



Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

March 2022

Volume 15 Issue 8

Apologies for the late publication. We have changed the due date to the week after the monthly meeting. For this month that meant we were into the new month!

This is a FULL newsletter. Make sure your copy goes all the way to "Editor's Musing."



Co-President Notes Gail Formanack

This will be my last newsletter column as co-president. As I complete the end of my 3-years in office, I give thanks to the co-presidents with which I had the pleasure to serve: Beth Hicks, Bonnie Field, and Mary Kay Rosinski. The co-president model adopted in the bylaws three years ago has worked well and allowed those of us who served to

take turns running board and regular meetings allowing us to travel without worry. The Nominating Committee this year has had a difficult time finding volunteers to serve in various capacities. Please know that our League's leadership is always understanding when conflicts occur, and every effort is made to cover for someone who is absent. I hope you will consider volunteering for some position or task as we enter the busy election season ahead of us.

Many of us watched the President deliver a State of the Union address recently. I decided to use this last column to provide a summary of the State of our League. The challenges the pandemic brought us made for interesting times. We pivoted to virtual meetings, Speakers Bureau presentations, and candidate forums. Our membership numbers have been steady, although we know we failed to engage some of our new members who chose not to renew after their first year. We hope the return to in-person meetings and voter registration and education will reverse that trend. I am happy to report on the successful creation of our own 501(c)(3) non-profit Education Fund which was created to facilitate tax-deductible donations and grants. Our League's board has created its first strategic plan which has allowed us to streamline the proposed program which will be voted on at the annual meeting.

Our League was the primary host of the Equalitea commemorating the 101st anniversary of women's suffrage. The event was rescheduled twice, but we persisted and held the event on Women's Equality Day, August 26th. The League has been a part of the ad hoc group Sisters of Suffrage whose purpose is to raise awareness of the anniversary of voting rights for women. We continue to work with partners in the community and are committed to recruiting a more diverse membership.

Our first community event held on March 5th was a success, and our plan is to continue to offer this type of activity on an annual basis. I am looking forward to presiding over the first in-person annual meeting in 3 years. I hope to see many of you there.

Thank you for allowing me to serve the League in this capacity. My plans are to remain active in the League through the Speakers Bureau, voter registration, and as the new membership chair. Karen West has been a great asset in the role of membership chair, and I can only hope to fill her shoes as best I can.

Yours in League,
Gail Formanack

CO-PRESIDENT MARY KAY ROSINSKI

At our general meeting on February 28th, members enjoyed a wonderful speaker. Bob Bridgeman, Assistant Supervisor of Elections in Lake County, shared "everything you need to know about voting." Unfortunately, Alan Hays, Supervisor of Elections Lake County, was unable to attend as planned due to the passing of his 100 year-old mother. Bob did not disappoint.



He was interesting and engaging and answered every question our members could come up with. We learned about the process ballots go through from the time you turn in your ballot until the election is certified. The process is very secure, especially in terms of cyber security. Numbers are checked and rechecked and machines are well guarded. We also learned about the importance of making sure your signature matches the one they have on file. We touched on many aspects of voting and learned a lot about what goes on behind the scenes. We'd love to have Bob back at a future meeting.

Mary Kay

REGISTRATION

Black History Celebration at Polo Grounds

Our League was happy to be asked to register voters at the Black History Celebration held February 27th at the Polo Grounds. This event was sponsored by multiple organizations. Although everyone we asked was already registered, the day provided a great opportunity to gain recognition and promote membership. We received very positive feedback from a young lady who approached us to thank us for our VOTE411 voter education resources which she personally found very helpful when making choices in the last election.



Pictured Above: Jeannie Hamilton and Gail Formanack at the League's booth

Gail Formanack with NAACP President Martha Taylor with whom we collaborated on a virtual candidate forum in 2020. It was the first time they met in person.



Voter registration in Ocala

Our League had a team of our members registering voters in Ocala on February 27th. We set up our table at Blessed Trinity Catholic Church and talked to people after four masses. The last mass was in Spanish.

