



The Voter



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

Volume 36: No. 9

May 2017

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.

May Timely Topics on Saturday May 20th

Indian River Lagoon: Brevard's Half-Penny Sales Tax at Work and How to Help

The informational program addresses the efforts being made to restore our Indian River Lagoon.

Keynote Speakers are:

Curt Smith, Brevard County Commissioner Chair representing District 4 and Brevard County Representative and Chair of the IRL Council Board of Directors

Virginia Barker, Director of Brevard County Natural Resources Management Department

Lorraine Koss, Chair of the Brevard County Save Our Indian River Lagoon Citizen Oversight Committee

Place: Suntree County Club at One Country Club Drive, Melbourne, FL 32940

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Doors open at 11:00 a.m. for registration and viewing of exhibits. Lunch is served at noon.

Luncheon Menu Options:

- Portabella Stack - Roasted Portabella mushrooms vegetable platter with a Boursin cream sauce
- Cobb Salad - Crisp lettuce topped with crumbled bleu cheese, bacon bits, chopped eggs, diced onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, avocado and diced chicken with choice of dressings
- Le Croissant - Cranberry and walnut chicken salad in a buttery, flaky croissant, lettuce tomato and onion served with a fresh fruit cup
- California Wrap - Turkey, avocado, ripe tomatoes and field greens, wrapped in a flour tortilla, served with a fresh fruit cup.

Cost: \$20

Reservations by Thursday, May 11th

Call Doreen Archer at 321-622-4071 or doreenarcher1@gmail.com or www.lwv-spacecoast.org and click on Reservations at Eventbrite.

Organizations providing exhibits are: Blue Life Florida (a Brevard Zoo partner); Brevard Zoo; Brevard County Natural Resources Management Department; Florida DEP Indian River Lagoon Aquatic Preserves; Florida Wildlife Hospital; Indian River Lagoon Natural Estuary Program; Keep Brevard Beautiful (Lagoon Friendly Lawns Program); Marine Resources Council; Recycle Brevard; and UF/IFAS Brevard County Extension (My Brevard Yard Program).

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Co-Presidents:
Kathy Wall & Barbara Williams
 321-638-2396
rogbarb@cfl.rr.com
 Editor: Lucia Watson
 321-779-6758
lucbil_99@yahoo.com
 LWVSC: Phone # 321-254-7183
 P.O. Box 360823
 Melbourne, FL 32936-0823
www.lwv-spacecoast.org

Voter is not published in June, July and August. Updates on League events and news can be found on our website
www.lwv-spacecoast.org

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.



President's Corner

Kathy Wall and Barbara Williams

MAKING THE PITCH by Barbara Williams



We associate softball with springtime, but that is not the pitch our team will be throwing. Ours will be more like a Chris Matthew's Hardball pitch, or more specifically, a lobby to our legislators.

Eight of us from our LWVSC organization ventured to Tallahassee for the 2017 LWVF Legislative Summit and our first agenda item was to receive Lobby training. This was a new ballgame for most of us and while we had arranged meetings with legislators and were provided a calendar for each bill to be heard along with the LWVF's position for each, we did not come prepared in advance to throw a proper pitch. We really needed to train for the pitch in advance, so here is a summary of the training to help prepare you in advance of your pitch.

In Tallahassee we had opportunity to lobby at a hearing for Senate/House bills, or in-person at our legislator's office. We reviewed the pitch for both. For hearings, we are required to fill out a form in advance and state if we will be speaking or "waving" in support or opposition to the bill. When "waving", you will be announced and you stand and state your name, address, organization you represent (can be self), and indicate if waving to oppose or support. When speaking, you will go to the podium and state the same identifying information but when stating your position, use what our LWVF president calls **PPF**, state **Position Facts Position**. You need 3 short and to the point facts. Have **PPF** typed out and in front of you **BUT** practice in advance, speak with passion but not emotional. Never be wishy washy. Look directly at your legislators as you speak.

