



The Voter

The League of Women Voters
of the Space Coast
www.lwv-spacecoast.org



Volume 33: No. 2

October, 2012

Mission: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Constitutional Amendments on Florida's 2012 Ballot

League of Women Voters of the Space Coast is sponsoring two educational events to learn about these amendments.

When: Saturday, October 13

There is a morning session and an afternoon session. The public is invited. There is no charge to attend these events.

Where: Morning Session at 10 A.M.
Central Brevard Library
308 Forrest Avenue
Cocoa, FL 32922

Afternoon Session at 2 P.M.
Eau Gallie Public Library
1521 Pineapple Avenue
Melbourne, FL 32935

There are 11 Constitutional Amendments on Florida's 2012 ballot. These amendments, if passed become a permanent part of the Florida Constitution. The most common way for an amendment to come to the voters is for the legislature to put it on the ballot. The next most common method is the citizen initiative process. In this process, citizens collect petitions in order to get an amendment on the ballot. This year all of the amendments were placed on the ballot by the legislature. An amendment needs to pass with a 60% majority to become part of the constitution.

Voter Guides are available at Brevard County Libraries. The nonpartisan Voter Guide includes information on the two presidential candidates, U.S. Senate Candidates in Florida, Florida Constitutional Amendments, and Florida Supreme Court Merit Retention.

REMINDER

The last day to Register to Vote is Tuesday, October 9th.

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President: Barbara Whitley
321-674-6070
whlyhome@digital.net
Editor: Lucia Watson
321-779-6758
lucbil_99@yahoo.com
LWVSC: Phone # 321-254-7183
www.lwv-spacecoast.org

Underwriter of the Month



Florida Power and Light Company



President's Corner

Barbara Whitley

Hello Leaguers and Hello Autumn,

Are you as ready for cooler weather as I am?? I am so ready. It seems I go from a hot car to a cold building. I get no inbetween of comfort. Isn't it strange how little things like the temperature can make you feel so different? I guess because I am older that I pay attention to things a little more. Also my bones have feelings too. If my bones ain't happy I get grumpy....

When I get back to my office after a day in the field I find my desk full of piles of messages. Some I must immediately return. Some with "info only", or "read then call me" "action required" You get the idea. It is amazing the amount of information that flows in a normal day.

In our daily lives we are expected to intake a vast amount of information. I am sure that many of us have never thought how much information we intake. We then plan how to use this information or file this information. It has become part of our lives.

We use all types of things to keep us updated. We have different rings for our phone for different people plus fax and e-mail. There is also an answer service or answering machine connected to our telephone. Yes, we even read the newspaper on our computer.

So what is the point of this column? I am just trying to say with all the folks trying to give us information today it is important that we have a filter on what comes through our brains each day. That is how you get to the bottom of what may be real. Is it truly a problem or just another person's point of view?

So now you remember what the League says to do... No matter in life where you are or what you do, the League says listen fairly to both sides of an issue. When you do that, then, no matter what, you will have a better understanding of the issue even though the voices around you may be louder and more rabid. You will have the best grasp of the problem and a fuller understanding. The best part, you will have the respect of others in your community. You will stand TALL.

Yours in League
Barb

Diversity Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast will promote in all aspects of the League's activities, a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition and issues of the community.



If you have a smart phone you can use this QR (A QR Code is a matrix barcode readable by QR scanners, mobile phones with a camera, and smartphones) to check into the Supervisor of Elections Office to see if your Voter Registration is up to date.



Voter Service

Voter Service is the Heart of the League. Consider volunteering to fill this important chair for League of Women Voters of the Space Coast. Many thanks to Barbara Jagrowski for filling this position in the interim period.

Barbara Jagrowski and Linda Kyvik, both board members were registering voters the day of our board meeting. Nineteen members from League of Women Voters of the Space Coast had signed up to register voters after the court ruling when Florida League was allowed to register voters again. Members who had participated in Voter Registration at the time of this article included: Barbara Jagrowski, Marilyn Collins, Barbara Dutton, Linda Kyvik, Terri Myers and Joyce Calese.

Barbara Jagrowski will be speaking to a NewComers Club in Merritt Island on September 20th. She will also be moderating candidate forums for Grant-Valkaria on October 3 and October 16th.

Space Coast Tiger Bay and the Melbourne Chamber are having an event on October 2nd. League plans to have a table there to register voters and distribute Voter Guides.

