



# The Voter



The League of Women Voters  
of the Space Coast  
[www.lwv-spacecoast.org](http://www.lwv-spacecoast.org)

**Volume 35: No. 1**

**September 2015**

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.

### September Timely Topic

**“Port Canaveral at the Crossroads:  
Implications of Industrial Expansion”**  
Moderated by Florida Today

**When:** Saturday, September 19  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.  
**Where:** Suntree Country Club  
1 Country Club Dr, Melbourne, FL 32940

**Menu:** Stuffed Sole  
Chicken Picatta  
Pasta Primavera  
All entrées served with garden salad, vegetables,  
starch, rolls, coffee or tea.

**Cost:** \$22.00  
Reservations to Doreen Archer at 321-622-4071 with  
entrée choice no later than Monday, September 14.

Public is Invited.

### League Applauds Florida Supreme Court FAIR DISTRICTS RULING on July 9, 2015

"It has been a long hard, battle against devious, political scheming, but today the Florida Supreme Court handed the people of Florida a total victory, forcing the redrawing of every one of the eight districts that we contested in the lawsuit," said Pamela Goodman, president of the League of Women Voters of Florida, part of the coalition that filed suit to have the districts redrawn because of gerrymandering.

"Not only must the legislature act speedily and hold a special session to redraw, what could prove to be nearly every congressional district in the state, but the Florida Supreme Court is leaving nothing to chance -- the court will have final approval on the redrawn districts." "The League will be watching this process closely to make sure our lawmakers operate in complete sunshine with one hundred percent transparency. Today, the Florida Supreme Court took the Florida Legislature to the woodshed. Their egregious behavior using partisan political operatives in the redistricting process was appropriately reprimanded. We commend our court system, our legal system and the hard work of citizens of Florida for making today a victory for the voice of the people," Goodman concluded.

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### 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 Fran Baer & Priscilla Griffith

### Summer Highlights:

Dear Leaguers,

This is turning into a busy, productive summer. The highlights are:

1. Six years and 1.6 million signatures later, on July 9<sup>th</sup> the Florida Supreme Court ruled in favor of one of the League's priorities, advocating for the end of representatives choosing their voters rather than voters choosing their representatives. The landmark decision chastising the legislature for violating the Fair Districts Constitutional Amendment approved by Florida voters in 2010, requires the redrawing of the Florida Senate maps and is likely to have ramifications with other states adopting similar constitutional prohibitions on partisan gerrymandering.

THE NEXT STEP: The possibility of creating an independent redistricting commission by Constitutional amendment.

2. Our own First Vice-President, Tony Dutton, was appointed to the Florida League of Women Voters as a Board Director. Tony's specific title will be Action Chair, a role perfectly suited to our high-energy, incredibly knowledgeable, totally dedicated Space Coast League friend and mentor. Tony will continue serving in his elected capacity as 1<sup>st</sup> V.P., and Voter Service Chair with the understanding that there are just so many hours in one day, even for Tony. We will all be there to fill in where necessary. Having Tony on both Boards keeps us well informed and the LWVF well served.

THE NEXT STEP: Take the voter registration exam on the LWVF website in order to participate in the National Voter Registration Day, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

3. On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Board held a brainstorming session at Doreen Archer's home. Discussed in detail were issues covering local, state, and national concerns. The group consensus is local issues take priority, including growth management, Port Canaveral expansion and Rail extension, the Indian River Lagoon, public schools, voter registration, property rights and protection, impact fees, working charter commissions, use of technology, display of the Confederate flag at public libraries, building coalitions and partnerships, member orientation, membership diversity, fundraising, and leadership development. A close second in importance are state issues, including Medicaid expansion, felon voter registration, independent redistricting commission, climate change, rising seas, fracking, solar energy, open primary study, elimination of all forms of discrimination, and human trafficking.

THE NEXT STEP: All agreed that the League's agenda is filled with equally important issues in need of our attention. The Board will decide, with members' input, which of these items will be studied for action at this time. **All members are invited to Board meetings. The next one is Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10a.m. at Suntree Library.** Contact Fran at fbaer@cfl.rr.com or your committee chair with your comments.

4. Members can now renew and potential members can now join and all may donate by credit card or paypal. Thanks to Webmaster, Lucia Watson, Treasurer Brigitte Stinton and member Marcia Booth for coordinating this feat.

