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March 2012- Volume 37, Issue 464



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Month at a Glance

3/1 at 9:45 am
Climate Change
Committee Callistoga's
Airport Road

Various dates in March
check
**Know Your County
Government**

3/13 at 2 pm
Book Club
Calistoga's, Airport Road

3/14 at 8 am
Social Policy Committee
Patric's
1485 Pine Ridge Road
Mission West Plaza

3/19 at 9:30 am
Justice Committee
Community Room
[North Collier Government
Center](#)

3/23 at noon
Lunch with Leaders

March 6, 2012

LIVELY LEAGUE - Searching Public Records



Celebrate Sunshine Week, March 11-17, with Dwight E. Brock, Clerk of the Circuit Court, who will tell us how to access public records through his website and other online sources.

Reservations: not essential, but appreciated, [Click here.](#)

GENERAL MEETING

**Assessing Local Environmental Policies:
A Panel Discussion**



Michael R. Bauer,
Natural Research Manager
for the City of Naples, and



Cloe Waterfield,
environmental scientist,
will discuss local environmental
challenges, related legislative
initiatives, and what you can do.

When: **Lively League** - 10:00 am
Registration for lunch - 11:45 am
Lunch promptly at noon
Program - 12:30 pm
General Meeting - 1:30 pm

Where: COUNTRY CLUB OF NAPLES

Jeff Lytle
Naples Daily News
1100 Immokalee Road
Community Room

3/28 at 9:15 for 9:30 start
LWVCC Board Meeting
US Trust on Seagate

Cost: LWVCC Members: \$20.00; Non-members: \$25.00

Reservations: for lunch: [Click here](#) or call (239) 263-4656

Menu selections: Fruit Plate with tuna salad or chicken salad OR Fruit Plate with cottage cheese

Please make your check payable to: LWVCC Education Fund
NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE TAKEN OR CANCELLATIONS ACCEPTED AFTER 4:00 PM FRIDAY, MARCH 2

Future Speakers at General Meetings

These upcoming programs are superb--don't miss a single one! Register now.

April 3 at noon: *Are Corporations People?* Nick Penniman, president of [United Republic](#) and well-known writer, will tell us how we can reverse the influence of corporate money and super PACs on political campaigns.

Reserve now.

*Watch Nick on the [Ratigan Show](#).

May 1 at 10:00 am: Annual Meeting and Election

May 1 at noon: Report on Azerbaijan by Donna Suddeth. Donna traveled to Azerbaijan as a delegate of the Naples Council on World Affairs. She will share what she learned about the country, culture, and people, and insights on how politics in the United States can affect other nations.

Reserve now.

President's Message

Lydia Galton



Women's History Month. March is Women's History Month, a time to celebrate the strides women have made during the 20th and 21st centuries. League members of both sexes know that women not only belong in the **House**, but in the **Senate** and the **White House** as well. One of our daughters or granddaughters will inhabit the White House before the end of the 21st century and she will not be there to decorate the rooms! Meanwhile we must faithfully guard the rights we have and refuse to retreat an inch. Women must retain control of their minds and their bodies, and not permit legislators, with their own political agendas, to dictate to them about their choices.

Collier 211

Congratulations to the Community Foundation and its partners on the launch of [Collier 211](#), an Information & Referral Service available by dialing 2-1-1. You can also call 239-263-4211. The backbone of Collier 211 consists of multi-lingual phone operators, who also serve as trained crisis counselors. They connect callers in need of services 24 hours/day, 365 days/year, to available community programs. All calls are

confidential.

Honored Members

Vi Steffan and Becky Newell will be honored at the AAUW Women of Achievement Benefit and Luncheon on Thursday, March 8, 2012, at the Grey Oaks Country Club. Reservations have closed.

Susan Calkins will receive a Women of Initiative Award sponsored by the Women's Philanthropic Network of the Community Foundation of Collier County at a luncheon on April 10 at 11:30 am at the Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club. Please contact Susan Utz at 649-5000 to purchase tickets.

Privatization Study

After careful consideration it was determined that the Privatization Study was so complex and the time to complete it so short that it was better to abandon our efforts. Thanks to Gina Downs for offering to spearhead the study.



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Know Your County Government

by Kathy Ryan

Want to learn more about **YOUR** county government first hand? Come be a chaperone on one or more evenings or days in March. KNOW YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT is a collaborative program between LWVCC, the Collier UF/IFAS Extension 4-H, and the Social Studies Department of the Collier County Schools. It provides the opportunity for 35 students who apply and are accepted to participate in 20+ hours of exposure to county government. They learn the purpose of county government, how it operates, and what career opportunities exist in government. They are exposed to most county government departments and attend a Board of County Commissioners meeting.

