

The Voter

Issue: 2016-04

April 2016

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APRIL 2016 LWVCC LUNCHEON & GENERAL MEETING

Public Education in Florida: What Collier County Voters Should Know presented by Sandy Parker

Please join us in welcoming Sandy, a former corporate finance executive, past president of the League of Women Voters of Collier County and its current Government Committee chair. She is passionate about civic engagement and has lectured about Florida Government since 2011.

Two of the current Collier County School Board members were elected in August 2014 with the votes of less than 10 percent of registered voters. How was that possible? Low voter participation. Just 18 percent of registered voters cast a ballot in the School Board races.

Yet decisions made by the School Board affect the instructional materials used in the classroom, the types of post-secondary opportunities for which students are prepared, the amount of taxes we pay, how the school district's \$1 billion budget is spent, and ultimately the vitality, reputation and prosperity of our entire community.

In August - just four months from now - Collier voters will again have the opportunity to elect two School Board members. This presentation will help you be a more informed voter in those elections.

Where: Hilton Naples Hotel, 5111 Tamiami Trail North

When: Monday, April, 11 2016

Registration: 11:45 am, with lunch promptly at noon

Program: 12:30 pm

General Meeting: 1:30 - 2:15 pm

Cost for lunch: \$25.00 per person, reservation required

Program only: beginning at 12:30 pm. No charge or reservation needed.

Please note: No cash will be accepted at the door.

To make lunch reservations, please [click here](#) or call 239-263-4656 and leave a message by Thursday, April 7, before noon.

If you have any questions about the event, contact [Tina Palmese](#).

Audiovisual and other expenses associated with our 2015-16 General Meetings are underwritten by a generous donation from

The Walker Group at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management

APRIL AT A GLANCE

Government Committee

Thursday,
April 4
10:30 am to
noon
Seasons at
Naples Cay
81 Seagate Dr

Education Committee

Tuesday
April 5, 10:30
am
North Collier
Government
Center
2235 Orange
Blossom Dr.

Annual Meeting

Monday, April
11
10:30 am
Hilton Naples
5111 Tamiami
Trail N.
Sabal Room

Luncheon and General Meeting

Monday, April
11
11:45 am
Hilton Naples
5111 Tamiami
Trail N.

Social Policy Committee

Wednesday
April 13 noon
Wilderness
Country Club
101 Clubhouse
Dr

Annual Meeting to be Held April 11

The League of Women Voters of Collier County will hold its Annual Meeting on Monday, April 11, 2016, at the Hilton Hotel in the Sabel Palm Room. The business portion, for members only, will begin at 10:30 am. Be sure to mark your calendars. Detailed information regarding the Annual Meeting will be sent to all LWVCC members by April 6.



President, Charlotte Nycklemoe

It seems as though it was only yesterday that I had knots in my stomach preparing for my first luncheon as president. Then I blinked! Suddenly the knots are back again as I find myself preparing for my first annual meeting. I wonder if time doesn't fly by a little more quickly when trying to meet monthly deadlines! Here we are with the last issue of The Voter for the year.

What a truly, wonderful learning experience it has been for me! Whether you are a seasonal or year-round resident the work of the League of Women Voters continues on! This summer we will have: candidate forums in which to participate, local studies to think about, communications and publications to release, meetings to attend and observe, strategic plans to refine and data to collect. The great thing about the digital age is that each one of our members can contribute her input through cyberspace from anywhere in the country.

I want to thank all of you for guiding me through my first year as president. A very special thank you to my board members, committee chairs and committee members for your amazing commitment and assistance throughout this past season. You were always there for me when I needed a task performed or advice. It really does take a village, doesn't it! I wish you all a healthy and safe summer!

I encourage you to review the [Impact on Issues 2014-2016](#) booklet. This booklet is designed to help League leaders use LWVUS public policy.

Feel free to contact me with any questions, [Charlotte Nycklemoe](#). Check out our website at: www.lwvcolliercounty.org and don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Nominating Committee Report

Becky Newell, Governance Chair

Slate of Officers for 2016-18

The following slate of officers is presented to the membership, each to serve a two year term beginning in April 2016 and ending in April 2018:

2nd Vice President:	Vi Steffan
Treasurer:	Ray Kalich
Directors:	Michelle Arnold Patti Forkan Paul Kardon

Continuing Officers and Directors

The following officers and directors will continue for the next year, serving the second year of the terms for which they were elected in April 2015. Their terms expire in April 2017:

President:	Charlotte Nycklemoe
1st Vice President:	Ann Campbell
Secretary:	Robin Larkin
Directors:	John Levy, Robin Birnhak, Joyce Fletcher
Past President:	Becky Newell

**Environmental
Affairs
Committee**
Thursday, April
14
9:30 to 11:00
am
Seasons at
Naples Cay
81 Seagate Dr

**Lunch with
Leaders**
Friday, April
15
noon to 1:30
pm
Collier County
Government
Center Building
H
Room 202
3339 Tamiami
Trail 3E

**Justice
Committee**
Monday April
18
10:30 am
Clive Daniel
Home
Community
Room
2777
Tamiami Tr N

**League
101** Tuesday
April, 26
North Collier
Government
Center
2335 Orange
Blossom
Drive

Exiting Officers and Directors

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the following officers and board members, who are completing their terms and are not returning to the board:

Arlene Shapiro
Susan Calkins
Crystal Kinzel
Shelley Perry

I would like to thank Paul Kardon, Susan Calkins, Vi Steffan, and Jan Eustis for their service as members of this year's nominating committee.

Kudos

League of Women Voters, Collier County, is pleased to announce that Becky Newell was named one of the "25 over 50" honorees by the Naples Daily News and that Vi Steffan is among the ten women to be honored as the 2016 Women of Initiative by the Women's Foundation of the Community Foundation of Collier County. Congratulations to Becky and Vi, both of whom have dedicated their time and considerable talent to making Naples a better community.

League 101

Everything You Wanted to Know About the League But Were Afraid to Ask

Are you a new member interested in learning more about the League? Have you been a member for a while and want a refresher? Then League 101 is for you!

In this informative session, past League presidents Robin Larkin and Ann Campbell will cover:

How the League operates at the local, state and national levels,
How we decide what issues we'll focus on from year to year,
How the League's positions on political issues are decided - and where to learn more about them,

Our voter service activities and our role in the upcoming elections, and more!

This is a great opportunity to meet fellow League members, learn some League basics and ask any questions you may have.

When: Tuesday, April 26, 9:30 to 11:30 am

Where: North Collier Government Center
2335 Orange Blossom Drive

RSVP: [Robin Larkin](#) to register. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Lunch with Leaders

Please join us for lunch with Stephanie Vick, M.S., B.S.N., RN, Administrator of the Collier County Health Department, located in the Collier County Government Center. To gain a glimpse of the work done at the department [click here](#). Bring your questions and your brown bag lunch for what is sure to be an informative conversation.

First come, first served for this members only event! Space is limited, so reserve now!

When: Friday, April 15, noon to 1:30 pm

Where: Collier County Government Center, Building H, Room 202
3339 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112, 239-252-8200

RSVP: [Ann Campbell](#) or phone 239-263-1755



Education Committee Mary Lou Boll, Chair

At the March membership meeting our speaker, Susan Block, really provided perspective on the challenges and the benefits inherent in early childhood education. The US, thought by many to be the most highly developed nation in the world, has no system for early childhood education. Instead we are left with a patchwork of programs; some are high quality and some are not. In addition, a large percentage of children who have the most need are unable to gain access to these programs.

Since the return on investment for school readiness programs includes outcomes such as better high school graduation rates, the avoidance of incarceration, an educated involved citizenry and economic prosperity; the Education Committee is doubly committed to sponsoring a local study on early childhood education next year.

Jennifer Kincaid, the Executive Director of Elementary Programs for the Collier County Schools will be our guest speaker at the next meeting. Please join us for her briefing on the Early Childhood Education portion of the school district's strategic plan. Following her presentation we will discuss plans for our local study.

When: Tuesday, April 5, 10:30 am

Where: Community Room of the North Collier Government Center
2235 Orange Blossom Drive

RSVP: [Mary Lou Boll](#)



Environmental Affairs Committee

Susan Calkins, Chair

Climate change has long been a major focus of education and advocacy for the League of Women Voters of the United States. The issues which have engaged our Environmental Affairs Committee this year: support for renewable energy such as solar power, opposition to fracking and related methods of extreme extraction, and calling on our county to address sea level rise, will continue to be a focus for us next year. In addition to the aforementioned issues we will follow development plans in Collier County and monitor the quality and availability of our water supply.

Advocacy has been at the forefront of our committee work. Florida legislators reportedly received more calls and e-mails, many from our League members, regarding the fracking issue than on any other issue this session. We hope legislators listened and local bans on fracking will remain. Collier County has *no ban on fracking*, which means that methods of extreme extraction can still occur here. Like many environmental issues, this is an on-going concern and one for which we will continue to advocate.

