



Nationally Recognized! Locally Active!

October 2021

Volume 15 Issue 4



Co-President Notes

Gail Formanack

We were disappointed to move our September meeting back to virtual, but the board felt the continuing health risks associated with the spike in COVID cases warranted the change. The board will continue to review local case numbers and will determine an appropriate time to resume in-person meetings. As we are still one month away from the October meeting as of this writing, the board will decide the meeting format at its October meeting. Please watch for updates via Constant Contact.

Your League board approved a **strategic plan** with the following three broad goals:

Increase the strength of LWVTRI by creating and maintaining a diverse, informed, and committed membership

Strengthen the LWV brand by increasing visibility and name awareness in the community

Strengthen LWVTRI's ability to achieve its mission by improving the financial strength of the organization.

The plan includes specific action steps which will be used to measure progress on meeting the goals. You can view the entire plan on the website under Members Only – Publications or by [clicking here](#).

Our local League board also determined the legislative priorities recently submitted to LWVFL as our local input. While there are many areas of interest to members of the League, our local board felt strongly that it would be wise to focus on priorities that directly support the League's mission. We submitted the following three priorities: Voting (including a suggestion for election reform that would prohibit a write-in candidate to close a primary election); Redistricting; and National Popular Vote. The LWVFL board will make the final determination after receiving and considering local input.

We hope to be able to gather in-person again soon.

Yours in League,
Gail Formanack

CO-PRESIDENT MARY KAY ROSINSKI

WANTED A FEW GOOD MENTORS!

A big thank you to the members who have volunteered to help those who have recently joined our League! We have established a mentoring program for our new members and are still looking for anyone willing to help. It's easy! The role of a mentor is to contact someone who has just joined and welcome them. There are many ways to support a new member, such as letting them know about upcoming meetings (even driving together!). We try to connect people who live near each other. It's just a nice way to let a person know that they have a friend in the League they can contact if they have questions.



If you are interested in mentoring a new member, please contact Mary Kay Rosinski, Co-President, at mknceta@yahoo.com or 619-742-2067

October Meeting October 25 10 AM Manatee Recreation Center



We sincerely hope to gather in person for our October meeting. Please keep an eye out for reminders and any update as to the status of this meeting, in person or virtual.

Vilia Johnson will be speaking on Ranked Choice Voting. Ranked choice voting allows voters to rank candidates by preference in all general elections. Initially votes are tallied as normal, with only first choice votes being counted. If no candidate receives a majority of votes, the candidate with the fewest votes has their votes moved to voter's next choice. This process repeats until a candidate receives a majority of all counted votes. Votes removed with no alternate assignments are not counted.

Vilia Johnson serves on the Board of the League of Women Voters of Sarasota County where she is Team Leader for the Election Reform and Advocacy Committees. She also serves on the Board of Rank My Vote Florida.



Board Meeting Highlights

A financial review of the treasurer's records was completed by Kathy Williamson and Christine Loken-Kim.

The board is exploring the use of Quicken software for the treasurer.

A committee of board members is working to revise the membership registration form and should have it finalized for use soon.

The board formally approved the Strategic Plan under development since April. The plan can be found on the website [here](#)

A committee will be formed to plan the holiday party scheduled for December 13th at Water Lily Recreation Center.

The board decided to change the September 27th meeting to virtual due to COVID concerns.



New Member Social/Orientation

Our last in-person orientation was in the fall of 2019. A virtual orientation was held last fall via Zoom. We have been fortunate to have 18 new members join us in the last year. All have been personally invited to attend a new member social/orientation on October 18th at 5:00 pm at Gail Formanack's home at 1096 Alcove Loop, The Villages. Light appetizers and wine will be served. If you joined in the last several years and missed the opportunity for an in-person orientation, please know you are welcome to attend. The event will be informal, and you will have an opportunity to ask questions and seek information about how to become involved in our League's work. If you'd like to join us, [please RSVP](#) by October 14th.

What is Home

Rule/Preemption

Some states constitutionally or legislatively grant home rule to cities, counties, and municipalities within their borders. These are called "home rule states." Local governments in home rule states are free to pass laws and ordinances as they see fit to specifically meet their unique needs. Florida voters added Home Rule Powers to the Florida Constitution nearly 50 years ago by a statewide vote of the electorate. Home Rule means local decision-making. As long as it doesn't violate state law, cities and local governments have the flexibility and independence to serve their citizens' needs and preferences.



