

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 9 Issue 4

November 2014



President's Letter

Only a few more days until Election Day, and our phones will stop ringing, and we will be able to collect our mail without losing our fingers pulling out all the candidate flyers that get tossed into the trash without reading. We will be able to turn the TV on and not listen to negative campaign advertising!

With this being the month of Thanksgiving, it is important for me to say "thank you" to all the League members who did the work of the League not only during the summer months, but also these last two months leading up to November 4. Please bear with me.

For the online Voter Guide for the Primary and the three separate online Voter Guides for the General Election, many, many thanks to Char Griffin, Beth Hicks, Carolyn Van Noy, Helen Gozdanovic & Marsha Shearer. After the Guide went up for the Primary, Char Griffin suggested that we do 3 separate Guides, one for each county. I cannot begin to tell you the amount of hours that went into all the Guides from the initial contact with the candidates by mail, to email follow up, and many emails back and forth to make sure the forms were filled out correctly. And as we mentioned before, this was done electronically while they were on vacation in various parts of the country.

For the Judicial Meet & Greet in August, many, many thanks to Lucy Espey-Francis Kathy Hansen & Beth Hicks for handling the invites to the candidates, reserving the room and making sure refreshments were provided. For the VCDD & AAC Candidate Meet & Greet in October, many, many thanks to **Judie Brown, Char Griffin, Kathy Hansen & Beth Hicks** for handling arrangements, etc.

For delivery of 5000 copies of the LWV Florida Voter Guide to the Supervisors of Elections in Lake & Sumter Counties, the public libraries in Lake & Sumter Counties and to the Recreation Department of The Villages, many, many thanks to **Carolyn Van Noy, Judie Brown, Beverly Epstein, Kathy Hansen.**

For handling speaking engagements, many, many thanks to **Richard Coen, Beth Hicks & Carolyn Van Noy.**

For spreading the word about Amendment 1, many, many thanks to **Kathy Hansen, Bernadette Aley, Lynn Klaczak and Claire Rahn.**

If I have overlooked anyone, I apologize. These last several months in the Coen household have been topsy-turvy, and our League activities could not have continued without the help and support of the Board and those people mentioned above. I am so very thankful for each and every one of you.

Not only was our Voter Services' Committee busy these last several weeks, but as you will read below, the Local Government & Natural Resources Committees have been very active. I urge you to become involved. The work of the League cannot be left to a few people.

Speaking of the work of the League, **Beth Hicks** will be heading up the Nominating Committee. Positions to be filled are President, Vice President, Treasurer, and two Directors. Terms will be for two years, 2015-17. In addition, we have a vacancy for a Director who had to resign due to ill health. That seat runs until 2016. For an organization to continue to grow and thrive, which our League has done so well these last few years, there has to be leadership and the willingness of people to become involved. Please give serious consideration to stepping up. When the work is shared, it is much easier to get the job done.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the **November General Meeting** which will be held on **Monday, November 17**, and at the **Holiday Luncheon and Auction** which will take place on **Friday, December 12**, at the **Continental County Club** in **Wildwood**. If you are unable to attend, I would ask that you consider making a donation to our League. This is our only fundraiser, and your support is greatly appreciated. Please don't forget to invite a friend to both.

On behalf of the Board, Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family. If you are travelling, please be safe.

In League,

Joanne

Joanne M. Coen

November General Meeting



Guest Speaker:

Robin Grantham

Southwest Florida Water Management District

November 17, 2014

10:30 a.m.

Community Bank & Trust Company

CR466 & Parr Drive

The Villages, FL

The Florida Water Star program is a voluntary certification program for new residential and commercial construction and existing home renovation. The program encourages efficiency as well as water quality benefits from best management practices in landscapes. Based on estimates, an average Florida Water Star homeowner can save up to 20 % of water use annually. The program outlines standards for a broad range of homes--from a condominium with no yard to an older home on a half-acre lot with an aging irrigation system. Commercial properties save even more, thereby lowering operating costs by reducing water and energy bills.