For in-person visits with legislators, we were told to make appointments if possible and be prompt. You may find you will be speaking with an assistant and not the legislator. For the meeting you should have a hand-out to leave behind with research on the issue and a one-page summary of your position and rationale. Be brief and to the point and know the views of those opposing your position and politely counter them in your discussion. We were provided with an example for a current education issue of how to have an acceptable position by providing additional bill parameters if the outlook of getting the bill pulled back entirely is not likely. Always be friendly, you may have to agree to disagree but you need to leave the door open for future issues. Follow-up with a letter and most importantly send a thank-you note.

Our LWVF lobbyist, Kelly Quintero, has requested volunteers for a Lobby Corps and has had great response from Tallahassee league members, due to their proximity to the Capitol. However, we do not need to let our legislators hide from us in Tallahassee. If a burning issue is coming up for a hearing, we can always coordinate with Kelly and organize a trip to provide in-person support. Of course, let us not forget that we do have hearings on local issues to support. We need to be well trained to throw the pitch we need to win on our positions. Given the political turmoil of today, we may have some long hard seasons ahead! Are we ready to throw the pitch?



Voter Service

Sharon Reynolds Mixon - Chair

INTERIM REPORT ON THE CRC (FLORIDA'S CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION) by Tony Dutton

Two months ago, in the March 2017 "The Voter", we presented an introductory article describing the origins of the CRC and its first steps in its present reorganization after 20 years. At the time the March article was written, only four (the Attorney General and the three appointees of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court) of the CRC's 37 Commissioners were known.

Now, all 37 have been appointed, and the CRC has held one meeting and four public hearings. At its initial meeting the CRC swore-in its members and presented proposed Rules for its proceedings. Those Rules placed much control in the hands of the Commission Chair, did not provide for a lot of openness to the public and had other questionable provisions. As a result some of the Commissioners and a number of community organizations have called for Rules changes before the CRC's Rules are officially adopted. There are public suggestions that a "Rules Committee" consisting of two representatives of each Commission appointer (Governor, Senate President and House Speaker), be formed to revise the draft Rules. At the time of this writing, however, no such action has yet been taken.

The four public hearings held to date (one more is contemplated in the Panhandle) in Orlando, Miami, Boca Raton and Tallahassee have drawn large enthusiastic audiences that have spoken to a broad range of procedural and public issues. Two substantive issues that drew considerable comment, at the Orlando and at least one other hearing, were restoration of voting rights of former felons and open primary elections in which every voter may participate, even if she or he is not a member of any political party.

(continued on Page 3 - 2nd column)



Health Committee
Diane Conaway & Susan Web
Co-Chairs

How do we introduce a culture of compassion as an essential component of health care and society? by Seeta Begui LPN, LWVSC Health committee member, Author, Activist and Radio show host.

"We have so far to go to realize our human potential for compassion, altruism, and love."

Jane Goodall

I believe compassion is something that is taught at an early age and is also a value that can be learned through example as well as through cultural and religious influences. As a young child growing up in Trinidad and Tobago, with 17 siblings, I remember my parents taking the time to teach us personal responsibility. They always encouraged us to be kind and considerate and stressed that compassion is free and that it can change a person's life.

After working as a geriatric nurse for 28 plus years, I have come to the conclusion that we live in a "throw away" society. I am not sure when this trend happened, but people have forgotten how to stop, look, listen and feel the love that can be felt from relatives, friends, coworkers and children. I am not sure where we are all going and why we are compelled to always be in a rush. I often wonder why so many floral arrangements are sent to funeral homes when a loved one passes but not when that person is alive and well.

Those who work in health care are under constant pressure to get countless procedures done and a mountain of paperwork completed so that a patient sometimes becomes a mere bed number - a thing rather than a person. Doctor James Doty a neurosurgeon, who has practiced medicine for more than 30 years and founder of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) at Stanford University sums it up like this

"Research has produced ample empirical evidence for proving what should seem obvious: Feeling soothed or cared for through the experience of meaningful social or human connections produces a physiological state in the body that is optimum for healing....."

