

The Voter

Issue: 2015-07

December 2015

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HOLIDAY PARTY

Come one, come all! It's time to celebrate the holiday season.

These days they say the holidays are just for children, so let's be children and have fun and laughter at our holiday party!

Bring your favorite joke to share. A prize will be given to the best jokester. A raffle may even bring you a cherished prize! Invite your friends, neighbors and relatives to be part of our making merry.

This will be our time to just be and enjoy an hour and a half of conversation and laughter.

Where: Hilton Naples Hotel, 5111 Tamiami Trail North

When: Monday, December 14, at 11:45 am

Cost for lunch: \$25.00 per person; reservations required. [Click here](#) for a reservation by December 10, before noon.

You may also contact [Tina Palmese](#) or call 239-263-4656 and leave a message by Thursday, December 10 before noon.



President's Message

Charlotte Nycklemoe, President

The holidays are fast approaching and let me be the first to wish you all a very happy holiday season. As I reflect on how many things for which I am thankful this season, especially during these contentious world times (think Paris), I am especially grateful for my freedom.

I have the freedom to vote for whom I choose instead of being under the watchful eye of a cruel dictator. My responsibility is to make sure I get to that voting booth and choose whom I want to represent me locally, legislatively and nationally. I have the right to meet with my representatives and express my opinion for or against a bill/ agenda item introduced into our respective bodies of government. Paul Kardon, Susan Calkins and I had the right to meet with Senator Richter this past week to state the League's positions on Environment, Gun Safety, Healthcare, Education and Election Law. We will have the right to meet with Representative Passidomo the first week in December to express those same positions again. Unfortunately, we will not be meeting with Representative Hudson since his office told me he is booked until after March.

The operative word here is *freedom* which gives us our rights! Our freedom has been attained by much loss of life in wars and by 75 long, brutal years of struggle by the League of Women Voters. *Let's not take our freedom for granted! Vote! Exercise your rights!*

DECEMBER AT A GLANCE

Government Committee

Monday, December 7
10:30 to noon
Clive Daniel Home
Community Room
2777 Tamiami Trail N.

Social Policy Committee

Wednesday,
December 9 at noon
Wilderness Country Club
101 Clubhouse Drive

Environmental Affairs Committee

Thursday, December 10
10:00 am
Suncoast Credit Union
8797 Tamiami Tr E

Holiday Luncheon

Monday, December 14
11:45 am
Hilton Naples
5111 Tamiami Trail N.

Education Committee

Tuesday, December 15
10:30 am to noon
North Collier Government
Center
2235 Orange Blossom Drive

Justice Committee

Monday, December 21
10:30 am
Clive Daniel Home
Community Room
2777 Tamiami Tr N

Book Club

No December meeting

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 at drchargar@gmail.com. Check out our website at: www.lwvcolliercounty.org and don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Floridians for Solar Choice Amendment

We live in the Sunshine State, but solar energy is hard to come by here. Why? Because Florida is one of only four states that prohibit citizens from buying electricity from anyone other than a utility company. This amendment, if passed, will vastly expand affordable solar choice by allowing all consumers the option to power their homes and businesses with solar power and the option to choose who provides solar energy.

Want to see the use of solar energy expanded in Florida? Check your mailbox for an envelope containing 5 copies of the Solar Initiative petition supported by the League. Our goal is to submit 25,000 petitions no later than December 31. Time is of the essence!

Please ask friends, colleagues, and family members to sign these petitions. You may submit them in one of two ways:

Mail the completed and signed petitions to:
Floridians for Solar Choice
120 E. Oakland Blvd Suite 105
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33333

Susan Calkins will collect the petitions at the Holiday Luncheon or at the Solar Energy Field trip, to bundle for a bulk mailing. Please attach a note with the total number of petitions in the packet.

If you mail the petitions yourself, please include the following information on a slip of paper in the mailing packet:

Volunteer Name and email address
LVWCC's volunteer number which is 981
Total number of petitions collected and date

If you would like to print out more petitions [click here](#).

Thank you for your time and energy.

The sun is here... Let's use it for the benefit of all Florida residents.