Membership

The **Annual Holiday Luncheon & Auction** will be held on **Friday, December 12, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** Your personal invitation has been sent and we look forward to your response by December 4. We will be gathering at the **Continental County Club, CR44, Wildwood**, and the cost of the luncheon will be **\$15**. For reservations and entree selection, please contact Carolyn

Johnson, cgljohnson@comcast.net. Reservations can also be made at the November General Meeting. Our guest speaker will be **Jen Elliott** from **Horses In Miracles**. This group provides healing, respite and recovery for veterans and dementia caregivers. This is the League's only fundraiser, and we hope you



will support us by attending and contributing a gift to the Auction. Invite a friend to join you.

As we have mentioned before, dues are payable in the anniversary month you joined the League. You will receive an email reminder from **Beth Hicks**, our **Membership Chair**, as the 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**. If you are not sure of your dues anniversary date, please contact **Carolyn Johnson**.

Just a reminder that we are asking that League members take a few minutes to think about what led you to join the League, and what you expect from your membership in the League. Going forward we would like to highlight a League member each month in our newsletter as well as compiling a *Story Bank* on our website, www.lwvtri.org. We look forward to hearing from you, and you can submit your *story* to **Beth Hicks** at ethicks71@gmail.com.

Local Government Committee

On Tuesday, October 28, 2014, we hosted the Fruitland Park City Manager, Gary LaVenía, and the Wildwood City Manager, Bill Cannon, to discuss growth in their cities and their Charter Amendment Ballot Issues.



Mr. Cannon distributed materials, which indicate that the City of Wildwood will grow from a town of 7,000 residents to at least 21,000 residents, over the next 15 years. Mr. LaVenía said that, due to the building of the Villages of Fruitland Park, the town of Fruitland Park will double in size, from approximately 2,000 residents to over 6,000 residents, by the end of 2016, and another 1,100 residences, by another developer, has been approved. As a result, both towns are submitting to the 2014 Voters proposed City Charter amendments that would change the election of City Commission members from At-Large to by districts. Both amendments would establish 5 voting districts. In both cases, the Mayor would no longer be elected by the voters, but would be chosen from the membership of the Commission, by the members of the Commission.

The Fruitland Park amendment also includes a change in the way initiatives and amendments are approved. If the Fruitland Park Charter Amendment establishing districts is approved, passing a charter amendment or initiative will require a majority vote of at least 4 of the 5 districts. The informative presentations by the two Managers was followed by an excellent question and answer period. Fifteen people attended the meeting; approximately half were residents of the two cities. In addition, Fruitland Park held another information session on its 2014 Charter Amendment Ballot Issue, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Villages/Tri-County Area, on Thursday, October 30, to which the public was invited. This has been a learning experience in the workings of democracy and local government, and we thank the Mr. LaVenía for inviting the League to

participate.

Carolyn Van Noy, Chair

Natural Resources

The League was very pleased to be asked to cohost Cynthia Barnett's presentation to The Villages Environmental Club on October 22. The author of *Mirage* and *Blue Revolution* is a very compelling speaker. She urged us to think about water differently. It is an illusion that we have an endless supply of water. We need a new ethical framework for water. We need the caring middle class to come together to be willing to live differently. We can use a lot less water.



Most important is to keep water in natural systems. Our wetlands are storehouses for fresh water and safe houses for flood water. Our wonderful Florida springs are windows into the health of our fresh water. In the 1950's, some of our springs began to dry up because of over-pumping. Over-pumping can also cause sink holes to appear. Damming, ditching and drainage of the Everglades cause harm.

Conservation is still the best method of preserving our fresh water. In the U.S., we use on average 150 gallons per person per day. Other countries, such as The Netherlands, Singapore and Australia, have been able to lower their rates of consumption dramatically. In Florida, Sarasota County is leading the way; they have reduced their consumption to 75 gallons per person per day. Seattle and Philadelphia are also taking important steps to change the consumption rates through storm water recycling.

Expensive technology is not the answer. It takes a lot of energy to treat water and to transfer water over long distances. Energy is expensive and it also takes a lot of water to produce energy. Think about hydraulic fracturing which requires from 2 to 10 million gallons of water per well. Solar desalination is in the experimental stage; so we don't want to overinvest in desalination at this point. A desalination plant at Tampa Bay is 5 years late and \$50 million over budget.

