



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
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Tallahassee

Volume 19 Number 10

November 2011

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PRIORITY TO ATTEND!

**November 8th,
2:00-4:30 pm. &
6:00-8:30 pm.**

Education Consensus Meeting at the LeRoy Collins Public Library, Room A starting at 2:00 p.m. or 6:00 pm. Details below.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 2011

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

09 Wed. 4:00 p.m.
City Commission
City Hall 2nd floor

15 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
LWVT Board Meeting
LWVF Office on Beverly Court

15 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Leon County Commission Meeting

**Hot Topics Luncheon
November 16, 2011**

"The 'New Normal' for Leon County"

Leon County's new Administrator, Mr. Vince Long, has described a "new normal" in county government that results from decreasing revenues, increasing citizen needs, and demand for no new taxes combined with a political climate in which government and its employees are increasingly denigrated as easy political targets.



Having served Leon County since 1995, last summer Mr. Long was promoted to County Administrator by a unanimous vote of the county commission, within a day of his predecessor, Parvez Alam's retirement announcement. In Leon County, the County Administrator is the chief executive officer of the County, exerting power according to the Home Rule Charter and the law.

At the November 16 Hot Topic Luncheon, Mr. Long will discuss his administration's "new model" for addressing the "new normal." He will tell us how this new model will ensure that Leon County government is efficient and high performing, will promote transparency and engage citizens, and will enhance the county's livability, sustainability and economic competitiveness.

Date & Time NOVEMBER 16, 2011 Wednesday
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location **Brokaw-McDougall House**
329 N. Meridian St., Tallahassee 32301

Meals \$15 Italian Chef's Salad
or
\$17 Handmade Mushroom Ravioli in Creamy Vodka Sauce with Bella Bella salad and bread & butter

all meals include iced tea, spring water, or hot coffee

FOR RESERVATIONS PLEASE CALL 309-3005
or EMAIL LWVTallahassee@gmail.com,
indicating your meal choice, by Sunday evening, November 13

Because the League must pay for reservations cancelled after November 13, those who cancel late should reimburse the League for their meal's cost.

County Courthouse 5th floor

16 Wed. 11:30 a.m.
Hot Topics
Brokaw-McDougall
329 N. Meridian Street

17 Thursday 7:00 p.m.
Local Government
Committee
Ruth O'Donnell
3509 Trillium Ct.

19 Saturday 7:00 a.m.-
1:00 p.m.
America Recycles Day
Solid Waste Facility

21 Monday 1:00 p.m.
CRTPA Board Mtg.
City Hall, 2nd Floor

22 Wed. 4:00 p.m.
City Commission
Meeting
City Hall 2nd floor

22 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
Leon Co. School Bd.
Howell Center
3955 W. Pensacola St.

December Meetings

15 Thursday 3:00 p.m.
Health Care Comm.
Theresa Chase
2299 Trescott Drive

President's Message

I've had at least three opportunities to speak publicly about the League of Women Voters of Tallahassee since the last Voter was published. Ben Wilcox and I addressed the Lions Club; I addressed our legislative delegation for Leon County on behalf of the LWVT and I spoke at the FAMU student government's Voter Registration Rally. Ben spoke at length to the Lions about the League's decades-long fight to achieve fair redistricting in Florida. To both the Lions and the Legislative Delegation, I told my audience that what the League does is study. We study issues of civic concern, then come to consensus, then take action to advocate for policy change based upon our consensus position. Study, I told them, is the very heart of League.

At the Voter Registration rally, when the student government leaders invited me in turn to address the crowd, I led the students in a chant to rehearse the Vote411Leon.org website address for LWVT's free online voter guide, so students could learn about the candidates and the issues. Like Vote411Leon.org, I told them, voter service work is what the League does.

Now, as a member of this League, it's your chance to prove me right. Will you back me up? Will you commit to attending an Education Study consensus meeting, Tuesday November 8? Please rsvp now to lwvtallahassee@gmail.com if you will commit. If you only have 3 hours all month to devote to League business, this Consensus meeting is my top choice for how I would encourage you to spend those three hours. Please make it a priority.