Over the past few years, the Florida Legislature has attacked the Home Rule authority of local governing bodies. The Florida League of Cities says it's because some legislators think they know your community better than the local officials you elected. Our Florida legislators continue to pass preemption bills, and LWVFL has opposed those actions based upon the principles of local government. These legislative bills circumvent local decision-making and trample on the individuality of each city, town, and county government. In the past three legislative sessions alone, more than 100 preemption bills were filed. Some examples include the preempting of local rules banning the use of plastic bags and plastic straws and other environmental protections passed by local municipalities. Closer to home, we saw an example when Sumter County commissioners voted to raise impact fees for road development. This action was promptly followed by the introduction of a bill in the Florida Legislature to cap increases to impact fees. The bill, co-sponsored by local Rep. Bret Hage, passed the legislature and overturned the decision of our locally-elected officials.

The most precious powers a local government in Florida has are its Home Rule powers. These bills impede the ability of locally elected leaders from enacting ordinances and codes, fundamental to governance of municipalities and counties.

Sources: Wikipedia; Understanding Home Rule in Florida – *The Boca Raton Tribune*; and What is Home Rule – the Florida League of Cities

Important Voting Legislation Introduced in Senate
Read this LWVUS [Blog Post on the Freedom to Vote Act](#)

Voter Services

The official results of the September 21, 2021 Ocala Election show that all of the winners in the races for Mayor, City Council District 1 and City Council District 5 participated in Vote411!



On November 2, 2021, there will be a runoff election for the races for City Council District 3 and for City Council District 4. Three of the four candidates in those runoffs participated in Vote411!

And, five of the seven winning candidates of all of the races participated in the Ocala Meet and Greet.

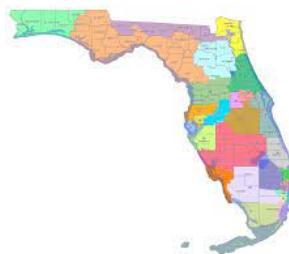
We can be truly proud that we offered Ocala voters excellent opportunities to get more information about the candidates and they responded.

Congratulations to the winning candidates and **Thank You** to the League members who made Vote411 and the Ocala Meet and Greet possible.

We have already posted on Vote411.org the candidate information and responses for the two runoff Ocala elections that will take place on November 2, 2021. All Ocala residents can access that information from now until November 2.

Soon, we will be preparing for the 2022 elections. We hope you are as excited as we are to invite the candidates to participate in Vote411. We will offer training in May and begin the process in June 2022.

If you are interested in working on Vote411 or in registering voters, please contact Carol Van Noy, denny.carol@gmail.com or 352-446-1660.



Redistricting

Florida is in the middle of drawing new district boundaries for the U.S. House, the Florida Senate, and the Florida House. This happens every 10 years after the Census.

In 2010 Florida voters passed the Fair Districting Amendment in 2010 to ensure fair districts. It requires districts

- be of equal size
- be compact
- adhere to political and geographical boundaries
- exhibit partisan fairness
- exhibit minority fairness

Nonetheless, the districts created by the Legislature in 2012 broke every rule with the exception of equal size. The League filed suit to get the gerrymandered districts redrawn. The judge said the maps made a mockery of the democratic process.

This year both the data and the map drawing tools the Legislature uses are [available](#). You can submit your maps for consideration, or at the very least better understand the challenges of drawing fair maps.

The districts created by the Legislature and approved by the Governor will impact your life for the next 10 years at both the national and state level. Be vigilant. Be informed. Be involved.

Local Program Statement on “One Sumter”

Monitor and support the repeal initiative for “One Sumter” and return to county commissioners elected by those residing in their districts.

The above statement was adopted by members at the 2021 annual meeting. In recent action taken by the Sumter County commissioners, it appears Sumter County voters will be given an opportunity to vote on repeal of “One Sumter” opening the possibility of a return to the election of commissioners by only the voters in their geographic district. It is likely to be opposed by The Villages Developer as it was initially passed to ensure the county’s greatest population center in The Villages would have more influence in electing those representatives to the county commission. Our mission will be to educate voters about the implications of this ballot item.



Plea for Volunteer Science Fair Judges

Submitted by Woody High of the Wildwood Middle High
Booster Club

The Science Fairs for Wildwood Middle High School (**on 11/17**) and the Sumter County School District (**on 12/1**) are approaching. We need quite a few Judges to support these two Science Fairs so we are asking you to be a judge at one or both of these Fairs.

Before you start thinking that you need to be a science heavyweight for this, let me assure you that that is not our role. The judging is done under 4 headings - creative ability, scientific thought, thoroughness and skill/clarity. All judges will have to be approved volunteers via the "Raptor" system which is done [online with this link](#) So, if you haven't sent in your Raptor Application there is ample time to do so.

Science Education is not only important for individual students but for our nation as well. Last year, of the 12 Wildwood Students winning at the Regional Science Fair and going on to State and International Science Fairs, 10 were girls. I hope you will join me and others in supporting Wildwood Middle High School and the students with these Science Fairs. Please call or email me if you are willing to be a judge for the Wildwood Middle High School Science Fair(s) or have any questions.