LWVSC will have 15,000 Voter Guides to distribute in Brevard County. 10,000 will be sent to the libraries. 5,000 will be distributed to Chambers, City Halls, candidate and speaking forums. 1,000 of these Voter Guides will be in Spanish. They will be delivered to the Hispanic Chamber for distribution.

Help is needed for getting these Voter Guides to different locations in the community. **Please consider helping with this distribution. and distribution of "Be Ready to Vote" posters by calling Barbara Jagrowski at 321-259 – 5942.**



Children's Committee

Marguerite Orban – Chair

Article by Fern Patton, Children's Committee Member

After our committee sponsored forum on school vouchers, charter schools and McKay Scholarships, I wrote State Representative Steve Crisafulli with questions we had regarding accountability for the programs at the receiving school, especially since most students in that situation are special needs students who need special physical and occupational therapy and extra help in reading.

Representative Crisafulli contacted the Florida Board of Education, and I received a letter from **Laura Harrison, Director of Scholarship Programs and Home Education, Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice**. Here is what she wrote:

Private (non-public) schools in Florida are not regulated, controlled, approved, or accredited by the Florida Department of Education. Section 1002.42, Florida Statutes, requires private schools to complete and submit an annual survey each year. The department is then responsible for a database of information provided in the survey.

Section 1002.42(2)(h), Florida Statutes, states: "It is the intent of the Legislature not to regulate, control, approve, or accredit private educational institutions...it is not the intent of the Legislature to regulate, control, or monitor, expressly or implicitly, churches, their ministries, or religious instruction, freedoms, or rites. It is the intent of the Legislature that the annual submission of the database survey by a school shall not be used by that school to imply approval or accreditation by the Department of Education."

The owners of private schools in Florida are solely responsible for their educational programs, including student services, curriculum, and general classroom procedures. Additionally, accreditation is not required for private or public schools in Florida.

The McKay Scholarship Program allows parents of eligible student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan to choose another public school or receive funding to attend a participating private school. The Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program is for families meeting certain income requirements.

Section 1002.421, Florida Statutes, outlines certain accountability measures for private schools that participate in the Florida Tax Credit and McKay Scholarship programs. These measures include providing documentation showing that a private school has met applicable state and local health, safety, and welfare laws, codes, and rules, including fire safety and

building safety; employs or contracts with teachers who hold baccalaureate or higher degrees, have at least 3 years of teaching experience in public or private schools, or have special skills, knowledge, or expertise that qualifies them to provide instruction in subjects taught, requires each employee and contracted personnel with direct student contact, upon employment or engagement to provide services, to undergo a state and national background screening; has adopted policies establishing standards of ethical conduct for instructional personnel and school administrators; and, demonstrates fiscal soundness and accountability.

Additionally, participating private schools must be academically accountable to the parent for meeting the educational needs of the student by, at least, providing to the parent a written explanation of the students progress, and cooperating with the scholarship student whose parent chooses to participate in the statewide assessments.

Private schools that do not comply with statutory requirements are not eligible to receive scholarship funds.

Parents of students that participate in the scholarship programs may, at any time, transfer a student to another participating school and maintain their scholarship. Parents also may forfeit the scholarship, and enroll a child in a public school at any time.

The Department of Education is not able to exceed statutory authority regarding private schools. Changes in statute require action by the Florida Legislature.



Health Committee

Linda Kyvik – Chair

I am pleased to announce that six members have graciously agreed to be on the Health Committee. They are: Terri Myers, Anita Smith, Diane Hawthorne, Dolores Kane, and Barbara and Tony Dutton.

We will be **meeting on the third Monday of the month at Suntree Library, from 6-7:50 pm**. We will begin by working out what our focus will be, and that likely will be dependent on election results. If anyone else is interested **feel free to contact me at 777-0849**. **The first meeting will be held October 15.**

ABSENTEE BALLOT REMINDER

A request to receive an absentee ballot by mail must be received by the Supervisor of Elections no later than 5 p.m. on the 6th day before the election. However you can obtain in person an absentee ballot up until and including Election Day. However, it must be returned no later than 7 p.m. on Election day.



International Relations

Mary Nicolay – Chair

The INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS GROUP will meet on October 9th, from 1- 3 P.M. at the Satellite Beach Library for a discussion on CUBA. League member, Martha Bradshaw recently visited Cuba on a trip sponsored by the Florida State LWV. She has been studying the issues covered during this visit and will share her insights with the group. Please try to attend this most timely meeting.