League of Women Voters of Florida
540 Beverly Court
Tallahassee, FL 32301-7530
850-224-2545
TheFloridaVoter.org

League Policy Study

Robin Larkin and Sandy Parker

Consensus Reached on Constitutional Amendment Study Questions

Over 30 LWVCC members actively and thoughtfully participated in our November 9 consensus meeting about the process of amending the U.S. Constitution and Article V Conventions. After a 30-minute background briefing, the group considered and reached consensus on 14 of 15 questions in a fast-paced discussion of each issue's pros and cons.

First, members came to consensus on five considerations for evaluating constitutional amendment proposals. Next, members agreed on seven conditions that should be in place for an Article V Constitutional Convention initiated by the states. Finally, members concluded that the League should consider supporting a Constitutional amendment that will advance a League position even if there are significant problems with the actual amendment as proposed, and even if it is being put forward by a procedural process the League would otherwise oppose.

Those who participated found the meeting very informative. Suggestions that we give reading assignments earlier and allow more time for discussion were much appreciated, and will be taken into consideration in planning the Money in Politics consensus meeting to be held in January.

A huge "thank you" to those who participated. You enabled the voice of the LWV of Collier County, Florida, to be heard as the National League frames its position on the Constitutional Amendment Process!

Money in Politics Consensus Meeting

Robin Larkin and Sandy Parker

Register Now for Wednesday, January 20, 9-11:30 am at The Country Club of Naples, 185 Burning Tree Drive.

The LWV believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. (Statement of Position on Campaign Finance announced by National Board 1974 and revised 1982)

Yet what we have today is far from that ideal.

Join Consensus Meeting co-leaders Sandy Parker and Robin Larkin to participate in the National League's update of its position on campaign finance. Consensus questions to be debated include:

- What should be the goals and purposes of campaign finance regulation?
- What constitutes political corruption?
- In what way(s), if any, should spending to influence an election be limited?
- Which of several possible actions, if any, should the League support in order to achieve the goals of campaign finance regulation?

When: Wednesday, January 20, 9-11:30 am

Where: The Country Club of Naples, 185 Burning Tree Drive

RSVP: Sandy Parker at sparker101@gmail.com or Robin Larkin robinwlarkin@gmail.com to sign up and receive your pre-reading assignment. This is a meeting you won't want to miss!

Click here to learn more about the [Money in Politics Review](#) and preview the consensus questions and selected readings.



Education Committee

Mary Lou Boll, Chair

Niccole Howard, the Executive Director of Collier Childcare Resources, Inc. (CCCR), was the guest speaker at the November 17 meeting of the LWVCC Education Committee. She presented information on CCCR and the challenges that her organization faces, as well as the challenges faced by the early childhood education industry as a whole.

CCCR is an organization that operates three child development centers: the NCEF Early Childhood Development Center on the south campus of FSW State College, and two Child Development centers at Golden Gate and Immokalee High Schools for teen parents. These schools receive significant funds from the Wine Festival; however, working families may still require additional subsidies to keep their children in the program.

The NCEF center offers service to a maximum of 110 children from infancy through four years of age. It partners with Able Academy to offer services to children with special needs. It has a 250 child waiting list.

CCCR also offers professional development programs for early childhood education teachers. There are roughly 100 early childhood development centers in our area, half of which are not certified and many of which do not offer a quality educational experience. Only 8% of the centers are accredited. These centers have more stringent staffing requirements primarily because the cost at these centers is over \$3000 annually.

Niccole listed the challenges that the entire industry faces:

1. A shortage of infant care centers. This is largely because this service requires one teacher for four children; the cost of hiring personnel renders these centers financially non sustainable. Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten programs are more sustainable because many offer wrap around care to increase revenue.
2. Weak educational foundations. Some of the four-year-old programs stress rote memory rather than the development of social and problem solving skills. The quality of the education offered depends largely on the skill of the director.
3. Lack of parental engagement with the programs. This may be may be caused by the family's need to work long hours.
4. Lack of worthy wages for early childcare teachers. An increase in state funding would help to increase wages. The average salary for teachers with a 45 hour training program, is \$9.99 per hour. A credentialed teacher may make \$10 per hour. The state Office of Early Learning has control over wages. A couple of counties in Florida have county taxes that supplement better wages for early childhood programs.
5. Dual language families. This can be a problem when the parents are not educated and articulate in their native language. There is a movement to hire two teachers in a class: one speaking English and one speaking Spanish or Creole.

