



TO PROMOTE POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY
THROUGH INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
OF CITIZENS IN GOVERNMENT AND TO ACT ON
SELECTED GOVERNMENT ISSUES

THE VOTER
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF TALLAHASSEE
www.lwvtallahassee.org
850.309.3005

TALLAHASSEE

VOLUME 18 - NUMBER 5

MAY 2010

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
May 2010

HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

“UNNATURAL CAUSES”

What connections exist between healthy bodies, healthy bank accounts and skin color? How might the chronic stress of racism over the life course become embedded in our bodies and increase the risk of infant mortality? What causes health to worsen as immigrants become acculturated to life in America? These are just a few of the questions addressed in the *Unnatural Causes* TV Series.



Ms. Mary Miaisha Mitchell, Executive Director of the Greater Frenchtown Governor’s Revitalization Council and co-chair of the Health Equity Alliance of Tallahassee (HEAT), will address some of these issues at our Hot Topics. The Tallahassee League has partnered with HEAT and other groups to address some of the most pressing health issues confronting us today.

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
2725 Graves Road (north of I-10 on N. Monroe)

Lunch: London Broil—marinated flank steak, charbroiled, sliced and topped with mushroom horseradish sauce. Salad, bread, mixed vegetables, chef’s choice of starch and chef’s choice of dessert, iced tea and coffee.

Cost: \$17.00 payable at the door

Reservations: Please call the LWVT Voice Mail (309-3005) by Friday, May 14.

Since the League has to pay for all meals ordered, cancellations received after the deadline will be billed for the cost of the lunch.

11 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County Commission
Leon County Court House 5th floor

12 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.
Tallahassee City Commission
City Hall

13 Thursday 7:00 p.m.
Local Government Committee
Ruth O’Donnell 668-6911

17 Monday 1:00 p.m.
CRTPA
City Hall 2nd floor

18 Tuesday 6:30 p.m.
LWVT Board Meeting
LWVF Office, Beverly Court

19 Wednesday 11:30 a.m.
Hot Topics
Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
2725 Graves Road

25 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County Commission
Leon County Courthouse,
5th floor

25 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
Joint City-County Comp Plan
Public Hearing
Leon County Courthouse
5th floor

27 Thursday 3:00 p.m.
Health Care Committee Meeting
Theresa Chase, 2302 Trescott Drive

26 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Meeting
City Hall

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again, I apologize for the non-appearance of our featured speaker at the Annual Meeting. I have learned my lesson and will never schedule anyone who is involved with the legislature to speak to us during April. Mr. Bousquet, who is the Tallahassee Bureau Chief for the St Petersburg Times, had a last minute conflict when they scheduled a budget meeting up at the Capitol. Hopefully, Rebecca Sager and I gave you some useful information about the legislative session.

With just two weeks left in the session, the Senate Reapportionment Committee brought out a joint resolution that will, in effect, nullify the redistricting amendments (5 and 6) already on the ballot. Supposedly, the resolution protects minority districts. However, the Black Caucus and the state NAACP have condemned the joint resolution and firmly back amendments 5 and 6. A press conference was scheduled in the Capitol and supporting groups were asked to send representatives. The Tallahassee League was represented by Theresa Chase, Ruth O'Donnell, Jane Quinton, Jan Rubino, Barbara Sterling, and Kathy Winn. Thank you for your support.

Thanks also to Gaynell Waldo, Anita Davis, Ruth O'Donnell, Sue Gross, Janet Findling, Barbara Rollins, Faye Mayberry, Peggy Ramsey, Rebecca Sager, Mimi Jones, and Louise Clay for volunteering to answer the phones at WFSU during the March Fund Drive.