Water quality issues and possible sea rise, resulting in flooding, may pose a threat to the safety of Collier citizens. At our April 14 meeting we will review our efforts to get Collier County to address these issues. Yes, it is true, based on first hand experience, that state employees of Florida Department of Environmental Protection have been ordered to be mum on this topic!

Please join us for the Environmental Affairs Committee meeting and don't forget that you can keep up with a variety of environmental issues online; sign up for [Eco-Voice](#) and [Florida Conservation Coalition](#).

When: Thursday, April 14, 9:30 - 11 am

Where: Seasons at Naples Cay
81 Seagate Drive

RSVP: [Susan Calkins](#)



Government Committee

Sandy Parker, Chair

This month the Government Committee turns its attention to Collier County government. Kate Albers, the County's Public Information Coordinator, will give us an overview of the County Manager's operation, which is responsible for a budget of almost \$1 billion and a staff of almost 1700 full-time employees. We will also learn what issues are likely to come before the Board of County Commissioners in the coming months.

When: Monday, April 4 from 10:30 am - noon

Where: The Seasons at Naples Cay
81 Seagate Drive

RSVP: [Sandy Parker](#)

Membership Survey Results

Charlotte Nycklemoe, President

An electronic membership survey was sent out January 28, and again February 5. The results are:

Why did I join League? (48 responses)

To learn about important issues relative to the Environment: 23 - 48%
To learn about important political and governmental issues: 39 - 81%
To help make a positive impact on my Community: 25 - 52%
To meet other people: 15 - 31%

I would like to participate in the following League activities. (42 responses)

Studies: 21 - 50%
Committee Work : 32 - 76%
Candidate Forums: 2 - .05%

Meeting Preferences. (47 responses)

Weekdays: 42 - 89%
Saturday or evening: 9 - 19%

Thank you for responding. Collecting data is an important factor in helping determine the needs of our members. Please look for more email surveys to help us meet your needs.



Membership Committee

Jan Eustis, Chair

A warm welcome to new members: Sue Scheessele, suffragist individual, Angel Radner, suffragist individual and Jennifer Chdwick, Susan B Anthony.

We are about to initiate a new program to welcome new members and guide them in becoming more involved. Each new member will have a designated partner, an experienced LWVCC member. The partner will help make the new member's first few meetings more comfortable and assist in educating new members on League projects and committees. If you are interested in becoming a partner or are a relatively new member and would like to have a partner designated, please contact me!

Share the League with a friend! The best way to expand our membership is to bring a friend to our next General Meeting.

Feel free to contact me at [Jan Eustis](#) or 239-872-5709.



Social Policy Committee

Ann Campbell, Chair

A Discussion About Senior Issues

On Wednesday, April 13, we will get together with Mark Hahn, LCSW, to talk about some of the issues confronting seniors in this community. As a Medicare Social Worker, Mark is on the front lines and sees the problems of housing, nutrition, socialization, and more in his daily work. Join us and become more informed.

We will have a light lunch at a cost of \$11.00. Please reserve your place. All LWVCC members are invited and guests are welcome.

When: Wednesday, April 13, at noon

Where: Wilderness Country Club

RSVP: [Ann Campbell](#) by Monday, April, 11.



Voter Services

Joyce Fletcher, Chair

Attention All Florida Voters

Make plans for the August 30 elections before you go North. These state and local elections are critical to your Florida life-style. Request your mail-in ballot. Tell everyone you know who leaves for the summer to do the same and to monitor the LWVCC website this summer for important profile information about candidates.

A big thank you to all the poll workers from the March 15 Presidential Preference Primary and Naples municipal elections: Becky Newell, clerk; Kathy Ryan, EVID specialist; Rosemarie Woodbridge, ballot specialist; Brian Kelly, poll deputy; and Phyllis Alden, Joyce Laeser, Charlotte Nycklemoe, Inspectors. If you are interested in becoming a poll worker, please contact me.

Plan to attend these candidate forums at Hodges University on April 7.
Candidates for Florida House Districts 80 and 106 are from 4-5:30.
Candidates for Florida Senate District 28 are from 6-7:30.

No April meeting scheduled

News from the State League

Charlotte Nycklemoe

Dear League of Women Voters,

I had the pleasure to speak at your 2015 convention in Delray Beach. A key focus of the convention was global warming and what the League of Women Voters of Florida can do to stop it. Much of this discussion focused on fracking. While shale - or so-called *natural* - gas is touted as a cleaner fuel than oil or coal, fracking for shale gas has been found to be a major global warming polluter.