Someone recently commented that the LWV is not interested or involved in studying International Relations. This is far from the truth as the National League has published a position paper which can be read in its entirety on the web at

<http://www.lwv.org/files/lo110->

12_InternationalRelations.pdf

Copies of this position paper are available from Mary Nicolay.

We look forward to seeing new members at the group meetings.

Mary Nicolay



Natural Resources

by

Maureen Rupe –

Disturbing News on the Fertilizer Front

With the articles that have been published lately on the concerns with the environmental damage the Indian River Lagoon is suffering, it's disappointing what Rep. Steve Crisafulli, Chairman of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee told the third annual Florida Water Forum in Orlando on September 6, 2012. Rep. Cristafulli stated his committee would bring up a number of bills that might have drastic implications on the Indian River. They include legislation restricting local government fertilizer ordinances, to promote using treated wastewater known as "reclaimed water," and rescind a prohibition that doesn't even start until 2016 on scattering pumped out septic tank waste over the ground.

Last year Senate Bill 604/House Bill 421 would have exempted any certified landscaping professionals from following local ordinances. It's been proven that nitrogen is doing a lot of damage to the Indian River Lagoon, especially during the summer rainy season. Florida's strong summer storms often rinse lawn fertilizers in to the Lagoon or our rivers and lakes.

There has been work since earlier this year to try to restrict the amount and type of fertilizer that could be used in Brevard County, especially in the summer. The state's law has only minimal restrictions on nitrogen. If an exemption is passed, not only would the Indian River Lagoon suffer, but many of our lakes and rivers throughout the state. The two other laws, one starting in 2016 that prevents scattering septic tank waste over the land, and promoting the use of reclaimed water (treated wastewater) falls into the same category, as both treated septic tank waste and reclaimed water have high level of nitrogen, and these are both easily rinsed into our rivers, lakes and our lagoons.

I read a paper from the June, 2008 edition of the Sea Grant Law and Policy Journal, titled "The Spread of Fertilizer Ordinances in Florida," by Richard Hartman, Frank Alcock, and Chris Pettit. The article explained why fertilizer ordinances are needed and how various fertilizer ordinances have been implemented throughout the years. The article explained that more than 60 percent of Florida's coastal rivers and bays are degraded by nutrient runoff, and this runoff has caused harmful algal blooms and loss of sea grass, kelp beds and Florida's coral reefs that are critically important for our fish nursery grounds. The article went on to say that local ordinances aren't the way it should be implemented because most water basins cross multiple cities and counties. Unfortunately, local ordinances have become so very important while the state has put in minimum protections that might be OK for some counties, but is not sufficiently protecting large bodies like the Indian River Lagoon.

Brevard County cannot afford to have the Indian River Lagoon die. The Indian River Lagoon's economic value in 2007 was \$3.7 billion. This isn't even considering property values of our numerous riverside properties value. If a property has a sick and smelly cesspool next to it, no one will want to live there and their values will plummet. There is already a substantial and irreversible loss of the world's ecosystems, and two thirds of these systems across the world are declining. Who else can we blame if we are not willing to protect the Indian River Lagoon right in our own back yard.

References:

<http://www.thefloridacurrent.com/article.cfm?id=29244675>

January 2012 Happenings, "Fertilizer Ordinance," by Maureen Rupe

<http://nsglc.olemiss.edu/SGLPJ/Vol1No1/5Hartman.pdf>



Additional information on

www.lwv-spacecoast.org

Our website has information on current activities for League of Women Voters of the SpaceCoast but you will also find informative links on the right hand side of the main page. You can also find the 11 proposed amendments to the Florida constitution and a copy of the Voter Guide that has been distributed throughout the community.



Information on Early Voting and Provisional Ballots in Brevard County

Information from www.votebrevard.com

The early voting period is from the 10th day before through the third day before each election. **Early voting is not available on Election Day or the day before.**

Early Voting Dates for the 2012 General Election in Brevard County are: Saturday, October 27, 2012 to Saturday, November 3, 2012.

Early Voting Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Weekend: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Early voting takes place at the following locations:

Titusville: Government Complex-North, 400 South Street, 1st Floor

Merritt Island: Central Brevard Service Complex, 2575 N. Courtenay Parkway

Viera: Government Center, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Bldg. C

Melbourne: South Brevard Service Complex, 1515 Sarno Road

Palm Bay: South Mainland Service Center, 450 Cogan Drive SE

Franklin T. DeGroodt Public Library, 6475 Minton Rd SE, Palm Bay

Melbourne Public Library, 540 E. Fee Avenue, Melbourne

Melbourne Beach Public Library, 324 Ocean Ave., Melbourne Beach

Identification requirements for early voting are the same as they are for voting at the polls. The following forms of identification are considered valid if they contain the voter's name and photograph and if they have not expired: Florida driver's license, Florida identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, United States passport, Debit or credit card, Military identification, Student identification, Retirement center identification, Neighborhood association identification, Public assistance identification.