Since our League is located in the state capital and we have a Lobby Corps, we feel much more involved in the legislation each session. This was a particularly difficult session. I would like to be able to talk about the great legislation that passed into law, but that didn't happen. We have spent most of the session trying to prevent the passage of some horrendous bills like the so-called "Campaign Finance Reform" bill, the education bill, the sunseting of the Department of Community Affairs, vouchers for religious schools, repeal of the class size amendment, and a constitutional amendment that will nullify two years of work on redistricting. The League believes in good government; we don't contribute to the campaign funds of legislators as some groups do. The League is a grassroots organization and we lobby our legislators by contacting them on a local level as well as the state level. We expect our legislators to pass laws that will benefit the citizens of Florida and not a few groups that contribute to their campaigns. Our "clout" comes from calls, emails, and letters. When you receive an Action Alert, be sure to take action. Our power comes from a concerted effort on the part of all League members.

On a brighter note, the Civics Education bill (Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act) sponsored by Representative Charles McBurney and Senator Nancy Detert did pass and was sent to the Governor to sign. While LWVF and Common Cause were successful in getting a semester of civics required in the middle school several years ago, there was no assessment required. This bill ensures that civics will be taught and assessed.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, MAY, 2010

Following is an update on some of the bills in which the League had an interest:

HB105/SB1096 The “Justice Sandra Day O’Connor Civic Education Act provides for year-end assessment in the civics classes taught in middle school. *LWVF supported; passed both houses.*

SJR2420 A joint resolution that proposes an amendment to the State Constitution to limit state government revenues and require vote approval of new taxes and fees. This is the “Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights” that was voted down in the Tax and Budget Reform Commission. *LWVF opposes this legislation; it seems to have been put on hold but will probably come back next year.*

HB1207/SB880 Campaign Financing Bill; legitimizes and creates new campaign fundraising accounts under the direct control of legislative leaders; the latter would be able to raise unlimited contributions to bolster the campaigns of their legislative supporters. *LWVF opposed this bill; the Governor vetoed the bill.*

SB11598/B1211 Public Records and Public Meetings; creates the “Open Government Act.” Requires all elected and appointed public officials to undergo education and training on the requirements of the Open Government Act. *LWVF supported this legislation; passed through several Senate committees and was not heard in the House.*

HB677/SB188 Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners; would allow nurse practitioners to prescribe pain medications; there are just two states that do not allow this practice-Alabama and Florida. *LWVF supported the legislation; bill was not heard in any Senate or House committees.*

SB6/HB7189 Teacher tenure would be abolished; salaries and retention would be based on test scores given at the end of the year. Tests would have to be developed, and school districts would have to remit 5% of their local tax dollars to the state to pay for the program. Advanced degrees, longevity, and

national board certification would not be considered in hiring or keeping teachers.

LWVF opposed the bill; it passed both houses and was vetoed by the Governor.

HJR1399/SJR 2550 A proposed constitutional amendment that, if passed, would allow state tax monies to be used to further programs at religious institutions, including vouchers for parochial schools. Both bills made it as far as the rules committee in their respective houses. At this writing, I hope they die there. *LWVF opposed this legislation; it seems to have stalled in Rules.*

SJR7231 A proposed constitutional amendment (Amendment 7) that would immediately follow the redistricting amendments 5 and 6 on the ballot. This amendment, if passed, will nullify 5 and 6 and allow the legislature to continue to draw gerrymandered districts. *LWVF opposed this legislation; at this writing, if it passes the Senate, it will be on the November ballot.*

There are other bills we supported but THEY never moved in either house, i.e., early voting bills, bills that would levy taxes on bottled water, internet sales, and corporations that are shifting their profits out of the state in order to avoid taxes. These bills did not move.

The following note was received from Betsy Crawford, Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator, WFSU-TV/FM...

Dear Marilynn,

Thank you for arranging to staff five (5) shifts of the WFSU pledge drive with League of Women Voters volunteers.

During the time the League was on the phone-banks, 102 members pledged \$7,785.00! I also enjoyed their company – what great people!

Thank you for your support.