The immune system gets a boost. Cortisol levels drop. Blood pressure goes down. Stress and anxiety begin to melt away and a person's mental state improves.

I always tell people that while science and technology have probably saved millions of lives, the fact of the matter is that kindness and compassion have probably saved more,"

Ideally, human beings all over the world should have equal access to medical care including mental, social, spiritual and physical health care services. In order to feel loved and appreciated, each person should have compassion for another as well as understand the need for compassion worldwide. The basic needs of people to have access to food, water, shelter, clean air, sanitation, education, affordable housing and health care should be concerns addressed by all of us.

We live in a society where the trend is to think that everything can be fixed quickly by medication. However, the feeling of being loved and wanted that is derived from the concern and compassion of others also has the power to heal. A lot of people, the elderly, minorities, low income individuals, face large disparities in access to basic care due to socioeconomic status as well as many other factors that affect their lives. These inequalities could be eradicated in our society if all of us, including leaders and legislators, had more compassion for those who need it most.

¹<https://dignityhealth.org/articles/Why-the-Future-of-Medicine-Is-About-Kindness-and-Compassion>

Seeta hosts "Viewpoint with Seeta and Friends" on the stations AM 1510 WMEL and 1510wmel.com online 94.7 FM 99.9 FM and 100.7 FM.



Voter Service

Sharon Reynolds Mixon - Chair

(continued from Page 2)

Presently, however, the CRC's next meeting and hearing dates have not been announced. We hope they will be soon and preceded by adequate public notice.

The League of Women Voters of Florida (LWVF) has joined two citizen groups that are dedicated to ensuring that the CRC operates in an open and fair way for the benefit of all Floridians. The first group, known as the "Partnership for Revising Florida's Constitution" (the "Partnership"), consists of 18 established public organizations, such as The Florida Bar, Florida League of Cities and the NAACP Florida. The Partnership met most recently on April 7th and reached a consensus that the first order of business for the CRC must be to revise its Rules to adopt open and fair procedures, such as the open-meeting requirements governing Florida executive agencies rather than the more lenient rules of the Legislature, providing for adequate notice of all meetings, and ensuring that the CRC members attend meetings and hearings in person and not by telephone. The Partnership will be working to achieve these goals. The second citizen group joined by the LWVF has adopted similar goals and also is working to make the public aware of the procedural changes that must be made, if the CRC is going to be a success for Florida.

We will endeavor to provide updates, every month or two over the next 18 months, on the CRC and its activities and compliance with the needs of all Floridians. Also, our LWVSC Local Government Committee expects to sponsor a Timely Topic luncheon this fall on the status and operations of the CRC. No one should miss that event.

* * * *

Sharon Reynolds-Mixon was elected LWVSC Voter Service Chair at our April 8th Annual Meeting. I am looking forward to working with Sharon over the next two years. She has great talent and enthusiasm and will be an excellent leader.

Tony Dutton,
 April 9, 2107



**Natural Resources
Chair – Susan Little**

Indian River Lagoon: Brevard’s Half-Penny Sales Tax at Work and How You Can Help –by Susan Little

This is the title of the May 20, 2017 Timely Topics of the LWV of the Space Coast referenced on the front page of this issue of Voter. One of the most helpful activities is simply to be informed. Go to the Brevard County Natural Resource Department, click on the Save Our Lagoon tab and read the Save Our Lagoon Plan. While it is a long document, it has many charts and is quite easy to understand. There is already an update to the Save Our Lagoon Plan with appendices that explain the guidelines that the Citizen’s Oversight Committee uses to assess prospective projects and the financial impact of the approved projects. The plan is based on the four R’s: Reduce, Remove, Restore, and Respond. The Reduce segment of the plan is for sewer treatment upgrades, septic tank removal and educating the public on the proper use of fertilizer. The Remove segment of the plan is for muck removal. The Restore segment is to build oyster beds and living shorelines to help clean the water in the Lagoon. And finally, the Respond segment allows the adaptation of the plan when new information or new technologies arise.