After further discussion it was determined that the role of the League is to educate the community about these challenges; to encourage access to quality early childhood education for all and to keep an eye on legislation at the state level that impacts services to children.

Myra Shapiro of the Naples Alliance for children will be our guest speaker at the December meeting. She will help us further our understanding of early childhood education and indicate what we can do to advocate for it in our community. All are invited!

When: Tuesday, December 15, 10:30 am to noon

Where: North Collier Government Center
2335 Orange Blossom Drive

RSVP: Mary Lou Boll, dboll7263@comcast.net



Environmental Affairs Committee

Susan Calkins, Chair

Solar Energy Field Trip

The Environmental Affairs Committee invites members and guests to join us for a visit to The Suncoast Credit Union on December 10 at 10 a.m. to see a local commercial building totally powered by solar energy. Suncoast is located in a shopping center at the corner of U S 41 and St. Andrews Blvd, 8797 Tamiami Trail East. There is ample parking in the shopping center lot.

Coming down from Tampa and leading our tour will be Bakari Kennedy, an Energy Efficiency Engineer.

After the tour, the committee will hold its monthly meeting at the home of Kathleen Slebodnik, 32 Pebble Beach Blvd., just around the corner from Suncoast in Lely Golf Estates. Please bring your signed Floridians for Solar Choice Constitutional Amendment Petitions to this meeting and we will mail them in for you; these are the petitions sent to us from LWVFL by mail.

Join us for the tour, stay for our meeting, and enjoy an optional lunch at a nearby restaurant!

When: Thursday, December 10, 10 am

Where: Suncoast Credit Union
8797 Tamiami Trail East

RSVP: Susan Calkins, calkritis@aol.com

Additional Information

Interested in Everglades restoration? Consider attending the annual Everglades Coalition Conference. The League of Women Voters of Florida is a member of the coalition and this year the conference is being held January 7 -10, 2016 at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables. For more information go to evergladescoalition.org.

Keep up with environmental news by subscribing to these free electronic newsletters, both of which are supported by LWVF: www.floridaconservationcoalition.org and eco-voice.org.



Government Committee

Sandy Parker, Chair

Do you want to learn from fellow League members about your state and local government? Then the Government Committee is for you!

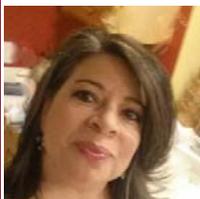
On December 7, members will update us on Florida's Congressional redistricting, water and land management issues, and other county government issues. In addition, we'll look at who has filed to run so far for the city, county and legislative offices on the 2016 ballot. And we'll prepare to monitor upcoming bills of interest by hearing about the bios and priorities of the 2016-18 leaders of the Florida House and Senate.

You'll be surprised how much you can learn in just 90 minutes!

Save the dates! Our Committee will meet on Mondays from 10:30 am to noon:

- At Clive Daniel Home, 2777 Tamiami Trail N on 12/7, 1/4, 2/1, 3/7, 4/4 and 5/9.
- At *The Seasons in Naples Cay* on 1/18 and 2/15

All League members and guests are welcome to attend. No prior knowledge is required. To receive no-obligation Committee updates and meeting reminders, email Sandy Parker at sparker101@gmail.com.



Justice Committee

Linda Flores, Chair

How do we maximize existing resources and partnerships in Collier County to reach our goal for establishing a mentoring program? Will we be duplicating efforts? Are we reinventing the wheel? How do we want the program to look? How do we remain selective in whom we choose to form an alliance? How do we attain funding and how do we go about it? Who are the key players in the community that can counsel, guide and act as ambassadors of our mission?

Lisa Church, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives at Champions for Learning will be joining us to help navigate this sea of questions and concerns.

Come join us! This will prove to be an informative session and great forum for discussion.

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.)

When: Monday, December 21, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Where: Clive Daniels Home
2777 Tamiami Trail North

RSVP: Linda Flores, lindaoflores@gmail.com Mobile:239-239-5160



Membership Committee

Jan Eustis, Chair

A warm welcome to new members: Peggy Fitzpatrick, suffragist; Dorothy Hourihan, suffragist; Dave Larkin, family; Linda Noel, suffragist; Barbara Phelan, suffragist; Irv Povlow, family, and Marcia Schlechter, suffragist.