Betsy

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

Events

We cordially invite and encourage you to attend our next Hot Topics Luncheon on Wednesday, May 19th when our topic will be the ***UNNATURAL CAUSES...is inequality making us sick?*** initiative. Miaisha Mitchell, a native of Tallahassee with over forty years experience in education, community organizing and health care management, will lead us in examining how "the social circumstances in which we are born, live, and work can actually get under our skin and disrupt our physiology as much as germs and viruses." (www.unnaturalcauses.org). We will view one episode of the award winning documentary for which the initiative is named. Ms. Mitchell will discuss the local calls to action to encourage our community in working towards health equity (see below). The LWVT owns a DVD of the documentary series and will make it available for borrowing after May 19th.

The Greater Frenchtown Area Governor's Revitalization Council invites you to attend "A Call to Action"

Community Engagement Workshops 2010 and become partners with health experts and community stakeholders to make healthy food changes in your life and community. Topics include food safety, food security, and food & the environment. Meals will be provided, as well as food demonstrations and music. Two-day workshops (Friday night and Saturday) will take place the first three weekends of May. For more information and locations you may contact Miaisha Mitchell, the Council's Executive Director, at miaisha@aol.com (850-224-8404) or Joyce Brown at up157j@yahoo.com (850) 765-8643.

Member Activities

Several committee members attended the Call to Action Town Hall Meeting held on April 6 at the Leon County Health Department in celebration of National Public Health Week. Topics of discussion included implementing policies in equitable partnerships in Florida to ensure the health of all its communities, empowering the community to become better advocates for themselves, the role of the media in engaging the community in solutions to their health problems, and the role of the food environment in Tallahassee in supporting or undermining healthy eating behaviors. The event was well attended by community leadership. Panelists included Florida Surgeon General Ana Viamonte Ros, MD, MPH, Mayor Marks and many local professionals in the health fields and academia.

As a follow-up to the Town Hall Meeting, member Jane Quinton attended a meeting of the Leon County Food Council on April 13. The Council's mission is "to improve the awareness, accessibility and affordability of nutritious foods to Leon County residents while promoting a healthy, environmentally and economically sustainable community. A popular point of interest shared by attendees, including Nathan Ballentine, aka "The Man in Overalls" (featured in the *Tallahassee Democrat* on April 15) was community gardens and home-grown food as inspiration for ways of living more sustainably.

National Health Care

Do you have questions about the new health care law (The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010) aka the Affordable Care Act, or ACA? The LWVT has copies of AARP's publications "How the New Health Care Law Benefits You" and "Improved Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit & Closing the Doughnut Hole" for distribution. They are great brief resources including change timelines. If you are interested in receiving copies, please contact Theresa Chase at 850 383-1348 or chasetheresav@yahoo.com. Other great resources for your questions are:

www.healthreform.gov

www.healthnewsflorida.org

www.kaiserhealthnews.org

www.healthcareforamericanow.org

www.factcheck.org/2010/04/more-malarkey-about-health-care/

For Florida health related legislation, please visit:

Online Sunshine

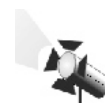
www.flsenate.gov

www.myfloridahouse.gov

www.healthnewsflorida.org/index.cfm/go/public.atTheCapitol



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Dorothy Anita McClellan Mann of the Tallahassee League



Dorothy McClellan Mann has been a League of Women Voters of Tallahassee member for over 50 years. Born in the Texas panhandle, she was the sixth of six children. Her father made a living farming, until the dust storms hit in the summer of 1934 or 35. Her mother was a stay-at-home farmer's wife with a college degree in education and a love of gardening. Dorothy said they went into the Depression with eight milk cows, chickens, pigs and a large herd of cattle. They came out with one milk cow, a handful of chickens, and no cattle but the family was still together. She felt one more year of the drought and the family would have broken apart with the men going to look for work. But the drought ended and the war started and she was off to college, then a career as a medical technician at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, Texas, where she met and married Dr. Charles K. Mann. And then to Tallahassee where Dr. Mann took a job teaching at FSU and

Dorothy continued to work as a medical technologist in Tallahassee.