How would you like to help the League do what it does - to study, to advocate, to empower voters? What do you see that needs to be done? What resources can you contribute? In what capacity would you like to serve?

Please reflect on these questions, then let me and your board know what you're thinking by clicking this link to send us an email: lwvtallahassee@gmail.com.

-Rebecca Sager
President, LWVT



Welcome New Members!

Peter Butzin
Carlos Boueres

Opt Out

The Voter newsletter has now made the transition to a beautiful, well-integrated digital format. The electronic version is also more colorful, arrives days before the paper Voter, costs much less, and uses far fewer natural resources to produce.

If you would like to opt out of the traditional paper Voter (the one that arrives by regular mail), then please send an email to lwvtallahassee@gmail.com with "Opt Out" in the subject line.

National Education Consensus Study

The Tallahassee League of Women Voters will convene the Education Study Consensus on Tuesday, November 8 from 2:30-5:00PM and again from 6:00 - 8:30PM at the Leroy Collins/Leon County Public Library, 200 Park Avenue West in downtown Tallahassee. Both sessions will be held in Program Room A, on the main floor of the Library, located immediately to the left in the Call Street building entrance. Ample parking is available in the library parking lot of the Call Street entrance. We hope you will join us in the discussion/consensus topic, 'The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.'

We do ask that you provide an indication of which of the two sessions you will attend: Afternoon, 2:30-5:00PM or Evening, 6:00-8:30PM. The sessions will be the same in schedule/content. Email LWVTallahassee@gmail.com by Monday, November 7, with your name, and the session you would prefer to attend. Those who signed up at the Hot Topics Luncheon on Wednesday, October 19, need not respond again, as we have you down!

Carolyn Herrington, our Hot Topics Luncheon speaker on the 19th, did an excellent job of presenting the primary points of the consensus study. National League has provided the questions in two broad areas of consideration - Common Core Standards and Assessments and Equity and Funding. For those unable to attend the luncheon, National LWV has provided background reading and study at: www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public_Education (From this webpage, click on 'Background Papers' for research and study papers done by League, as well as 'Voter-Ready Articles' for brief summaries of the topics)

Marilyn Wills will facilitate both sessions, assisted by Education Committee members Shirley Ellis, Margie Thomas, Dolores Valdez and Cynthia Williams.

The anticipated schedule for the sessions are as follows:

Afternoon:

2:30 - 2:45 - Brief History of Federal Involvement in U.S. Public Education
(Pre-K - 12) - Shirley Ellis

2:45 - 3:45 Common Core Standards and Assessment - Cynthia Williams

3:45 - 4:00 Break

4:00 - 5:00 Equity and Funding - Margie Thomas

Evening:

6:00 - 6:15 Brief History of Federal Involvement in U.S. Public Education
(Pre-K - 12) - Shirley Ellis

6:15 - 7:15 Common Core Standards and Assessment - Cynthia Williams

7:15 - 7:30 Break

7:30 - 8:30 Equity and Funding - Margie Thomas

We look forward to your participation in this important study from the National League of Women Voters. The education of our children and young people is of vital interest and concern to all of us.

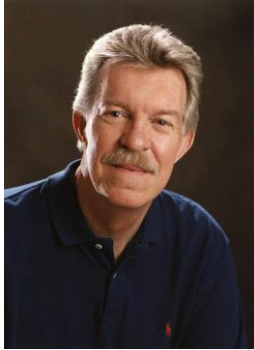
In Memory

It is with much sadness that we recognize the passing of Tallahassee League member and former Tallahassee League President Bob Kromhout. Bob was the first male president of a local League of Women Voters in Florida, and may have been the first in the U.S.

Bob came to the League through another faithful member, his late wife Ora Kromhout. He began as an associate member and became a full member when men were invited to join the League in 1974. Bob served on the board, coordinated the Legislative Observer Corps, and served on the Administration of Justice, Constitutional Revision, Energy, and Representative Government committees. He served as Tallahassee League President from 1978-1979. Both Bob and Ora remained active League members until their later years when health problems became insurmountable.