Log onto

<http://www.lwv-spacecoast.org/member.html>

THE NEXT STEP: Pass the link on to your family and friends.

The summer is not over yet, and more will be happening as we live our mission to understand, inform, influence, and educate ourselves and the public, remembering the African Proverb, **"If You Want To Go Fast, Go Alone. If You Want To Go Far, Go Together."** Let's go far.

In League,  
Fran

## Welcome To Our New Members

Joy Baer  
Carla & William Baer

Please add new members to your membership book. Addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of new members will be sent to you by e-mail. If you have friends who belong to League of Women Voters of the Space Coast who do not receive e-mail, it would be helpful if you could contact them and give them addresses and phone numbers of new members to add to their membership books. We discontinued printing this information in our *Voters* because of privacy concerns since our *Voters* are distributed to libraries and other community locations. They are found on line at our web site, [www.lwv-spacecoast.org](http://www.lwv-spacecoast.org)

These new members joined after the 2015-2016 membership book was printed so League members will receive the new members addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses soon via e-mail.



**Voter Service**  
**Tony Dutton – Chair**

## STATEWIDE STUDY OF OPEN PRIMARIES Should Florida Consider Changing its Primary Election System?

The League of Women Voters has always sought to increase voter participation. It has sought to increase the number of people who are registered to vote, and who come out and vote, in all elections. One question is, does the current Florida primary election system act as a hindrance to this goal?

There are “Closed Primaries” and a number of forms of “Semi-Open” and “Open Primaries”. Florida is one of 11 states that have Closed Primaries, where voters may vote only for candidates of the party to which they belong, and unaffiliated voters (NPA’s) may not vote (except in non-partisan contests or where candidates from only one party are running). Included in the Semi-Open primaries, are those where nonaffiliated voters may select which party’s primary they want to vote in, those where all voters may select which party’s primary in which they want to vote, and more.

One of the most common forms among the Open Primaries is “Top Two”, where voters vote for all candidates for an office, regardless of party, and the top two vote-getters go on to the general election. At least four states (California, Louisiana, Nebraska and Washington) have selected that form of primary, and others are considering adopting it. Another 25 or so states have forms of Semi-Open or “hybrid” primaries.

Within the last several months, a group called “All Voters Vote” has proposed an amendment to the Florida Constitution that, if adopted by the voters, would install the Top Two system in Florida. The Florida League of Women Voters (LWVF) has not taken a position on that initiative because it, and we as part of LWVF, is presently organizing a statewide study of voting incentives. A key part of that study will to look at whether Florida’s current Closed Primary system inhibits voter participation in primary elections and, if so, whether Florida should adopt the Top Two or some other form of Open or Semi-Open primary.

Stay tuned; we will be hearing much more of this subject in the coming months.

Tony Dutton



**Local Government**  
**Ron Bobay – Chair**

The Space Coast League of Women Voters LWVSC approved of action to apply for Associate Membership in the Space Coast League of Cities. We were accepted and were represented in their July 13, 2015 meeting. The guest speaker was Bob Gabordi of Florida Today.

We have been surveying the membership who have indicated an interest in the subcommittee of “Local Government”. If you have not received a call and wish to be involved in this year’s activities, please contact Ron Bobay either by e-mail or telephone. We anticipate our first meeting of the year to be held in late August or early September. The time and place have not yet been established.



## Board Bytes

- New Membership Books will be mailed or hand delivered to members the end of August.
- 126 Members on day of board meeting on August 4.
- A new committee is in the planning stages, entitled “Women’s Issues”. Please contact Fran Baer if you would like to join this committee.
- Leadership Brevard has invited the Board of League of Women Voters of the Space Coast to attend a reception for Brevard’s new school superintendent Dr. Desmond Blackburn on Wednesday, September 9 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Florida Today. Other organizations who are partners in this event are: Florida Today, Space Coast Chapter of National Congress of Black Women and Brevard Federation of Teachers – Retired Chapter.
- Annual Holiday Luncheon will be Saturday, December 5. Location will be announced later.
- Health Committee has been busy during the summer. Co Chair Jo Shim is registered to attend a Florida Chain Conference in Orlando on September 17<sup>th</sup> and September 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Audrey Grayson, Speaker’s Bureau Chair has given presentations to groups in the community.
- Ron Bobay is new chairman of the Local Government Committee.
- Board reviewed and approved LWVSC Board Policies and Procedures.