The program will take place on Thursday 3/8 4-7 pm; Tuesday 3/13 4-7 pm; Thursday 3/15 8 am-3 pm; Tuesday 3/20 4-7 pm; Thursday 3/22 4-8 pm; and Tuesday 3/27 8:30 am-2:30 pm.

Contact Kathy Ryan at 593-7818 if you are interested and available to come to one or more of these sessions.

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Justice Committee

Bernice Schmelz, Chair



A hot topic in the Florida Legislature for at least two years -Privatization of South Florida Prisons - is the subject of the March 19 Justice Committee meeting. To educate us on the issue, both



the pros and the cons, and the legislative battles will be the League's own Gina Downs. Gina has been immersed in privatization issues since 2007. She successfully fought off the privatization of Alligator Alley and brought national attention to the issue. Gina is the invited Florida participant in Ford Foundation sponsored national public policy conferences which focus on privatization.

Join us on March 19, 2012, at 9:30 am in the Community Room of the North Collier Government Center on Orange Blossom Drive for what is sure to be an interesting and educational presentation. The presentation will be followed by a business meeting. We invite everyone interested in the topic to join us, regardless of whether you have been a regular member of the Justice Committee. Please RSVP by Thursday, March 15 to insure that adequate materials are available.

Upcoming Meetings

April 16, 9:30 am at the North Collier Government Center, Girls in Conflict with the Law, Linda Hyde, Committee Chair, and committee members.

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Government Committee

Joyce Fletcher, Chair



Redistricting remains in the news. The Florida legislature approved their maps. The state Senate and House maps have been sent to the Attorney General who must petition the Florida Supreme Court within 15 days. By the Florida Constitution, the Court must approve the proposed redistricting plan. If they do not, the Legislature may submit another plan and if it is not approved, the Court is authorized to create and enact a reapportionment plan, which is legal and binding.

The congressional redistricting was approved and sent to Gov. Scott for signature, per the Constitution. The Democratic party has filed a lawsuit, as has a coalition including the LWVF, Common Cause Florida and La Raza and 4 individual plaintiffs are also filing suit.

Capital Reports discussions have continued. Any member is invited to join the discussion. Come with information on bills you have interest in. We are following the budget, redistricting, medical and property insurance, prison privatization, health care coverage - Medicaid. We also watch for requests for action from the LWVF to contact our legislators. Our next meeting will be announced when it is determined.

Lunch with Leaders for March will be on March 23 with Jeff Lytle, Editorial Page Editor of the Naples Daily News and host of NDN's Newsmakers. We will lunch in the Naples Daily News Community Room at 1100 Immokalee Road. Space is limited to twenty participants so please reserve with me as soon as you can. Jeff is excited to meet with us.

Please also continue to observe meetings of the Board of County Commissioners on

the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays on Channel 97 and the City Council on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays on Channel 98.

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Social Policy Committee

Ann Campbell, Chair



Our next meeting will be a breakfast on Wednesday, March 14 from 8-9 am at a Patric's, 1485 Pine Ridge Road, in the Mission West Plaza across from Noodle's. Our guest is Doreen Cassarino, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner. In addition to her busy schedule as part of a medical practice, Doreen is an advocate for wider recognition of the expanded roles that nurses have today. I invited Doreen to have a conversation with our group, updating us on the current legislative issues being pursued by ARNPs in Florida and how Nurse Practitioners are helping to fill the widening primary care gap.

All League members are invited, and guests are always welcome. Please contact Ann Campbell at acamp1082@aol.com or 263-1755 to reserve a place and to get more information about our meeting location for March 14.

Last month ...

We met with Dr. Todd Vedder, Chair of Pediatrics at NCH and Chairman of the Board for the Safe and Healthy Kids Coalition of Collier County along with the Coalition's Executive Director, Paula Di Grigoli. There are 40 agencies involved in the Coalition which has 501(c)3 status and is currently working under the leadership of the NCH Foundation but includes Physicians Regional Hospitals, Fire Chiefs, EMS, Public Health and more. Dr. Vedder described his motivation to "think outside the box" when confronted with the incidence of drowning deaths and suffocation deaths among small children in this community. Their work is data-driven so the third area of concern is the high incidence of childhood obesity. In view of Dr. Vedder's and Ms. DiGrigoli's enthusiasm and their dynamic and practical programs, we feel certain that the statistics will be modified in short order.

