



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
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TALLAHASSEE

VOLUME 19 - NUMBER 8

SEPTEMBER 2011

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
September 2011

06 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.
Tall.-Leon Cty Planning Commission
Public Hearing Renaissance Center
435 N. Monroe Street

06 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
Leon County School Board
Budget/Business Mtg Howell Center
3955 W. Pensacola Street

06 Tuesday 10 a.m.
LWVF - Health Care Webinar

07 Wednesday 5:30 p.m.
LWVF - Health Care Webinar

07 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Meeting
City Hall 2nd floor

12 Monday 6:00 p.m.
LWVT Board Meeting
LWVF Office, Beverly Court

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

17 Saturday 2:00 p.m.
Local Government Workshop
Ruth O'Donnell 3509 Trillium Ct.

19 Monday 1:00 p.m.
CRTPA Meeting - City Hall 2nd floor

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

21 Wednesday 11:30 a.m.
Hot Topics
Brokaw-McDougall House
329 N. Meridian Street

21 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.
City Commission Meeting/City Hall 2nd floor

27 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
Leon County School Board -Howell Center
3955 W. Pensacola Street

October

06 Thursday 3:00 p.m.
Health Care Committee
Theresa Chase 2299 Trescott Drive

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

HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON
Wednesday, September 21, 2011

“POWER THROUGH CONSENSUS”

This month's Hot Topic Luncheon focuses upon a hallmark of the League: the process through which our diverse membership comes to consensus on critical and at times controversial policy questions. Drawing on extensive personal experience participating in and leading consensus meetings, our speaker, Charlene Walker, will describe how a League consensus meeting is run effectively and how coming to consensus on position statements makes League positions more powerful and persuasive. Consensus is not compromise, nor is it achieved through a vote; it is achieved through specific rules of dialogue that allow a groups' shared goals and aspirations for public policy to supersede political and personal differences.



Charlene Walker, former president of the Tallahassee and the Orange County Leagues, is now a member of the Villages/Tri-County League. Ms. Walker has participated in and led numerous studies and consensus processes for the Tallahassee League, including a national study on immigration and a state study on Alternative Voting Systems. As current Chair of the LWVF Transportation Study, Ms. Walker is guiding the drafting of consensus questions in pursuit of a new position on multimodal transportation planning.

Please share this invitation with other grassroots civic groups or activists who desire to learn more about how the League achieves strength through consensus.

Date & Time: SEPTEMBER 21, 2011 WEDNESDAY
11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Location: BROKAW-MCDOUGALL HOUSE
329 N. Meridian Street, Tallahassee, 32301
(centrally located at intersection of Meridian and Miccosukee)

Meal costs \$15: SALADS & SANDWICHES
(including wraps, pesto pasta, Tuscan, & Greek salads)
all meals include iced tea, spring water, or hot coffee

FOR RESERVATIONS PLEASE CALL 309-3005 by Sunday evening, September 18.

Since the League has to pay for all meals ordered, those who cancel after the deadline are expected to pay for cost of the lunch.

President's Message

When you elected me to be president, I was quite pleasantly surprised to start receiving from members some well-investigated, informative articles and book recommendations covering an array of public policy issues. Your spontaneous offering of compelling reading has got me wondering if there isn't a desire within our League to find more ways that we can gather to share these gems of journalism and non-fiction?

This question relates to our last board meeting, where your board tasked me with assembling a communications group to investigate and recommend ways to improve communications within our League. My challenge in assembling this group is that those members that I personally know who have an interest in communications are already committed to other projects within League. If you are curious, or even knowledgeable, about print, face-to-face, and/or digital communication systems that could enhance the effectiveness and visibility of LWVT, please contact me or another board member. Thank you!

It seems LWVT's challenge of finding volunteers to fulfill our mission is largely based upon folks like me not knowing all of our members personally. Thankfully, our newly organized Membership Committee has a strategy to address this. This strategy involves more conversation: LWVT League leaders are committing to communicate with a small group of members living nearby to them. One of the first tasks of these leaders will be to discuss with each member how s/he would like to be engaged in the League.