## Natural Resources Susan Little – Chair

The League of Women Voters of Florida voted unanimously to support the proposed "Solar Choice" amendment to the Florida Constitution which is on track to be placed on the November 2016 ballot. This amendment removes the current government created barrier to customers right to purchase solar energy unless sold by one of the registered power utilities. Under the new amendment, home or business owners will be able to enter into a contract with a solar company to install solar panels on their property at the expense of the solar company. In return, the solar company will sell the power generated back to the owners at a fixed rate for a specified period of time. Any excess power generated, up to 2MW, can be sold by the solar company to contiguous property owners. The up front costs will be borne by the solar company but the home or business owner will benefit from having a fixed energy cost.

You would think that conservative groups would be very supportive of this amendment as it increases competition and opens up the energy market and, indeed, many Florida conservative groups are advocating the passage of this amendment. Americans for Prosperity, on the other hand, have spoken out against the proposed amendment. They have claimed that allowing some consumers to buy solar power from third party producers will make energy more expensive to all energy consumers. In other states which allow third party sales, this has not proven to be the case. Most recently, in Georgia, the rates have not risen. Florida is currently one of only four states that does not allow third party sales of solar electricity so there is a lot of data suggesting that rates will not rise with the passage of the Solar Choice amendment.

To further muddy the waters, a new group backed by AFP has written a new amendment proposal which they call the Smart Solar Amendment. The wording in this amendment allows consumers to do just what they can already do, buy or lease solar panels to put on their own properties and use the electricity for their own use. The consumer bears all the up front cost in this amendment and can not sell any excess to neighbors on contiguous properties. While it will probably not pass the Supreme Court scrutiny as it does not change anything for the Florida consumer, it will serve to confuse voters. For more information, please visit the Floridians for Solar Choice website at [www.flsolarchoice.org](http://www.flsolarchoice.org) and the League of Women Voters of Florida website, [www.thefloridavoter.org](http://www.thefloridavoter.org).

Article by Maureen Rupe – Natural Resources Consultant

### Legislature Disappoints Again with Clerk of Courts

Our Florida Legislature did some harmful things to the state this past year, along with our Governor, who vetoed a number of projects that would have provided a large number of our residents with employment. Besides ignoring its citizens on Amendment 1 and education, we are now finding they are not even providing our Clerk of Courts with the funds they require. A June 29<sup>th</sup> Florida Today story by Dave Bergman titled "Brevard Clerk of Courts faces Budget Staff Cuts, our County's Clerk of Court Office is facing a \$700,000 budget shortfall.

According to the Florida Today story, "...it will take longer to pay a traffic ticket, request court documents, apply for a passport, marriage license, or transact other business with the Clerk of Courts Office." The Florida Today story blamed the Budget Committee of the Florida Clerk of Courts Operations Corp. but it really comes down to our Florida Legislature, which decided not to fix the real problem. According to a June 30<sup>th</sup> Tampa Bay Times Editorial, "Court clerks should be properly funded by state". Out of a \$193 speeding ticket, the Clerk Office gets \$51. The rest of the funds go to a lot of other things throughout the state. Apparently when we had all our foreclosures the last few years, the Clerk's Office had an overage of funds so the legislature took a major portion of fines and fees to pay for other things throughout our state. Unfortunately, that overage has gone away when our foreclosure rate dropped, and now we have a huge shortage of funds in our Clerk of Court Offices. The Florida Constitution requires the legislature to fund the Clerk of Court Offices through the fines and fees, not to spend it on other things besides these core services which our citizens and businesses require every day.

Members of our legislature have spent a lot of time in our Editorial section patting themselves on their backs on how effective and productive they have been this past year; something that is well away from the truth. Our legislators have forgotten who they are working for, and why they were elected. They are elected to follow the will of the people. I feel that we no longer have a government for the people.

Reference:

<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/local/2015/06/26/brevard-clerk-courts-office-faces-budget-staff-cuts/29355451/>

<http://www.tampabay.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-court-clerks-should-be-properly-funded-by-state/2235661>



## Education Committee

Linda Scales – Chair

The new school year has started and the new League Education Committee is busy preparing for this school year. At the annual meeting in April LWVSC members voted for the new Education Committee. Previously, education subjects were covered under the Social Policy/Children's Issues Program.