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Climate Change Committee

Linda Denning, Chair



The Climate Change Committee meets the first Thursday of each month. Our March 1, 2012 meeting will be held from 9:45 - 11:15 am in the meeting room at Calistoga Restaurant, on Airport Road North, just south of Vanderbilt. We will review state legislative initiatives related to energy. Meetings are open to all members and their friends who are interested in policies that affect climate change. Contact Linda Denning at lvdenning@naples.net for more information.

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Spotlight on...Vi Steffan

by Denise Rochford



Vi Steffan can certainly be proud of being named a "Woman of Distinction" by the American Association of University Women. But she has many other extraordinary achievements she can point to such as being the Director of Operations in the Covert Action Department of the CIA where she "ran" a KGB agent who defected to the U.S. Her career began in the Department of Justice and advanced to Attorney General Ramsey's office, before she moved on to the CIA.

Since moving to Naples in 1995, Vi has served as President of AAUW (2008-2010) and is deeply involved in Greater Naples Leadership and Laces of Love as well as the League. These organizations necessitate lots of meetings, which she notes with a grin, can be a problem. "I don't know too many women with several outside activities who can attend all the meetings comfortably," she observed.

"The empowerment of women and girls is one of the issues that is most special to me." She acknowledges that equity for women and the passage of the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act have been among her favorite issues. *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is a book that she recommends reading two or three times in order to better understand the nuance of difficulties women experience in other countries.

With regard to the League, Vi says "I would like to see the League identify one or two specific areas of concern and make those issues the target of awareness programs to bring to the forefront of community attention."

Look for Vi at one of our luncheons - she has many stories to tell.

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Membership Committee

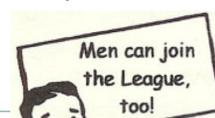
Becky Newell, Chair



This month, we are pleased to welcome new Suffragist level members **Shelley Perry** and **Janet Eustis**.

Thank you to those who attended our February 10 new member coffee at League President Lydia Galton's home. We had a great turnout among our new members, and many of our board members and committee chairs were available to share information and answer questions. I'm happy to have had the opportunity to talk with the new members who attended, and I'm looking forward to getting to know them better as we all work together.

I would also like to thank past membership chair Sandy Parker for all of her help during my ongoing transition into the duties of membership chair. Sandy has a wealth of knowledge and insight about the League, and she's always incredibly helpful.



I encourage every member of our League to invite others to attend our upcoming meetings and to join the League. To request more information, email me at membership@lwvcolliercounty.org or call me at (239) 290-2260.



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Book Club

Charlotte Nycklemoe, Chair



Do you remember the first time you voted? What was special about it? Why did you vote? Join us for our next book club meeting as we discuss *Founding Sisters and the 19th Amendment* by Eleanor Clift. *Founding Sisters* contains 200 pages of historical information pertinent to us as members of the League. Learn how the courage, bravery, and determination of these women enabled our free entry to the ballot booth and remember them as you mark your choice in 2012. Do you realize that in less than a decade we will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of women's right/privilege to vote? Let's get ready to celebrate! I promise you a lively discussion!

The Book Club meeting will be at Calistoga on Airport Pulling on Tuesday, March 13 at 2 pm.

If you are interested in joining the Book Club, call me (239) 455-2261 or email me in advance at drchargar@yahoo.com.

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News from the National League

Ann Campbell

In recent weeks the National League:

* Applauded President Obama's move to deny the Keystone XL Pipeline. LWVUS President, Elisabeth MacNamara, called the step "a decision that puts the health and safety of Americans ahead of blind reliance on fossil fuels. The route of the Keystone XL Pipeline was a threat to the drinking water of millions of Americans. The pipeline was just too big a risk to allow it to go forward".

* Reported that the League has surpassed its goal of 25,000 signatures on the petition to ask the White House to appoint new members to the Federal Elections Commission and help stem the tide of big money in campaigns. Leagues on the front lines in places like Florida, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Virginia are busy protecting voters. In Maine, Democrats and Republicans joined together to defeat legislative language that would have required photo ID at the polls.

* Announced that registration for the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, "Rio+20", is open and will close on May 20. The conference, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 20-22, 2012, will be preceded by the third Preparatory

Committee meeting of the Conference from June 13-15. All attendees must be registered by the League's UN Observer, Rosalee Keech.