Thank you - Woody High - Wildwood Middle High School Booster Club
352-446-2052 hmhigh@gmail.com

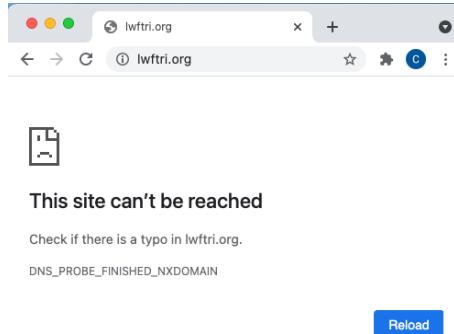
Ends Health Care for the Needy

In a 3 to 2 vote, the North Lake County Hospital Board put a sad end to the health care clinics for our uninsured and underinsured citizens. The board voted for a millage rate of zero which ended the tax we pay (usually about \$10 to \$15 a month) to support six clinics in North Lake County. The funds were allocated to six community health clinics to offset their expenses for treating those who were unable to pay. These clinics work on a shoestring budget and are staffed primarily by volunteers. Any monies left after funding the clinics went to our two hospitals to reimburse them for indigent care. In 2016, 59% of Lake County voters approved a Referendum to continue the Hospital District and its taxing authority for ten years. The board couldn't get rid of the District through legislation, so they did the next worst thing... approved a millage rate of zero.



I would like to personally thank those LWV members who worked to support these clinics and try to prevent the board from voting for zero millage. Kudos to Melody Duckins, Diane Grayber, Phil Grayber, Jane Hepting and Karen West for their efforts. We wrote, we spoke, we called, we rallied and showed up in large numbers to let the board know we voted for this taxing district and we wanted to continue the funding for those who are less fortunate. Though we were unsuccessful, we will develop a plan of action to bring funding back for such important health care

Mary Kay Rosinski
Co-President
LWV Villages/Tri-County
619-742-2067



Our Website Watchdogs

Ever click a link on a website only to get a dreaded “Server Not Found” message? The exact wording may change depending on the browser you’re using, but it’s usually technogibberish and is definitely not what you were expecting.

A link “breaks” because the website the link points to was changed so the address is no longer valid. It’s like someone moving and not leaving a forwarding address. When that happens to links on our website, we need to find the new address.

The reason you seldom, if ever, get those annoying messages when you are on the www.lwftri.org website, is because we have a team dedicated to finding those broken links and getting them fixed before our users click them.

Once a month Judy, Bonn, Kim Fowler, Marie Davenport and Sara Rich check every link on our site. We owe these four women a big Thank You for helping us project a professional image to the public.

Speaker's Bureau

We are pleased to announce two new timely topics from our Speakers Bureau. Please contact [Jeannie Hamilton](#) to schedule your group for either a live or zoom presentation.



Redistricting

After the Census, Redistricting is done every ten years to ensure the House of Representatives and State Legislatures truly represent the population. This presentation explains the following: what is Redistricting; how is it done; what can go wrong and how can we make it more fair?

Senate Bill 90

Senate Bill 90 (SB90) was passed by the Florida Legislature in April 2021 and signed into law by Governor DeSantis in May 2021. This presentation explains changes to the voting process and includes Voter Registration, Vote by Mail, Election Administration and Election Protection in Florida.

Local League on Social Media



**Facebook - League of Women Voters
The Villages Tri County**

Twitter - LWV-TV/Tri

**Snap Chat
League of Women Voters The Villages**

Instagram - Lwvtriprez

November 15: Frank Costanza on Redistricting
December 13: Holiday party; presentation

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

by Katina Stephens of the Southern Christian Leadership Foundation

January 24: Annual program planning

February 28: Alan Hayes, Lake County Supervisor of Elections

March 28: Annual Meeting

April 25 - Patrick Walsh from Covanta Energy on *Trash to Electricity* (rescheduled from September)



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Dues are payable on the **anniversary month** of your joining the League. You will receive an email reminder from **Karen West** (LWVTRImembers@gmail.com) prior to your anniversary date. When you do, please make your check payable to **LWVTRI** and mail it to our **Treasurer, Bernadette Aley, 1106 Monterey Lane, The Villages, Florida 32159**. If you are not sure of your anniversary month, you can contact **Karen West**, LWVTRImembers@gmail.com. Please add Karen's address to your email contact list.

Please note: The National League will also send you a request for membership the month before your dues are up for renewal with LWVTRI THE VILLAGES. Please send your renewal **LOCALLY**. National gets a portion of your local dues as does the State League. Local memberships support all levels - and we need to keep the grassroots organization strong. We may not get "credit" for you as a local member if your check goes directly to National.

If you have forgotten the password for members only for our website, or have any other membership questions, please [contact Karen West](#).

If you have a submission for this newsletter,
please use the [newsletter email](#). Deadline
for the November issues will be
October 27

Yours in the League,
Beth