Several of these new members joined just after our November General Meeting; so I'd like to remind you that bringing a friend to a meeting, especially with such wonderful speakers, is our best recruitment tool!!!

IF YOU HAVE NOT RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET, IT'S TIME!

You can renew on line at the LWVCC website: log in, then click on the Membership tab, and then select "renew," found in the drop down menu. You can also renew by mailing your check to LWVCC, P.O. Box 9883, Naples Florida 34101.

The levels of membership are:

	INDIVIDUAL	FAMILY
Suffragist	\$65.00	97.50
Susan B. Anthony	\$100	132.50
Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200	232.50
Associate*	32.50	

*Members who joined April 1, 2015 or later do not need to renew, since their current memberships are valid through December 31, 2016.

When you pay your dues as a Suffragist only \$18 is retained locally; the first \$47.00 goes to the state and national League. Both Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt levels provide more funding to our local League; however, the dues are not tax deductible. **A separate check made out to the LWV Educational Fund is a tax deductible way to support the Collier County League.**

We're looking forward to an exciting year!

Feel free to contact me at janeustis@me.com or 239-872-5709.



Social Policy Committee

Ann Campbell, Chair

December topic is Collier County Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

On Wednesday, December 9, we will get together at noon for a light lunch at the Wilderness Country Club to meet with Walter Kopka, Chief, Collier County EMS. We asked to learn more about the EMS response to the large number of falls and other injuries in the elderly in Collier. Chief Kopka and his Assistant Chief will also tell us about response times and other issues of interest such as the differences between Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ACLS). We will want to understand the differences between Paramedics and EMTs as far as their certification and training as well. A hot topic locally!

The cost of lunch is \$11.00. All LWVCC members are invited and guests are welcome.

When: Wednesday, December 9, at noon

Where: Wilderness Country Club

101 Clubhouse Dr, Naples, FL

RSVP: Ann Campbell, acamp1082@aol.com

Follow-up on our November meeting about the School Nurse Program

We met with Debbie Stultz, RN, Director of the Collier County School Nurse Program to share our concerns about the new staffing model that reduces the number of Registered Nurses and adds Nursing Assistants. Working under the auspices of Naples Community Hospital (NCH) which has had the contract to provide the program since the beginning, Debbie has crafted a management plan that was reassuring to our group. There is a four week training accompanied by a comprehensive manual; nurses and assistants work in teams under a "Lead RN". Assignment of nurses and assistants is flexible according to the acuity of medical issues in each school. With 50K plus students in 58 schools we are still wondering how the nurses can spread their expertise around. A very positive note: Debbie tells us that they are collecting data on this first year pilot to include feedback from all stakeholders. We hope to receive the finished report.

Voter Services Committee



Joyce Fletcher, Chair

Our first candidate forums will be held January 21 and 25 for the Naples City Council and Mayoral elections to be held March 15.

We are sponsoring these forums with the Collier Citizens Council, The Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce, East Naples Civic Association, The Naples Press Club and other groups. LWVCC is the primary sponsor and we will need volunteers and issue questions affecting the City.

I will send out a notice for the next meeting to those who have indicated an interest in Voter Service. Please let me know at jbletcher@embarqmail.com if you have not told me you wish to be involved.

Book Club

Marcia Maloni, Chair

Books for this season are:

Thursday, January 21, 2016: *Euphoria* by Lily King

Thursday, March 3, 2016: *Soldier Girls* by Helen Thorpe

RSVP for time and place to Marcia Maloni, marciamaloni@yahoo.com.

GET ON THE BUS, GUS!

LWV - Collier & Lee Counties are on the move to Tallahassee for the Legislative Summit on February 16, 17 and 18.

We need to know the head count for our journey by Monday, January 11. Email [Claire Lang](mailto:Claire.Lang@lwv.org) or call 239.301.0220 (home) or 954.684.0093 (cell).

The US Coachways luxury bus features restroom, reclining seats, DVD screens, and ice chests for beverages, including wine.

The trip is 8 hours of fun: singing and movies to entertain ourselves 'til we arrive at Double Tree Hilton in Tallahassee on Tuesday around 4 pm.

There will be a wait list for those who are not League members who wish to attend. Cost is \$110 round trip bus fare. There will be a separate charge for LWVF registration and hotel rooms, which may be single or double occupancy.