* Joined the Texas League in speaking out following the Supreme Court ruling regarding the state's controversial redistricting plans. The decision leaves the fate of the Texas redistricting plans and primary election schedule uncertain, and the San Antonio court has been ordered to develop another set of redistricting plans. The League has long advocated for a more fair and neutral redistricting system in the state. Meanwhile, the Pennsylvania League and a group of citizen plaintiffs are celebrating a historic victory as the state Supreme Court has struck down the state's overly partisan redistricting plans.

For more information on these and other National League projects, [click here](#).

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News from the State League

Vi Steffan

Two of us represented LWVCC at the Legislative Summit in Tallahassee: Dr. Kathy Ryan and I were able to meet directly with Senator Garrett Richter and Representative Matt Hudson. Representative Kathleen Passidomo had other obligations during the Summit. When meeting with the two legislators, we presented each law maker with one-page issue sheets outlining those bills the League is particularly tracking:

- **Elections Bill** (SB 1596, HB 1461) regarding the resolution of a conflict in the state election law involving the use of voter's identification at the polls;
- **Energy** (SB 2094, HB 7117) which deals with energy conservation and renewable energy. The Collier County representatives urged both legislators to support an expansion of bills in the future by setting renewable energy targets, which are lacking in the current bills;
- **Ethics** (SB 552, HB 359) which prohibits legislators from voting upon, participating in or attempting to influence the passage of any legislation that would result in their enjoying any special private gain for themselves or their relatives;
- **Legislative Immunity** (HB 7213, no Senate companion bill), which created an "absolute privilege" for legislators, former legislators and legislative staff in certain legal actions or proceedings. This bill was abruptly dropped after Democratic legislators spoke out against it, and editorials and media pieces appeared against it.
- **Public Meetings** (SB 206, HB 355) which addressed the issue of members of the public having a reasonable opportunity to be heard before a board or commission. We urged the legislators to include specific guidelines for rules or policies for consistency purposes.

We learned of new bills that will negatively impact **women's health**-- specifically, Senate bill 290, an omnibus anti-abortion measure, which imposes a 24-hour waiting period before a woman can have an abortion, restricts ownership of abortion clinics to doctors who have specialized in abortion procedures during their residency, and requires doctors who perform abortions to take an annual ethics class. It will next be heard in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. The House bill (HB 277) requires women to be told that fetuses can experience "fetal pain" during an abortion after 20 weeks in the womb (note: scientists are divided on whether this is true). The House bill will be heard by the full House next week. The League is urging members to contact the committee members and ask them to vote "NO" on SB 290.

As you may know, the League and others have filed lawsuits challenging the redistricting maps drawn by the legislature and oral arguments have been scheduled to be heard by the Florida Supreme Court.

Finally, we heard various legislators from both houses and of both parties describe what they do and what their own priorities are for the legislature. Ben Wilcox, the LWVF Governmental Consultant, was available for comments and advice on these and other issues. Overall, it was an interesting and educational experience that more of our membership should experience. Kathy Ryan and I strongly urge you to consider attending next year's Legislative Summit.

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2012 General Meeting Schedule

Save the dates!

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

April 3

May 1

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About Us

The League of Women Voters of Collier County, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our goal is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

Visit our website at www.lwvcolliercounty.org for our current list of officers, directors and off-board members, our Program, Diversity Policy, Nonpartisan Policy, By-laws, Minutes, and more.

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League of Women Voters of Collier County | P.O. Box 9883 | Naples | FL | 34101

Invite a friend to

Join the League of Women Voters of Collier County!

How would you like your contact information to appear in our records?

- _____ Individual membership - \$65.00
- _____ Family membership (two individuals at same address) - \$97.50
- _____ Student membership - \$32.50
- _____ Associate membership (for persons under 18 years of age, persons who are non-citizens, and members of other Leagues who are seasonal attendees of the LWVCC) - \$32.50



Please let us know your area(s) of interest so we can keep you informed about upcoming events:

- _____ Justice
- _____ Climate Change
- _____ Government
- _____ Social Policy
- _____ Voter Services
- _____ Hospitality
- _____ Membership
- _____ Publicity

*Please mail this form with your check to:
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLLIER COUNTY, P.O. Box 9883, Naples, FL 34101*

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone Number _____
Email Address _____



League of Women Voters of Collier County
P.O. Box 9883
Naples, FL 34101

*Enclosed is your
March 2012 VOTER*

March 6th Lively League and
General Meeting
Country Club of Naples
(details Inside)