Not only did we spread the word about the League of Women Voters, we registered four voters. Two completed their registration on our laptop and two registered on their cell phones after scanning our QR code. Both ways worked well. Thanks to our volunteers: Alice Gardner, Joleen Gonzalez and Sue Lanning.



**March 28 11 AM
Annual Meeting
Leesburg Resource Center**

You are invited to attend the Annual Meeting and Luncheon of the League of Women Voters on:

Monday, March 28, 2022, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Leesburg Resource Center 1041 County Road 468 in Leesburg

Menu: Sandwich buffet including chicken salad, ham, corn salad, bean salad, dessert, and beverage. Vegetarian option available – please indicate with your reservation.

Cost: \$20.00. Reservations to Karen West by **March 18th**. Paid reservations are required. Please make check payable to LWVTRI. Checks may be mailed to Karen West at 204 Clusterwood Dr. Yalahala, FL 34797. Questions may be directed to lwvtrimembership@gmail.com or call 352-324-2518. Reservations cancelled after that date will not be refunded.

Speaker: Rod Broker on the history of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Annual Meeting Packet will be emailed to members in advance of the meeting. A quorum is required to conduct the business meeting so please consider attending. This will be our first in-person annual meeting since 2019 and an opportunity for our members to be heard.

Directions: From The Villages: Take 466A to Rose Ave (468) and go south. Follow past the first light on 44C and the center will be to your right. From the south coming on 441/27, turn west (left) on Griffin (44C). Follow it to the light on 468 and turn left. The center will be on your right.

2022-23 Proposed Program

Each year the League decides on an action agenda, which is called **program**. The action involved may be a first-time League study of an issue, an update of a previous study, or action on an issue on which the League has come to member agreement. Members are encouraged to voice their priorities at program-making meetings. The board feels the priorities should be on the League's signature issue of voting with continued advocacy on Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten.

The current board of directors took a deep dive into the current Adopted Program and proposed major revisions which were discussed at the January membership meeting via Zoom. The reality of the matter is that our program document became a place to state our commitments to continue activities such as VOTE411, candidate forums, etc. By definition, the League program is defined as **ISSUES** which our local League plans to support and take action on.

The board now has a Strategic Plan where many of the activity statements were moved. The proposed program was cut from three pages to one. We understand members are passionate about the wide variety of issues identified in the LWVFL Program and as reflected in the LWVFL Legislative Priorities. However, our small organization is struggling to find members willing to commit to leadership roles, and we don't have the volunteers willing to lead action at the local level on the broad array of topics identified in the current program. You are asked to carefully examine the Proposed Program prior to the annual meeting which is where the membership has an

opportunity to discuss and vote on the document.

One item in the current and proposed program is to support the repeal of “One Sumter.” Although members had opportunities to provide input on this statement before and when it was adopted, our local League did not conduct a “study” on this local issue of importance in Sumter County. In retrospect, we will make every attempt to educate our membership as well as the general voting population about this issue which will be on the ballot in November’s election. Look for information on this topic elsewhere in this newsletter.

Uprooting Prejudice: Conversations for Change

If you missed this outstanding community event sponsored by our local League, there is an opportunity to view the program on YouTube with the following link. Unfortunately this was a first effort at doing a hybrid (in-person and virtual) event, and there were technical glitches.

Video link

<https://youtu.be/wFj5gZ3xYoo>

This event was inspired and led by Char Griffin and her very able committee. Many thanks to the League members who helped publicize the event to their friends and other groups and who helped set up the facility and clean up after the event. This was truly a team effort and one we hope can be replicated in the future as it provided great visibility for our League.

League’s “One Voice” Policy

No member can take action of any kind (i.e.: public statements; writing of articles for distribution/publication; or, planning of public events) as a League representative without the approval of the president(s). The presidents may at times designate a member to speak on their behalf. What does this mean? If you attend a public meeting or meet with a legislator, feel free to use League talking points if you choose to talk/testify, but do not identify yourself as a League member unless you have permission to represent the League.