On May 20, 2017 we will have several speakers who work daily with the Save Our Lagoon Plan. So, read the plan and bring your questions for the speakers. We also will have examples of the work being done by various organizations and hope to recruit volunteers to assist them. Mostly we want to show that we all have an impact on our Indian River Lagoon. Please, make it a good one.

See you there
Susan Little

Thank you

Thank you to the members who serve on the telephone committee. Their work is greatly appreciated.

Chair – Martha Bradshaw

- Doreen Archer**
- Karen Atlas**
- Jan Bancroft**
- Dixie Bankston**
- Teresa Barrett**
- Clarice Costello**
- Connie Hogerty**
- Linda Hogg**
- Joann Jacobs**
- Anita Kountourakis**
- Fern Patton**

Bios for New Board Co-President and new Director.

In the April Voter you read the Bios for **Co-President Barbara Williams, 1st Vice President, Sharon Reynolds Mixon and Secretary, Audrey Grayson.**

Following are Bios for Co-President, Kathy Wall and newly elected Director, Lorraine Koss. Marcia Booth and Lucia Watson were **re-elected** as Directors at the April annual meeting.



**Kathy Wall
Co-President**

I guess you could say that I was born with sand in my toes. I grew up in Brevard County and watched its transformation over the years. From a small town to an urban hub of the East Coast of Central Florida. After graduating from college I could have moved, but couldn’t see myself anywhere else in the World. From an early age I debated politics from the campaign of 1968, Nixon vs. Humphrey to debating the legal age to vote during the Vietnam War. As you remember Nixon won that election and the age to vote changed from 21 years-old to 18. After college and during a Master’s study in Public Administration I began working for State and Local government in financial advisement. It was my job to do the research and present the facts to those responsible for making decision. In doing this for over 30 years I’ve found presenting the truth and facts on any issue is the best policy. I joined the Space Coast League of Women Voters.



**Lorraine Koss – Newly Elected
Director**

Lorraine Koss has spent her career working for the water environment. She is the Chair appointee of the Brevard County Save the Lagoon Citizen Oversight Committee. Formerly, she served as Deputy Director of the U.S. Water Alliance, a Washington D.C. non-profit. As a LWV Space Coast Board Member, she is noted for leading the 2016 FL SUN (Solar United Neighborhoods) co-op initiative where she organized public outreach and press to recruit more than 200 members. Her Master’s Degree is in Environmental Management from Duke University. Lorraine lives in Cocoa with her husband, a Brevard County native. They have two sons.



International Relations

Joyce Calese – Chair

May meetings are: Tuesday, May 9th and Tuesday, May 23rd at the Satellite Beach Library from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. **The May 9th topic is Prospects for Afghanistan and Pakistan led by Laverne Bruffey and the May 23rd topic is Nuclear Security led by John Twitchell and Susan Webb.** We invite you to join us.

The International Relations group does not meet during the summer months but the September Voter will give you an update on plans for the remainder of the year.

The Future of Europe by Jane Wilson

Jane Wilson gave the second presentation in the “2017 Great Decisions” series on February 28, entitled “The Future of Europe: Coping With Crisis.” The presentation first laid the foundation for explaining the critical situation in the Eurozone by explaining general government monetary policies of countries facing either inflation or recession. For example, as we have all learned since 2008, the general monetary policy for recession is to reduce interest rates, devalue the currency and increase the money supply (including quantitative easing.) The 19 (out of 28) Member States in the Eurozone all had different economic situations in 2008, but none of them could act individually because they were members of the Eurozone. Being in the Eurozone has had very seriously negative effects: overall country growth has shrunk by 8% in the Eurozone, but outside the Eurozone there has been 5% growth.