She joined LWVT in 59 or 61, between the birth of her first child Richard and the second Amy. Back in those days, they would meet at members' houses until Mr. Lewis of Lewis State Bank stepped up and allowed them to use one of the bank meeting rooms to have their meetings.

In those days women were just beginning to speak up and challenge the status quo. They had the infamous good ole' boy "Pork Chop Gang" to deal with at the capitol (McCarthy era politicians supporting segregation), the Space Age was dawning on Florida's East coast, and Representative Beth Johnson was the first woman to be elected to the Florida Senate (from Orlando) in 1962. This was the political climate in which Dorothy and the other Tallahassee Leaguers learned about politics and how to lobby for what they felt was right for the people of Tallahassee and Leon County.

Dorothy served as the State Treasurer sometime in the mid to late 60's and remembers driving down to Orlando to board meetings (in the days before telecommuting) with Ora Kromhout, and some funny stories about buying gin for martinis (you will have to ask her for details!)

In the seventies Dorothy worked on the "Know Your Public Officials" handout that the League uses as a tool to teach voters who their representatives are and how to contact them. She was a Girl Scout mom at the time and invited the girls to study the draft pamphlet. The League wanted the language on about a fourth grade level, so she had a captive audience and the girls got to work on their government badge.

Dot stayed active in League business, campaigns and voter registrations in the years between 1980 to the present, serving as LWVT president during one of Florida's many teacher crises. She also served as Legislative Chair (now the Action Chair) for the State Board and spent many elections as the clerk for precinct poll-workers. She and Ora organized the first Legislative Seminars (two per session originally).

"It was a great time to be involved in the League, getting to know the Legislators and working with other interesting and stimulating women", she stated. Dot remains involved with League projects on an as-needed basis and is always willing to get to work.

APRIL BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The LWVT Board of Directors meeting was held April 13, 2010 at 540 Beverly Court, at 6:30 pm.

The Treasurer reported that the Legislative Seminar Dinner fundraiser netted \$219.24 and a good time was had by all at the Paradigm Restaurant.

Theresa Chase, Health Committee chair, discussed the scheduled Hot Topics on Unnatural Causes. Members of the committee have been attending Town Hall meetings to help organize action events related to improving the health inequities of our community.

The Adopt-A-Precinct fundraising project has ten volunteers at this point. Training will be scheduled after July 13.

Ben Wilcox reported that the legislature intends to put their own redistricting amendment on the 2010 ballot in an effort to confuse voters. The League will need to have education events prior to the elections to counter this effort.

There has been a good response by members staffing the Saturday Market. It was suggested that, if possible, volunteers should stay until 1:00.

The Board is considering purchase of an LCD projector for use at Hot Topics.

The next meeting will be on May 11. All members are invited to attend and participate in the discussion.

ADOPT-A-PRECINCT

During the election cycle 2008, members of the LWV of Tallahassee participated in The Supervisor of Elections Adopt-A-Precinct program. We had seven members working at the polls during the primary and general elections. We each donated the money we earned for the election days and the training time, to our treasury.

We are planning to do the same for the 2010 cycle and would welcome the participation of all interested members. The only qualification is that you be a registered voter in Leon County. The Supervisor of Elections staff provides the training, which is usually 3-4 hours before each election.

If you want more information about poll-working, please go to www.leonvotes.org or contact Marilyn Wills at 893-4104 or marilynwillms@msn.com

To submit an application, go to:

<http://leonvotes.org/index.asp?page=Poll%20Workers/PollWorkerApplication.asp>

Thanks for your consideration!

GET INVOLVED

Make plans today to attend Leaders Council 2010! This informative event will enable you to participate in planning for the Next Ninety, meet other League members from around the state, and learn in greater depth about key Florida issues and the just completed Legislative Session.