Meet the Board

A native of Mobile County, Alabama, Lanue Ryan has made his home in Tallahassee for more than 35 years. He has a master's degree in political science and American History from FSU, and is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He retired in 2007 after 38 years in health care administration. An active member of the Tallahassee arts community, Ryan has been a member of the Tallahassee



Community Chorus since shortly after its inception in 1988, serving as president of the board for several years, as well as singing in the choir at St. John's Episcopal Church. He says he'd always thought of The League of Women Voters as a female organization, but his friend Peggy Ramsey convinced him otherwise.

Lanue says: "We have much to do folks and the challenges are great, but not insurmountable. Let's keep the momentum going!"

Sustainable Thinking

Do you know how to properly dispose of batteries? Here are a few tips.

Alkaline batteries, sometimes referred to as "flashlight batteries," are no longer considered hazardous waste and can be disposed of in your trash. No alkaline batteries containing mercury have been manufactured since the 1990s, and no other hazardous components have been added since then. Currently, it is not cost effective to recycle alkaline batteries. There are some recyclers in other parts of the country but transportation costs prohibit Florida from using them. Nonrechargeable lithium batteries should be completely discharged and the terminals securely taped before disposal in the trash.

There are a few options for Florida consumers to recycle batteries. Many stores that sell batteries, phones or other electronics will take used batteries for recycling. See www.call2recycle.org to find a retailer who will accept them.

A number of batteries are recyclable and are considered hazardous waste. These include rechargeable lithium batteries (laptops), button batteries (hearing aids, watches), nickel-cadmium batteries and nickel metal hydride batteries (electronics and toys), wet cell lead acid batteries (autos, boats, trucks), battery packs (phones, small equipment), portable power tool batteries, and old-style cell phone batteries. If you need to dispose of any of these kinds of batteries, you can take them to the Solid Waste Management Facility at 7550 Apalachee Parkway.

Speaking of the Solid Waste Facility, would anyone like to man an LWVT table at America Recycles Day on November 19th? The hours are 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. If you can help, please contact me at 878-7320 or ljdavis75@gmail.com or Rebecca Sager at rsager@music.org.

-Linda Davis

Legislative Priorities

The Florida Legislature's committees and chairs have been named for the 2012 legislative session. Local Leagues were asked to submit their legislative priorities for the coming session. The results were as follows:

Government in Florida is the top choice, with several Leagues emphasizing reapportionment and finance and taxation as main priorities.

Education was next; here, the emphasis is on funding and extending testing to private schools receiving state funds.

Social Policy with an emphasis on Health Care and Immigration is the third top choice.

-Marilynn Wills

Health Care Report

Members Cynthia Cook (LWV of Florida Speakers' Bureau Member) and Theresa Chase traveled to Panama City on October 20 to make the presentation of LWVF Education Fund's "Health Care Reform: What Does It Mean for You and Your Family?" to the Democratic Women's Club of Bay County.

We were warmly received by twenty-six attendees and appreciated their enthusiasm and attention to the details of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. We will follow up with this inquisitive group as we research and share more answers to questions they have posed.

If you can recommend local organizations or groups who may benefit from the presentation, please let us know.

On Sunday, October 23, several members attended the Youth Symposium "Food & Hunger: Opportunities for Policy & Change" sponsored by The Tallahassee Food Network and coordinated by Qasimah Boston, of Project FOOD (For Our Own Development).

The symposium included elementary, high school and college students along with members of Tallahassee's professional community presenting on their research, knowledge and activities with community gardens, food environment (security/hunger/sustainability) with global connections, leadership skill development and urban planning. It was a delightful educational experience interspersed with music, dance and dialogue. The event was held at The Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science as a part of an afternoon of activities to celebrate Food Day. The LWVT hosted a League information table and underwrote the program printing.



If you are interested in learning more about the symposium agenda and participants in these food environment issues, please contact Qasimah Boston at abarakaq@aol.com or M. Miaisha Mitchell (850) 244-8404.

You may also contact Theresa Chase for information on the LWVT participation with the Unnatural Causes/Health Disparities initiative.

Our next meeting is Thursday, December 15 at 3 pm at 2299 Trescott Drive (Chase home). We will have holiday refreshments following the meeting. Hope you will join us!

-Theresa Chase

Local Government Report

The Local Government Study & Action Group met on October 27 and discussed several items related to the ongoing Transportation Study, the upcoming November 19 America Recycles Day event (see Sustainable Thinking article above), and local government activity.