There was detailed discussion about Brexit, the result of the referendum in Britain to exit or stay in the European Union. While Prime Minister Theresa May announced she would pursue a “Hard Brexit,” there has been no public discussion whatsoever of the cost of Brexit. Brexit has been titled in the press “The World’s Most Expensive Divorce,” with an estimate from the EU of \$42-65 billion settlement by the UK for obligations allegedly previously agreed. (This is in contrast to the fact that Britons were told prior to the referendum that leaving would save \$440 MM/week). Much of the Brexit is fraught with complications, such as the negotiation of the exit sum and addressing with the EU the status of Britain vis a vis the EU common market. In addition, the laws and regulations that have evolved under the influence of and in combination with EU law must be reviewed and amended, where necessary. Michael Dougan, Professor of European Law at Liverpool University, stated that there would be constitutional changes as a result of this review that would be so enormous as to require a “lifetime’s worth of Parliamentary legislative sessions to complete.” The last topic on Brexit covered involved Britain’s future trade

situation and what it could look like. Complications abound, whether the country stays in the EU single market or reverts to its World Trade Organization membership.

Finally, the presentation discussed populism, a concept that is widely used these days. It is a political style of action that mobilizes a large alienated element of a population against a government, which is seen as controlled by an out-of-touch, closed elite that acts in its own interests. After discussing the incidence of populism in recent decades, the Transparency International Annual Report for 2016 was discussed. Transparency International is based in Berlin, Germany and is an anticorruption watchdog group. This year, in addition ranking 176 countries on its Corruption Perception Index, the report found that people are more increasingly turning to populists who promise to break the cycle of corruption and privilege; however, populist leaders fail to address corruption once in office.



Sustainability Report

League Member, Terry Mott recently attended a University of Florida conference on *Natural Resources and Urban Sustainability* and a Brevard County *Art of Sustainability* event in Palm Bay.

Terry’s Highlights from these events are:

- Learn who’s doing what to help restore our Lagoon and share this information.
- Take advantage of educational programs: Information can be found at <http://brevard.ifas.ufl.edu>
- Be mindful of your everyday activities and decisions. The decisions we make each day regarding how we manage our homes have a direct impact on our collective quality of life.
- Lead by example in your respective communities. Be that one house in the community that shows your neighbors that Florida-Friendly™ / Florida native landscapes can be beautiful, save homeowners money, prevent erosion problems, prevent the polluting of our waterways, sustain our wildlife habitat/wildlife, and reduce the use of chemicals – which can negatively impact our own health.
- Face the facts – we’re not currently on a sustainable path: Realize that with 1,000 people moving into Florida every day, we need a new norm.
- **One final request:** As you hear the birds chirping in the morning or happen to catch sight of some of our majestic wildlife, please remember this: *We are the generation that will determine whether our children and our children’s children inherit the opportunity to experience these awesome moments in nature.*



Education

Fran Baer & Linda Scales

Co-Chairs

“Schools of the Future” Public Forum by Linda Scales

Last month I attended a public forum at Gainesville High School organized and sponsored by the Alachua County League of Women Voters, the Alachua County Council of PTA's, The Education Foundation of Alachua County and Alachua County Public Schools. Sue Legg opened the forum, stating “We want to talk about the kind of environment that’s necessary for high-quality teaching and learning.” “That includes everything from monitoring student progress to empowering teachers and parents.”

Peggy Brookins, CEO of the National Board of Teaching Standards and a member of the President’s Advisory Commission on Education, was the forum’s keynote speaker. Her full bio is at:

<http://www.nbpts.org/bios/peggy-brookins-nbct>.