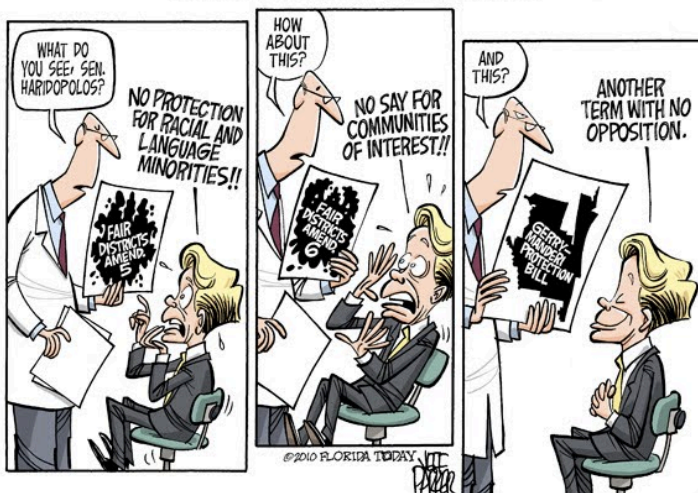
May 21 – 22, 2010 | Rollins College | 1000 Holt Avenue | Winter Park, FL

Register to attend at www.lwvfla.org

“How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes!”

-Maya Angelou

REDISTRICTING RORSCHACH





DOWNTOWN MARKET

A big thank you to the volunteers for the Downtown Market during April: Rebecca Sager, Christy Crotty, Kathy Winn, Bill and Carol Weissert, Cheryl Cole and Jane Clarkson. The response for help with this project to register voters and educate about Fair Districts has been great!

Now on to May! Should be another month of really nice weather, so let me know which Saturday you would like to have!

- May 1
- May 8
- May 15 - Mimi Jones
- May 22
- May 29

Please call me or send an email.

Peggy Ramsey
386-7589
ramsey020@comcast.net

**THANK YOU!
NEW SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMBERS**

- Ruth Findling
- Erin Edwards
- Dot Mann
- Peggy Ramsey

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

P. Bryant Chase
2302 Trescott Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32308
850 383-1348

LEAGUE MOURNS PASSING OF CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER DOROTHY HEIGHT **Voting Rights Heroine Impacted Generations**

Washington, DC – The League of Women Voters of the United States today joined Americans across this country in mourning the passing of Dorothy Height, a longtime leader of the nation’s civil rights movement and Chairwoman of the National Council of Negro Women.

“Today our country lost a true heroine with the passing of Dorothy Height,” said Mary G. Wilson, national President of the League of Women Voters. “Ms. Height was an inspiration to many. Her pioneering work for racial and gender equality spanned six decades and impacted the lives of millions of Americans.”

“Ms. Height’s contributions to the fight for voting rights in the 1950s and 1960s were pivotal to passage of the Voting Rights Act,” Wilson stated. “Likewise, passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963 would not have been possible were it not for the strength, dedication and leadership of Dorothy Height. The League has been honored to work with Ms. Height in her role as Chair of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.”

“Ms. Height was a role model for many Americans, never stopping in her quest for a better life for all in this nation. Her legacy will live on for generations to come,” concluded Wilson.





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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TALLAHASSEE
 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Phone (home) _____

Address _____

Phone (cell) _____

_____ (please print legibly)

Email _____

\$100 Susan B. Anthony Membership \$ _____

\$75 Household Membership \$ _____

\$50 Individual Membership \$ _____

\$25 Student Membership \$ _____

I am enclosing \$5 for the LWVF Lobby Fund \$ _____

Additional Gift to the LWVUS Education Fund \$ _____ (tax deductible)

TOTAL: \$ _____

Please make all checks payable to LWV of Tallahassee
 Mail to: LWVT, P.O. Box 10216, Tallahassee, FL 32302
 You may also review/join online at www.lwvtallahassee.org
 (there is a \$2.00 charge for using PayPal.)