Transportation Study Activity

Research for the Transportation Study starts on October 31 with an interview of Harry Reed, Director of the [Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency \(CRTPA\)](#), our regional metropolitan planning organization and responsible for coordinating transportation planning within Florida's Capital Region. The agency's mission is "to act as the principal forum for collective transportation policy discussions that results in the development a long range transportation plan which creates an integrated regional multimodal transportation network that supports sustainable development patterns and promotes economic growth." So we are starting at the top!

The Study & Action Group prepared for this and other interviews that will be part of the Transportation Study by reviewing interview questions drafted by Tallahassee League President Rebecca Sager. Ruth O'Donnell and Marilyn Wills will conduct this interview and other League members interested in transportation will be asked to participate in future interviews. We plan to interview City of Tallahassee and StarMetro staff soon.

Local Government Activity

Tallahassee City Commissioners have been much in the news lately. Study Group members had a good discussion about concerns related to transparency of information and commissioner activity that have been reported in the Tallahassee Democrat. We will continue to monitor the ongoing conversation between commissioners as it occurs.

Action related to the Leon County Comprehensive Plan was also discussed as a follow-up to previous discussions. The County Commission approved all but one of the Comp Plan changes related to use of the land area designated Urban Fringe (reported in the October 26, 2011 Tallahassee Democrat). Linda Davis, who lives in the affected area, has been keeping us apprised of the Planning Department's efforts to assure development patterns that will keep this area protected from suburban sprawl.

Invitation to Leaguers Interested in the Environment

President Rebecca Sager discovered that quite a few Tallahassee League members indicated an interest in environmental issues when they joined/renewed. In so far as action to promote sustainability and environmental protection occurs at the level of our local government, Rebecca will encourage members of the new interest group to get involved in the Local Government Study & Action Group.

Next Meeting

Please join us as we continue to work on the Transportation Study at our next meeting on November 17, 2011. We usually meet on the fourth Thursday of the month but in November that will be Thanksgiving so we will meet a week earlier. Our regular meeting place is Ruth O'Donnell's home at 3509 Trillium Ct. Everyone is welcome!

-Ruth O'Donnell

Special Donations

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Many League members appreciate the work of League of Women Voters and may feel they would like to be actively involved, but are too busy with family, job, and other obligations. This is another way you can help further the work of the League.

All of the activities of LWVT cost money - the budget for FY 2010-2011 projects expenditures of \$16,300 for operation of the League. This includes things like printing and mailing the monthly VOTER newsletter, P.O. Box rental, telephone service, etc.

If you choose to make a monetary contribution toward these expenses, please consider the following:

VOTER Printing per month: \$180.00
P.O. Box Rental per year: \$70.00
Telephone Voice Mail per year: \$120.00
Student Member Sponsorship per year: \$30.00
Website Operation per year: \$150.00
Required Annual Business Reports per year: \$75.00
Dues, Big Bend Environmental Forum per year: \$50.00
Special Lobby Fund Donation: You decide
Printing of Voter Education materials for distribution: You decide

Please make your check out to LWVT and indicate on the memo line the item of your choosing. Mail the check to P.O. Box 10216, Tallahassee, FL 32302.

YES, I WANT TO GET INVOLVED.
WHO DO I CONTACT?

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Please Circle Annual Membership Level

(May 1, 2011 - April 30, 2012)

\$100.00 Susan B. Anthony membership _____

\$ 90.00 Household membership _____

\$ 60.00 Individual membership _____

\$ 30.00 Student membership _____

I am enclosing \$5.00 for LWVF Lobby Fund _____

Additional gift to LWVUS Education Fund _____

Please circle any topics
 that interest you:

Voter Services

Local Government

Fundraising

Health Care

Lobby Corps

Sustainability/Natural Resources

Publicity

Membership

Hot Topics

Education

Hospitality/Events

Please make all checks payable to LWV of Tallahassee. Mail to LWVT, P. O. Box10216, Tallahassee, FL 32302-2216. You may also renew/join at www.lwvtallahassee.org. There is a \$2.00 charge for using PayPal.