Our program for the year is :

- Monitor and report the results of Brevard County's Public Schools status and student achievement results.
- Monitor and report the implementation of Florida Standards in the Brevard County School District.
- Support the homeless and underprivileged children attending Brevard County Public Schools.
- Monitor and report on the status of early childhood education efforts in Brevard County.
- Research, monitor and report on the adequacy of technology needs and advances in Brevard County Public Schools
- Conduct a follow up to the 2013 study on charter schools in Brevard County.
- Promote civics and citizen education for all high school students in Brevard Public Schools.

We welcome all members to join the new committee. A definite monthly meeting time and place has not been decided upon. We hope to accommodate the schedules of members who join the committee. You can call or e-mail Chair, Linda Scales, Doreen Archer or Lucia Watson if you would like more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

It is an exciting time for Brevard County Schools as we welcome our new superintendent, Dr. Desmond Blackburn.



## Recycling Awards Program

Marcia Booth – Chair

On May 26, 2015, the recipients of the 2014-2015 League of Women Voters of the Space Coast (LWVSC) Recycling Awards Program received their Award Plaques to be displayed next year at their schools. This year's winners are students from Andrew Jackson Middle School and Croton Elementary School. The program, in cooperation with Brevard Public Schools, challenges students to create and innovate ways to

further implement recycling and to educate why recycling is important to our environment. In attendance were LWVSC Awards Project Coordinator Marcia Booth and Brevard Public Schools Resource Conservation Specialist Laura Kandiko.

The League also wishes to recognize the Teacher Representatives, Christine Ryba from Andrew Jackson Middle School and Alicia Warnick-Ellis from Croton Elementary School for their leadership roles.

Tropical Elementary School as been accorded honorable mention status in the 2014-2015 League of Women Voters of the Space Coast (LWVSC) Recycling Awards Program for their project and demonstrated commitment to recycling and the environment. For more information, please contact LWVSC Recycling Awards Program Coordinator Marcia Booth at [Marcia@RecycleBrevards.org](mailto:Marcia@RecycleBrevards.org) or 305-479-4514.



## Politicos in Paradise

### LWVF's 2015 Convention

The League of Women Voters of Florida held their biennial Convention in Delray Beach on May 15-16, 2015. Ten members from League of Women Voters of the Space Coast attended the 35<sup>th</sup> Florida State Convention. It is always an opportunity to meet League members throughout the state. There was a variety of educational workshops.

Friday afternoon workshops included:

- How to Run an Effective Meeting
- Building a Rip Roaring Speaker Corps
- Dissecting the State Budget
- LWVUS Study: Campaign Finance Reform

Saturday morning caucuses included:

- Open Primaries
- Gun Safety
- Climate Change
- Education
- Health Care

Saturday afternoon workshops were:

- Effective Advocacy and Relationship Building: Making Change
- Millennials and Student Interns: Growing League!
- Fracking/Solar Amendment
- Developing Your League through Leadership Best Practices.

Election of Officers was held along with voting for the LWVF 2015-2017 Program. There was a roast for our outgoing president, Deirdre Macnab and we welcomed our new president, Pam Goodman.

You are encouraged to attend state League conventions and councils. They are very educational and enjoyable.



## International Relations

Joyce Calese

The International Relations Group will be meeting again on Tuesday October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Satellite Beach Library from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Early in 2016 we will study topics in the Great Decisions 2016 publication. There will be more information on those topics in the October Voter. One of the topics we studied earlier in the year from Great Decisions 2015 was Privacy in the Digital Age. This discussion was led by Martha Bradshaw. A summary of her topic follows:

### Privacy in the Digital Age by Martha Bradshaw

Digital privacy can be defined as “giving those who utilize technology the right to control their information” and making it possible to command their digital destiny. Some feel that privacy in the digital world isn’t important, but as Glenn Greenwald pointed out in his book on Edward Snowden and the NSA, “if you are always being watched and judged, you are not really a free individual.” When we feel we are being watched, we change our behavior; a Pew Research poll found that of those who were aware of the surveillance programs, 25% said they had changed the patterns of their own use of various technological platforms “a great deal” or “somewhat” since the Snowden revelations.