I think this strategy will help LWVT grow in our ability to influence good government while also expanding our vibrant membership. I'm basing this on two assumptions. The first is that members want to feel meaningfully engaged in the work of their League. The second is that if your current board members just knew who likes to do what for the League, then our volunteer efforts would be maximized, and we could collectively assert even more positive influence on our government than we are able to now.

It is through conversation that we can learn what we each person experiences as meaningful work. For some, using a particular skill or talent is meaningful, for others, it is a financial contribution, for yet others, meaningful volunteering means stretching oneself out of the comfort zone to try or learn something new.

While the League is not predominantly a social organization, League membership involves good sociability: studying, discussing, persuading and being open to being persuaded, then coming together in consensus, drafting a position statement, then working together to influence our government based upon our consensus position. The new membership reception, Thursday, September 22nd (see below) will be a really fun, highly sociable launching of a renewed effort to meaningfully engage all of our membership in the work of the League of Women Voters of Tallahassee.



COME WELCOME OUR 2010-2011 NEW MEMBERS!

LWVT is hosting a New Member Reception to welcome our newest members to the Tallahassee League.

Date: September 22, 2011 (Thursday)

Place: Bella Bella (123 E. 5th Ave, one block off Monroe St.)

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10 per person (free for new members), includes appetizers – cash bar available.

RSVP: Amy Mann – 339-9189 or use our new email – lwvtallahassee@gmail.com

Entertainment provided by local Study and Action groups – “light bites” of information on what local groups are currently studying and how you can get involved. Come meet new friends and catch up with old friends you may not have seen in a while.

VOTER OPT OUT

Starting with next month's Voter, members have the option to "Opt Out!" of receiving the paper Voter.

Please send an email to lvvtallahassee@gmail.com with "Opt Out" in subject line, if you wish to opt out of receiving the traditional paper Voter.

Unless you opt out, you will continue to receive both copies of the Voter: the traditional paper Voter and the new digital Voter.

Both print and digital Voters will look identical.

Digital versions will be produced and delivered to your email inbox using Constant Contact®. You will no longer need to open an attached pdf file in order to read the Voter. Another benefit is that clicking on highlighted text will take you to additional online resources such as websites, references cited, study materials, and board member emails.

THANK YOU!
NEW SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMBER

Gertrude Deyle

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Richard Rubino
Yvonne Worden

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SUSTAINABLE THINKING—LOCAL NEWS AND NOTES ON OUR ENVIRONMENT

"Sustainable Thinking" is a new column in our Voter. League member and author, Linda Davis, reports faithfully on sustainability and environmental issues for our Local Government Study and Action Group. Linda agreed to write the column after I learned that the environment was the second highest ranking interest checked on membership forms (voter service was first). Linda, your League thanks you for your service!

Today's column briefly introduces us to Sustainable Tallahassee, Inc., which promotes environmental stewardship and economic development through education and collaboration. Their work is made possible by a grant from the Knight Foundation, membership dues and donations.

To join Sustainable Tallahassee, please visit their web site, www.sustainabletallahassee.org. Members receive weekly e-mails containing "Good Green News" detailing recent projects, opportunities, and events.

A recent accomplishment of Sustainable Tallahassee is the expansion of the city and county plastics recycling. Previously, only bottles and jugs were accepted. Sustainable Tallahassee is responsible for securing markets for the additional plastics. Excluding containers which held pesticides or other hazardous wastes, you may now put in your recycling bin any plastic container less than three gallons in size such as bottles, jugs, yogurt cups, butter and dairy tubs, fruit and vegetable containers, plastic caps and lids. You may also recycle aluminum, tin, and steel cans, and glass jars and bottles. Rinse containers to help keep bugs and smells away.

(Plastic bags still may be taken to any Publix, Winn Dixie, Target, Lowe's, and J. C. Penny for recycling.)

-Linda Davis


SUPPORT YOUR LEAGUE & THE ENVIRONMENT ALL IN ONE EVENT!