Peggy started by quoting John Dewey “...if we teach today the way we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow...”. In today’s world, students not only need to learn to read and write but also to analyze and think critically. She described the necessity for teachers to acquire their Board Certification to become an “Effective and Reflective Practitioner”. Out of just over 3 million teachers nationwide, only 112,800 are Board Certified. Recently the process has changed for the better to make it easier for candidates to attain this distinction. Courses can now be taken and paid for separately over a four-year period. Peggy highlighted the need to focus on a cohort of teachers. It is very important for relationship building between teacher-student, teacher-teacher, and teacher-parent. Leadership plans must show benefits for the students it serves and district funding will always show what the priorities of that district are. Learning coalitions must be reimagined to deliver personalized learning so that each student in the class can be reached by their teachers. Students will work their hardest and want to work on something they are interested in. In the schools of the future, the voices of all involved will be included to form an educational vision.

Following Peggy Brookins presentation, a panel of parents and educators responded to questions and comments from the audience about education in general. Panelists included the Deputy Superintendent, Executive Director of Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, TSA Curriculum Specialist, Teacher of the Year and President of Alachua County Council of PTA's. These are some of the key points I took away from this session. The worst thing we can all do for the future is to be complacent. Districts need to show they are professional to attract the best teachers. High quality

schools make students feel safe and cared about, while at the same time making teachers feel supported. Common time for teachers teaching the same students is important for delivering each individual student a quality education. Studies show that early childhood education is more important than ever and needs to be fully funded to give all students the best opportunity to be successful. Finally, when lawmakers argue about funding education because not all students are successful, we can ask that when law enforcement gets funded, does crime disappear?

Welcome to our New Members

Jane Naylor
Jacquelyn Hammond
Alison White
Leo Roselip
Linda Kyvik
Anita Kountourakis
Mark Prynoski
Kristie Ferriell
David Hott

We have 9 new members who have joined since our April Voter was printed. Addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of new members will be sent to you to e-mail.

You can add the information to your membership book that was published last summer.



Board Bytes

- Jacqueline Chandler and Gloria Parra are Co-Chairs of the newly organized Women’s Issues Committee.
- Diane Conaway and Susan Webb are new Co-Chairs of the Health Committee.
- Co-Chairs for the Education Committee will be Fran Baer and Linda Scales.
- Awards will be presented at a School Board Meeting to the schools that have won the Recycling Awards for 2017.
- Voter is not published in June, July and August. Updates on activities for the summer can be found on the website, www.lwv-spacecoast.org
- Local Government Committee is planning a Work Group to monitor the Constitutional Revision Commission.
- New 2017-2019 CONTACTS have recently been published and are found in all Brevard County Libraries and other County locations

LeaguePhotos

Many Thanks to our Outgoing Officers from 2015-2017



Co President
Fran Baer



Co-President
Priscilla Griffith



1st Vice President/Voter
Service Chair - Tony Dutton



Secretary
Doreen Archer

New Officers and Directors elected on April 8, 2017



Co-Presidents
Barbara Williams and Kathy Wall



Fran Baer with Barbara Williams, Kathy Wall, Audrey
Grayson, Lorraine Koss and Lucia Watson

First Vice President, Sharon Reynolds Mixon and Director, Marcia Booth were out of town on day of photo.

May Calendar - ~Members are welcome at all meetings~

- Tuesday, May 2nd Board Meeting for old and new Boards at Las Olas in Satellite Beach at 10:00 a.m.
 - Tuesday, May 9th International Relations Meeting at Satellite Beach Library 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
 - Monday, May 15th Health Committee Meeting at Suntree Library at 6 p.m.
 - Saturday, May 20th Timely Topics at Suntree County Club 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
 - Monday, May 22nd Local Government Committee Meeting at Suntree Library 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
 - Tuesday, May 23rd International Relations Meeting at Satellite Beach Library 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
 - Thursday, May 25th Education Committee Meeting at Suntree Library (small meeting room) at 1 p.m.
- (As additional dates of Committee Meetings are known they will be posted on member's calendar on the website.)

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League of Women Voters of the Space Coast - P.O. Box 360823, Melbourne, FL 32936-0823

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