Florida's legislature spent time this spring debating a bill to further regulate fracking. Indeed, environmental regulations for fracking sound like a good idea, but what do they actually do? In short, they allow fracking.

When we *regulate* an activity - whether it be fracking or otherwise - it means we're allowing it, in fact legalizing it. Regulations may put certain conditions on an activity - such as setbacks or noise controls - but as communities across the country are learning, even when we better regulate shale gas drilling, we're still getting fracked.

How can this be? Because our environmental laws regulate the use of nature.

Thus, under the federal Clean Water Act, coal corporations are authorized to blow the tops off of mountains. The New Hampshire Groundwater Protection Act authorizes corporations to siphon off

hundreds of thousands of gallons of water a day from local aquifers to bottle and sell. Similarly, under state oil and gas laws - including Florida's - corporations are issued permits to drill wells through our aquifers to frack for oil and gas.

Communities and groups across the U.S. are coming to an understanding of how our environmental laws actually work, and further, how these laws are part of our broader legal structure which protects fracking, mining, etc., and the actors who conduct these activities.

This larger structure of law - i.e., our constitutional structure - is aimed at constant growth, extraction, and development, rather than the protection of the environment or sustainability.

To protect that constant growth, the Constitution has been used to clothe corporations in *rights* - to insulate them from anything that may *interfere* with the endless expansion of their operations. As well, our state and federal government have been granted broad *preemption* authority, which similarly is wielded over communities, activists, and groups - to shield the existing system from attempts to change it.

Corporate *rights* - along with preemption and other core legal doctrines - form a structure of law that protects endless growth at the cost of people, communities, and nature. It's a structure that is inherently unsustainable.

Communities, beginning in Pennsylvania and now in Ohio, New Hampshire, Maine, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, Colorado, and other states, are recognizing that if we continue working within the current legal framework - which elevates the right of corporations to frack, drill, mine, etc., over the rights of communities and nature to not be fracked, drilled, etc. - we'll get fracked, drilled, and mined.

That is, if we continue to try to stop individual harms like fracking, and don't address the basic structure of law which legalizes those harms and ensures the endless extraction and exploitation of nature - then we'll never be able to protect the environment, stop global warming, or achieve anything close

CELDF has partnered with nearly 200 communities across the country to begin to build a new framework - based on the rights of communities and nature to health and well-being - which necessarily addresses those key legal doctrines that communities and activists confront when they try to stop fracking or other threats - including corporate *rights* and preemption. They are doing this by advancing Community Bills of Rights laws which establish rights of human and natural communities. This includes a community's right to self-govern, the human right to a healthy environment, and the rights of nature itself to exist and thrive. Fracking and other activities which would violate those rights are prohibited.

Communities are thus putting in place a new legal framework which for the first time legalizes sustainability. Many are advancing this through their local elected bodies, and others through the local citizens' initiative process (which also exists in many Florida communities).

Mari Margil is the Associate Director of [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund](#).

For more information about the League of Women Voters of Florida, [click here](#).

News from the National League

Ann Campbell

Last month the National League:

- Announced Nominees for 2016-2018 LWVUS Board. This slate for Board of Directors and Nominating Committee will be presented to delegates at LWVUS Convention in June. The group was chosen from a strong group of leaders nationwide that were nominated and represents a mix of diversity in age, geography, ethnicity, broad experiences and strong skill sets to continue to elevate the League and our impact. Read about them at www.lwv.org.
- Filed a motion for Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) and preliminary injunction enjoining the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and Executive Director Brian Newby from enforcing the decision granting state requests to amend the national uniform mail-in voter registration form to require documentary proof of citizenship. This is part of a filed suit in federal district court to stop the recent illegal action by the Executive Director of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) that allows these states to restrict voter registration.
- Joined other partner organizations on letters to the U.S. House in opposition of the SENSE Act (H.R. 3797) and the BRICK Act (H.R. 4557). These bills would weaken health safeguards for Americans on behalf of special interests and result in more air pollution and health hazards.

Reported, in the President's letter, that as the premiere source of nonpartisan voter information, we've already had nearly 600,000 users on VOTE411.org looking at over 2.4 million pages of content. As the campaign continues for many more months, we encourage Leagues to join their colleagues all across the country in using this increasingly popular tool for voters' guides and other election information. The work the League does this year will be equally critical to whether or not every eligible voter has free and fair access to the polls. Our Leagues are focusing their efforts on making this a reality. Keep up the good work!

For more information [click here](#).

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.