LWVT has been invited by Rethink Energy Florida to join the worldwide Rally 350, Moving our Planet on September 24, "to demand solutions to the climate change crisis and celebrate a fossil fuel free future."

The event in Tallahassee will last from 4-8 pm in Railroad Square. LWVT is invited to participate in the parade and/or to set up a display table from 4-8 along the parade route through Railroad Square.

For more information on the international event visit www.moving-planet.org or www.350.org.

Please email rsager@music.org to indicate your interest in participating.



Local Government Committee takes on Transportation Study

Members of the Local Government Committee agreed with President Rebecca Sager and Vice-President Marilyn Wills at the Committee's August 25 meeting to manage the Tallahassee League's participation in the state League Transportation Study. The process will begin in early September (date to be announced) when Committee members and other interested people hold a planning meeting. An email has gone out to several members and potential members who expressed interest in participating but if you are interested in being part of this study please contact Ruth O'Donnell at 668-6911 or ruth.odonnell@comcast.net. We welcome everyone who wants to participate!

Other news from Local Government includes our plans for the September 22 New Member Orientation. Be sure to come by and check out our display and chat with committee regulars about what we do. You might even become interested enough to join us at our monthly meetings!

Committee members also discussed setting up appointments this fall to interview newly elected and appointed local government officials. We haven't set any dates yet so the door is still open to participation. Just let us know of your interest.

Barbara Sterling, Committee Co-Chair, informed us about a meeting on nuclear energy she attended. Dr. John Kelly, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Reactor Technologies, Office of Nuclear Energy, U.S. Department of Energy spoke along with others about the state of nuclear energy in the country.

That's all the news for now. See you at the New Members Orientation.

- Ruth O'Donnell

50 YEARS IN THE LEAGUE....REMEMBERING RUTH FINDLING

When Ruth Findling and her family moved from Illinois to Palm Beach County in 1959, she joined the League in order to learn more about the community. Within a few months she became a board member and Education Chair. About five years later, she was elected President for two years. When her term ended, she became Treasurer, remaining in that position until she moved to Tallahassee in 1999.



She served on the State Board for four years in the early seventies with Eleanor Weinstock, Helen Gordon Davis, Betty Metcalf, all who later were elected to the Florida House of Representatives, and Betty Castor, who became a County Commissioner, Senator, Commissioner of Education and USF President. Ruth is very proud to have served as State Membership Chair and Treasurer with such outstanding women.

In appreciation of her long-term dedication to her local League (30 years then), they had a luncheon in her honor and named their annual conference after her. Ten years later, at another luncheon, Ruth received an engraved necklace - LWV 1959 - 1999 - an many tearful farewells.


Ruth graduated from college with a degree in speech pathology in 1937 and an M.S. in special education in 1969. While she did not work full-time until her children left home for college, she did do substitute teaching. She later had a variety of jobs - an intake worked for a counseling agency, a human services coordinator for a disability agency and office manager for her husband's contracting business. She remained married for 60 years even though she and her husband were often together 24 hours a day with her last job!

Ruth also used her degrees and love to play a major role in the rehabilitation of her daughter, Janet, after brain surgery. She helped her learn how to walk, talk, read and write again after the operation. When Janet recovered and attended law school many years later, Ruth journeyed to Tallahassee at the end of each semester and before the Bar exam to cook for and study with Janet. Janet claims her mother deserves Bar membership too!

Ruth and her husband also traveled extensively, driving throughout this country and visiting Canada, Central America, South America, Europe and Australia. Often they were visiting their older son when he was on sabbatical leave. When driving, they would make sure a visit to each of their children was on their itinerary.

- Janet Findling (October 2008 Voter)

On August 2, 2011, at the age of 95, Ruth passed away. The family requests that donations in Ruth's memory be made to LWVT, P.O. Box 10216, Tallahassee, FL 32302.



Lobbying starts now!

Leon County's legislative delegation will meet early in September (date to be announced). All Florida House and Senate representatives elected from Leon County will be attending in order to hear recommendations and concerns of local officials, civic groups, and citizens.

This year, your Tallahassee League will present a statement to the delegation.