If the identification does not contain the voter's signature, an additional identification that provides the voter's signature is required.

Early voting will utilize optical scan ballots except for voters with disabilities, who will be able to vote using a touch screen machine.

Provisional Ballots

Provisional ballots are issued to voters in five situations:

When a voter claims to be properly registered in the county and eligible to vote at the precinct or early voting site in the election, but the voter's eligibility cannot be determined (Section 101.048, Florida Statutes).

When an elector has been mailed an absentee ballot but desires to vote in person and he or she does not bring the ballot to the polling place or early voting location, and it cannot be determined whether the supervisor has received the elector's absentee ballot (Section 101.69, Florida Statutes).

When an elector fails to furnish the required identification (Section 101.043, Florida Statutes).

When the polling time is extended by court or other order; these provisional ballots are segregated from all other provisional ballots (Section 101.049, Florida Statutes).

When an elector from *outside* Brevard County attempts to change his or her legal residence at the polling place; this elector may not vote a regular ballot; however, such elector is entitled to vote a provisional ballot (Section 101.045, Florida Statutes).

Provisional ballots **are not** issued to a voter who is found to be in the incorrect polling place. These voters are directed to their correct polling place to vote.

A provisional ballot is voted the same as a regular ballot; however, after the voter marks his or her selections, the ballot is sealed in a certificate envelope instead of being fed into the tabulating machine. The affirmation printed on the certificate envelope requires the voter to give his or her name, date of birth, registered party affiliation, previous name (if changed), current residence and mailing addresses, Florida driver's license/state ID number/last four digits of social security number, phone number (optional) and signature. There is also space on the envelope for the voter to add any additional information that might be helpful in determining his or her eligibility. A voter may also present written evidence of eligibility to the Supervisor of Elections by 5 PM on the second day after the election, although voters who are voting by provisional ballot due to lack of identification do not need to provide evidence of their identity, as this will be confirmed by comparing the signature on their certificate envelope with the signature in their registration record. After the voter fills out the certificate and seals the envelope, (*continued on Page 7*)

(continued from Page 6) it is kept in a special container designated for provisional ballots.

After the period has passed for voters to provide supporting documentation, the provisional ballot certificates are individually examined to determine the voter's eligibility. The county canvassing board reviews voter eligibility status and determines whether the provisional ballot should be counted. The vote totals from the ballots that are determined to be eligible to be counted are then obtained and added to the totals from election night. Ballots that are determined to be ineligible to be counted remain sealed in their certificate envelopes, and the envelopes are marked "rejected."

Provisional ballot voters are given a stub which contains a serial number that corresponds to their provisional ballot envelope. This stub contains information on how to access the Supervisor of Elections Office free access system, which allows the voter to determine whether or not their provisional ballot was counted.

Photos at League Events



Jan Bradshaw



Marilynn Collins and Ruth Schechter



Linda Kyvik



Carol Riley



Karen Raboin and Yvonne Hubbard



Ayn Samuelson

~October Calendar - Members welcome at all meetings~

Wednesday, October 3rd - Board Meeting at Suntree Library at 10:15 A.M.

Monday, October 8th - Children's Committee at Suntree Library at 1:30 P.M.

Tuesday, October 9th - International Relations Meeting at Satellite Beach Library 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. Subject is Cuba with Martha Bradshaw.

Saturday, October 13th - Constitutional Amendments on Florida's 2012 Ballot

Morning Session at 10 A.M. - Central Brevard Public Library in Cocoa

Afternoon Session at 2 P.M. - Eau Gallie Public Library in Melbourne

Monday, October 15th - A Sunshine Law Seminar at Florida Today, One Gannett Plaza, Melbourne, FL 32940

Monday, October 15th - Health Committee at Suntree Library - 6 P.M. to 7:50 P.M.

Sunday, October 21st - Progressive Fest Communities in Action from 11A.M. -5 P.M., at the Eau Gallie Civic Center, 1551 Highland Ave, Melbourne 32935.

Voter: Monthly publication (except June, July, August)

Issue Date: October 2012

League of Women Voters of the Space Coast

P.O. Box 360823

Melbourne, FL 32936-0823

www.lwv-spacecoast.org