Many find deeply disturbing the surveillance of communications, movements, and other activities Americans have allowed the government to put in place since 9/11. In Europe, experiences under Communist and Fascist surveillance states led to an even greater appreciation of privacy and the possibility of abuse. The Dutch remembered how their government’s 1930’s population registry, intended to facilitate government administration, had been used by the Nazis to track down Gypsies and Jews. Until 1989, the East German secret police agency kept files on citizens that were used to further the power of the state.

Article 8, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000) raised the right to data protection to that of a fundamental right of EU law. Jeffrey Toobin in *The New Yorker* says “In Europe, the right to privacy trumps freedom of speech; the reverse is true in the United States.”

Even before Edward Snowden revealed the extent of the National Security Agency’s mass communications surveillance, Europeans were concerned about American companies’ handling of their citizens’ personal information. In 2000, “Safe Harbor” rules were agreed on allowing American companies to process data

collected in the EU if the companies had certified that processing met EU protection standards, even outside EU borders. Cloud computing companies have recently begun opening European data centers to let citizens keep data within EU borders. Several have centers in Ireland, and Amazon has a center in Germany. It is estimated by some that reaction to revelations about information being passed to NSA is costing the cloud computing industry up to \$180 billion in lost revenue.

In this country, the President’s Policy Directive 28 of January 2014, has brought about some changes concerning privacy, but these are because of US, not international law. As part of reforms, the US intelligence community now treats information collected on foreign nationals outside this country under rules equivalent to those on the treatment of US persons.

In the non-governmental realm, it is metadata, or data about data, that is analyzed in search of consistent patterns or relationships. Financial institutions, political and medical organizations, and retailers perform data mining for significant insights into their customers and markets to predict future trends and behavior. Our data is a valuable commodity--the saying is that “you are the product.” Each Facebook user is said to be worth \$9 to the company.

Data brokers buy and collect vast amounts of information. Do you know who has your data? Not only do we not know what is being collected on us, we don’t know what is being done with it. Is it sold to data brokers? Who? Where? And how long is it kept?

In February, the White House proposed new data privacy legislation that would have companies explain their privacy and security practices in “concise and easily understood” language. Companies would be required to establish codes of conduct and create policy review boards. The Privacy Bill of Rights, although unlikely to be passed, would require collectors to provide transparent descriptions of collection practices and be limited in how and what data they are allowed to collect.

The tradeoff we endure is giving up our privacy for the pleasures and conveniences of modern life. Apparently we feel it worth it, for although most of us -- over 90%, one poll found -- feel we have no control over the situation, few complain loudly.

League Pictures from a Variety of Events



Clay Henderson



Doreen Archer, Marcia Booth, Fran Baer, Susan Little  
Barbara Dutton & Marilyn Collins



Maureen Rupe & Priscilla Griffith



Audrey Grayson, Frank Clifford, Pam Kendrick, Jan Bancroft



Tony Dutton & Jo Shim



Cynthia Williams & Annie Frame



Mary Jo Jarrett, Pam Goodman, Barbara Dutton

~September Calendar - Members welcome at all meetings~

- Wednesday, September 2 - Board Meeting - 10:15 a.m. Large Room at Suntree Library
  - Saturday, September 19 - Timely Topic - "Port Canaveral at the Crossroads: Implications of Industrial Expansion" 11:30 a.m. at Suntree Country Club
  - Monday, September 21 Health Committee Meeting at Suntree Library at 6 p.m.
- Dates of other Committee Meetings were not determined at time the Voter was printed.

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

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**League of Women Voters of the Space Coast**

**P.O. Box 360823**

**Melbourne, FL 32936-0823**

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## Men Are Welcome to Join LWV!

### PLEASE CHECK YOUR INTERESTS

- Education
- Fund Raising/Finance
- Health Care
- Hospitality
- International Relations
- Justice
- Legislative Action
- Local Government
- Membership
- Natural Resources
- Publicity & Public Relations
- Speaker's Bureau
- Telephone Committee
- Voter Service
- The Voter newsletter/mailing
- Website
- Women's Issues

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete the information below and return  
with your check made payable to  
League of Women Voters of the Space Coast

Mail to: LWV Space Coast  
6629 Canal Road  
Melbourne Village, FL 32904

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Returning Member \_\_\_\_\_

#### ANNUAL DUES

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 for Individual Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$75.00 for Household Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 for Student Membership