Please consider supporting the League by attending. To volunteer to report on the meeting's content, please contact Rebecca Sager at 219-9966 or rsager@music.org.



SUMMARY OF AUGUST HOT TOPICS

We were pleased to have Mr. Harry Reed, Executive Director of CRTPA as our August Hot Topics Speaker. Since we are involved in a transportation study, his remarks were most timely. You may be asking "What's CRTPA?" It's the Capital Region Transportation Planning Authority and it includes representatives from Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, and Jefferson Counties. It is a metropolitan planning organization and is responsible for coordinating transportation policies in the Capital Region.

Mr. Reed discussed the growth patterns in our area and the "power of connected streets." The latter gives those traveling by car many more options for getting to a destination. While most people think of street widening to improve the efficiency of moving traffic, research has shown that this is not the most efficient way to do so. On streets with two lanes and left turn lanes, the capacity to move traffic is increased by 40%.

A recently completed project is the pedestrian tunnel under the CSX railroad bridge on Lafayette Street; it provides a safe passage for pedestrians under the railroad crossing and completes the final link of the sidewalk along Lafayette Street. It provides direct access to residential and retail areas to the east and office buildings and the Cascade Park to the west.

There is also a multi-modal project planned for Tennessee Street that is very exciting and somewhat controversial at this time. As Mr. Reed said to us, the regional mobility plan is committed to the movement of people and goods rather than vehicles; this may be a new concept to many Tallahassee motorists.

Our transportation committee will be meeting on the evening of September 21 with State Transportation Chair Charlene Walker; if you are interested in joining us, call Marilyn Wills at 893-4104 or Ruth O'Donnell at 668-6911.



LWVUS National Study on "Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector"

Starting this month, interested League members can join a "Privatization Study List" (email list) and begin to study materials posted on that list.

In accordance with direction from LWVUS 2010 Convention, the purpose of the study is "to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good."

Timeline: Aug-Oct 2011 Information will be provided to State and Local Leagues; Nov 2011-May 2012 Study and Consensus

Please contact a LWVT board member to discuss your interest in this study; knowing members' interest level will help your board decide if LWVT should commit to participating in the study. Recommended readings are available at these links:

1. [Government Privatization: History, Examples, and Issues](#)
2. [Paul Starr, "The Meaning of Privatization," Yale Law and Policy Review 6 \(1988\): 6-41.](#)
3. [Privatization: A Seattle League Study](#)

OPPORTUNITIES AT THE STATE LEVEL
Help set Florida's League's 2012 Legislative Priorities

Please rank your top three priorities from this list of issues for action. By submitting your ranking by email (lwvtallahassee@gmail.com) or in person during the Hot Topic, you can influence what will receive greatest focus of our Florida League's advocacy work at the Capitol.

- _____ Government in Florida:
- _____ fair redistricting
- _____ ethics reform
- _____ Finance and Taxation
- _____ Election Law:
- _____ early voting
- _____ Public Education:
- _____ funding
- _____ assessment
- _____ Judicial System
- _____ Social Policy:
- _____ health care reform
- _____ library funding

To learn more about these issues before ranking, please visit
[For "Study & Action" Guide to LWVF's Public Policy Positions](#)
[For review of LWVF's legislative advocacy during 2011 Session](#)



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:

- Student Member Sponsorship per year: \$30.00
- Bulk Mail Postage per month: \$30.00
- Dues, Big Bend Environmental Forum per year: \$50.00
- P.O. Box Rental per year: \$70.00
- Required Annual Business Reports per year: \$75.00
- Hot Topics Venue Rental per month: \$93.00
- Telephone Voice Mail per year: \$120.00
- Website Operation per year: \$150.00
- VOTER Printing per month: \$180.00
- Bulk Mailing Permit per year: \$190.00
- Special Lobby Fund Donation: 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?

Peggy Ramsey, Treasurer
386-7589 or ramsey020@comcast.net



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
 (Please Print Legibly)

Name _____ Phone (home) _____
 Address _____ Phone (mobile) _____
 _____ E-mail _____

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
- 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.