All information can be found by [clicking here](#) then go to the Summit event page. From there, you can not only register for convention but also pay online.

Details to follow upon receipt of full payment before Monday January 11, 2016. Pick-up and Return will be at a local Publix where we can safely park our locked cars.

News from the State League

Charlotte Nycklemoe

Campuses are generally safe places. Do we really want to turn them into just the opposite, when a student who has had too much to drink can pull a gun over an argument with a friend? When a gun accidentally goes off because it wasn't properly secured? When a student, who has no knowledge of how to handle weapon, picks up the gun of a roommate out of curiosity? When a depressed and suicidal student can turn to a gun on impulse and pull the trigger?

Stop Campus Carry.

In an environment that encourages open discourse, what kind of effect will guns on campus have on the freedom of students to debate, to passionately disagree? If a student knows those around him may be carrying a concealed weapon, will he feel as comfortable voicing his opinion? And what about the angry student confronting a professor over a grade? Many instructors will tell you that such confrontations can escalate quickly. Do we really want to add a gun into that mix?

Stop Campus Carry.

The gun lobby argues that allowing permit holders to carry concealed weapons will make college and university campuses safer. But the facts don't bear that out. Young adults between the ages of 18-25 experience the highest rates of mental illness. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college-aged students.

The gun lobby argues that women need firearms to protect themselves on campus. Again, the facts don't bear that out. Most campus sexual assaults occur among people who know each other, who may trust one another. Between 80-90% of such assaults involved acquaintances, not strangers. That limits the possibility a victim would be carrying a gun during an attack. And arming the victim doesn't rule out that the assailant may also be armed.

Law enforcement officers undergo weeks, months and years of training. Your average concealed permit holder does not. In addition, when police arrive on the scene of an "active shooting," just how are they supposed to tell the "good guy" from the "bad guy?"

Stop Campus Carry.

Protect our students, faculty, college administrators, and visitors to campus. As the saying goes, the college years can be the best of one's life. Let's not change that by introducing firearms onto campuses by those who have neither the experience nor proper training to use them. Let's allow the police to do their jobs.

[Call your representative.](#) Tell them to **"Stop Campus Carry."**
League of Women Voters of Florida | 540 Beverly Court | Tallahassee |
FL | 32301-7530
For more information about the League of Women Voters of Florida,
visit www.thefloridavoter.org.

News from the National League

Ann Campbell

In recent weeks the National League:

- Announced that Money in Politics background papers have been posted. Hard, Soft and Dark Money presents ways that outside groups try to influence elections through hard money, soft money and dark money, and Options to Reform Money in Politics covers campaign finance reform strategies that are currently allowable in the wake of Supreme Court decisions. The official MIP Consensus form is also posted for Leagues to use to report their consensus reports. All these materials can be found on the Money in Politics page. For additional information, please contact Barbara Zia, MIP Committee Chair at MIPCommitteeChair@lwv.org. To learn how other Leagues are conducting their consensus meetings, join the discussion in the [MIP Google Group](#).
- Reported that the League has been working from several fronts to stop resolutions of disapproval in the U.S. House and Senate that would block the Clean Power Plan. LWVUS joined a letter from environmental groups that went to the Senate on the eve of votes taken on the resolution. Legislation in the Senate passed on November 17 and it now moves to the U.S. House. League members and supporters should take action by contacting their members of Congress urging them to oppose this legislation.
- Called the defeat of the XL Pipeline a major victory for the health and welfare of the American people and our planet after the Obama Administration issued a full rejection of the permits necessary to build the Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline. This is a major victory for the League, environmental groups and pipeline fighters around the country.
- Joined an amicus brief filed by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Southern Poverty Law Center and sixteen other organizations concerned about civil rights and equal access to education in the rehearing of Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, a reconsideration of an identical case the Court heard just two years ago. The brief supports the University of Texas admissions policy as necessary in order for students to receive the vast and critical benefits associated with diverse campus environments. The LWV has a long standing position in support of access to public education that provides equal opportunity for all. We have fought since our inception to ensure that every citizen can fully and productively participate in American society, from the school room to the ballot box.
- Invited members to participate in the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, to be held from March 14-24, 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The priority theme is "Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development".

For more information on National League projects [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.

