research administration of Pre-K programs.

Justice in Florida-support juvenile justice actions that emphasize civil citations, rehabilitation, and other alternatives to incarceration.

Natural Resources-promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationship of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources.

- Study structures and powers of Florida Water Management Districts.
- **Investigate school programs on recycling and sustainability.**
- Monitor legislation regarding hydraulic fracturing

Issue for Action: Monitor the implementation of Amendment 1.

Social Policy-secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all citizens.

- Support the LWV Florida's position of accepting federal funding for the expansion of Medicaid eligibility.

Issue for Action: Support the safe rescue and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and the education of the public about this issue.

Education

As mentioned last month, education issues are a priority for the League and one excellent resource to help you keep up-to-date, not only here at home but across the country, is the LWV Education Blog which is coordinated by Sue Legg, a member of the LWV of Alachua County.



We have been following HB7037, one of four education proposals that have been approved by the House. This bill would create the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation, make it easier for top-performing charters to replicate themselves in high-need areas, and specify

in the *Tampa Bay Times*, "The bill that passed Friday (March 27) would ensure charter schools receive about 40 per cent of the amount traditional public schools can raise for construction and maintenance.... If the state does not provide enough money in the budget as it has done in recent years, the school districts would have to make up the difference with their tax revenue." This is just one issue relative to education that the League is following.

The Education Team blog is a forum to promote the exchange of information on school reform. They do fact-based studies, and encourage posts with reference citations that contribute to a better understanding of different points of view about school choice issues. For further information go to <http://lwveducation.com/contact-us/>.

Local Government

Nineteen League members and guests will be participating in the Resident Academy April 20 & April 21. Normally available to residents of The Villages only, this opportunity was presented to the League by Janet Tutt, District Manager for The Villages Community Development Districts. During the two day seminar, League members will gain an understanding of how a CDD, in this case, The Villages, operates.



The Committee always welcomes new members, and if you are interested, please contact **Carolyn Van Noy**, denny.carol@gmail.com.

Natural Resources

The Committee has been active in voicing their concern about the funding of Amendment 1. League members have contacted Sen. Hays' office and registered their disappointment with the under funding. As reported in the most recent *Capitol Report*, "...the Senate boosted funding for land acquisition from \$2 million to \$37 million on Wednesday (April 1). This is at least a positive step in the right direction in order to fulfill the Constitutional obligation that was voted for overwhelmingly by the people of Florida. Ongoing advocacy by members across the state will be important to support the work we are doing up here continuing to keep the pressure on to fund the purchase for land acquisition." Thank you to the Preserve our Environment Club and The Villages Environment Club for enlisting their members in this effort.

Earth Day will be celebrated in The Villages on April 22, from 3-6 p.m. at Sumter Landing, The Villages.

The Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 22, 1 p.m. at the home of Anne Grawe. New members are always welcome and if you are interested, please contact **Kathy Hansen**, hansenk2@comcast.net.



2015

LWVTRI Annual Meeting

Invitation to Join the League

Please print this page and fill out the Membership Information Form. Then mail it with your check to: League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area, Treasurer, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, Florida 32162.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name _____

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (home) _____ Cell phone _____

Email address _____

Village or Community _____

Single Membership	\$ 60.00
Household Membership	\$ 85.00
Student Membership	\$ 25.00
Susan B. Anthony Membership	\$100.00

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Checks should be made payable to the LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area. Dues are not tax deductible.

Comments (e.g. interests, how you heard about the League)