Board Meeting Highlights

- The Speakers Bureau has added “Ranked Choice Voting” to its list of presentations.
- The Members Only section of the website now has tips for lobbying including a role play video.
- Revisions to the strategic plan were approved and posted on the website.
- The board voted to raise local dues from \$13

to \$15 for a total of \$62. beginning April 1st (beginning of the fiscal year). Dues may now be paid online by credit card via SQUARE. A review of the bylaws indicated this action does not require approval by the membership.

- The board decided to discontinue the Equalitea event.

Voter Services

We have been using Vote411 to post an online voters' guide of local candidates, since 2016. For the first time, in 2021, we used Vote411 to post an odd-numbered year election, which was candidates for the City of Ocala. We were so successful that all of the winners in the races for Mayor, City Council District 1 and City Council District 5 participated in Vote411. And, three of the four candidates in the follow-up runoff election participated in Vote411!



In addition, we held an ***Ocala Meet and Greet*** and five of the seven winning candidates of all of the races participated in that Meet and Greet. So, we are ready for more success!!

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

In the meantime, we are registering voters. We were given a grant by LWVUS to register youth at Technical/Vocational/Community College Schools. We have volunteers working tirelessly to set up voter registration efforts in those schools.

We also have Community Events Coordinators (member volunteers) who are identifying events at which we might register voters. As a result, we held a voter registration drive in a Church in Ocala, at the Polo Grounds in the Villages and are contemplating an event at the Martin Luther King Complex, in Ocala.

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. We can't do any of this without you. You can make a difference!!



Welcome to our New Members

Linda Foy
Diana Welsh
Gail Vivian

Speaker's Bureau

All previous hosts have been notified about our most current Power Point presentation: Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). To date, two requests for this new presentation have been received.

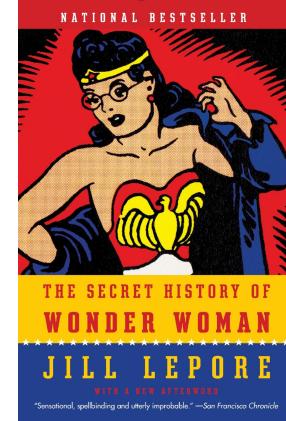


In the past month five requests for Power Point presentations have been received.

BOOK REVIEW ~ *Kathy Porter*

The Secret History of Wonder Woman by Jill Lepore

When Harvard historian and *New Yorker* staff writer Jill Lepore puts pen to paper, you know the result will be another tour de force. Lepore transports us back in time to the founding of comic book superheroine Wonder Woman, who has her origins in feminist history and has been fighting for women's rights for decades.



Lepore had access to the private papers of William Moulton Marston, Wonder Woman's creator. Marston was no ordinary man. The women Marston loved were suffragists and feminists. Despite being a Harvard graduate, a lawyer, a writer, the inventor of the lie detector, a consummate self-promoter, and proponent of free love, he was largely supported by his wife, Sadie Holloway. The niece of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger, Olive Byrne, moved in with Marston, his wife, and their two children. Olive, who wore bracelets on her wrists much like Wonder Woman's, bore Marston two children. In the family's orbit were some of the most influential people of the twentieth century.

The family kept their living arrangements very secret, but Marston seemed to relish divulging often salacious aspects of his life in his writings, and especially in the pages of Wonder Woman.

This intriguing book is filled with pictures and illustrations and regales us with the enigmas of Wonder Woman's founding. It also exposes the drama, secrets, and lies that were part and parcel of the Marston family.

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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

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 **Gail Formanack** (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 **Gail Formanack**, LWVTRImembers@gmail.com. Please add this 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 Gail Formanack](#).

Editor Musings

We are into the final month of the league year....A new board will take over following the annual meeting. Best wishes to all who have served and those beginning their service. Please consider becoming active and helping to continue our growth.

Minor change in the newsletter deadline. In the future, please get all related articles to me by the **MONDAY AFTER THE GENERAL MEETING**. Please continue to use the [newsletter email](#)

Yours in the League,
Beth