Water wars between states do not solve anything and have cost millions. Florida has spent \$20 million in legal fees to fight Georgia over the Caloosahatchee River. \$15 million of that went to one law firm. The states should be working together to find solutions.

Innovative solutions are possible. Green roofing, plant vegetation on top of flat industrial roofs reduces heat and polluted storm water. As much as 80 per cent of the pollutants can be absorbed by plant life. Agriculture is using less water and less fertilizer and there is still

room for more efficiency. We can demand that crops that are doing the most damage are not subsidized by the public. The homeowner can replace turf with native plants and collect rain water in barrels for later use.

Ms. Barnett imparted hopefulness that there is much that can be done if the public will return to a mindset of excitement and engagement such as the 1970's that produced The Clean Water Act and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Kathy Hansen, Committee Chair

Southern Waste Information Exchange, Inc. (SWIX)

Southern Waste Information Exchange, Inc. (SWIX) is a Florida non-profit clearinghouse and repository for businesses and government WasteMap Florida provides citizens of The Sunshine State with an easy-to-use, web-based GIS mapping system to locate solid waste facilities in their local area agencies looking for information regarding: market development, recycled products, solid and hazardous waste management, current regulations/legislation, alternative and emerging waste management technologies, trade journals and associations, technical reports, the availability of and demand for waste materials, and waste management services and products. Present projects include: WasteXchange.org and WasteMap Florida which provides citizens of The Sunshine State with an easy-to-use, web-based GIS mapping system to locate solid waste facilities in their local area.

Partners in SWIX include: Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Florida Chamber of Commerce, and Institute for International Cooperative Environmental Research at Florida State University.

To see a brief Vimeo on-line, visit www.swixusa.org. The phone number for SWIX is: 850-386-6280.

Plans are being made for a FDEP-sponsored pharmaceutical collection to be held Sat., Feb. 21, 2015 at Medicine Cabinet Pharmacy in Lake Sumter Landing, in The Villages, Fl. Contact Mary Hampton, mimomita@hotmail.com for more information.

Mary Hampton, Committee Member

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday, November 1, 2014

Operation Medicine Cabinet

Sponsor: Sumter County Sheriff's Office

Location: R J Gator's Restaurant

Sumter County Deputy will gather the donated expired medicines by coming to the vehicle to pick them up.

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Please tell your neighbors about this pharmaceutical collection. Thank you.

Monday, November 3, 2014

Florida Urban Forestry.....And How You Can Help

Sponsor: Preserve Our Environment (POE)

Location: Villages Pinellas Plaza Library, room 102

7375 Powell Road

Wildwood, Florida

Time: 10:00 a.m. to noon

Speaker: Ken Lacasse, President, Florida Urban Forestry Council
Certified Utility Arborist

Yes! This program is for all tree huggers out there! Save this morning to come join us. Bring your questions and a friend, too! R.S.V.P. to Mary Hampton, mimomita@hotmail.com.

Voter Service & Education Committee

Over the last two months, the League made 10 presentations on the amendments and spoke to over 300 people. Audiences ranged from 10 to 95. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to meet so many interested citizens.



Our League distributed 5,000 copies of the LWVF Voter Guide to the libraries and Supervisors of Elections offices; the Recreation Centers in The Villages and at all our general meetings and speaking engagements. For the first time, we posted three Voter Guides on line, one for each county that we cover.

In addition, we hosted a Meet & Greet for Judicial Candidates in August; in October we hosted a Meet & Greet for Community Development District and Amenity Authority Committee candidates in The Villages.

Lastly, the League hosted the proposed Charter Amendment meeting in Fruitland Park. League members have been attending commission and committee meetings in

Fruitland Park and Wildwood as both municipalities work on proposed changes to their respective Charters.

Voter service and education does not end with the Election Day on November 4. This is the prime mission of the League and we encourage you to take part in this committee. Contact **Richard L. Coen**, joannejon@aol.com.

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, Membership Chair, 1315 Arredondo 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)
