

*Highlights of  
The 66th Annual Meeting on April 25, 2015*

**B**ill Jonson, Clearwater City Council member, Chair of the PSTSA Board, member of LWVNPC and former treasurer of the same, was one of two fine speakers at the Annual Meeting. His talk about PSTA was very informative. Did you know? :



- ▶ There are 40 fixed routes for the buses, 3 commuter routes, and 2 express routes.
- ▶ \$2 is the normal fare price; \$4.50 is the weekly rate. Seniors pay 1/2 fare.
- ▶ Number 1 in ridership are the routes on Gulf-to-Bay to the Clearwater Mall and downtown Clearwater to Countryside Mall. Overall, ridership is up.
- ▶ Millennials embrace public transportation because it gives them time to work or to engage in social media on the bus. All buses are equipped with Wi-Fi. (cont'd on p. 2)

**S**allie Parks, a woman of many achievements including recognition as a Governor's Point of Light, serving as a County Commissioner, first Director of the Pinellas Arts Council, founder of PACE, President of the Dunedin Rotary Club, and a past President of LWVNPC, spoke to us about the Pinellas Community Foundation on whose Board she serves and just concluded her term of President. She told us:



- ◇ The Foundation was created in 1969 and was the brainchild of Ralph Richardson, its first Executive Director. The dream of its founders was that people who had the pulse of the community would serve on its Board. Sarah Louise Helmi, a former LWVNPC President, gave great excellent service to the Board in the early years.
- ◇ In 1970, a gift of \$350 was given. In 1977, \$9,000 was given out in gifts. The grant payments made in 2014 totaled \$1,914,934. The assets of the Foundation at the end of 2014 was almost \$88 million. (cont'd on p. 2)

Business of the LWVNPC was conducted at the Annual Meeting. There was election and installation officers, approval of programs, approval of the budget for 2015-16, and welcoming of 30 members and three guests.

**From our President:**  
**Donna Sharpless**  
**See p. 2**

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- ▶ Pinellas & Hillsborough public transportation systems partner in such things as purchasing and training of employees.
- ▶ Looking to the future, PTSA is focusing on ongoing community communication and messaging, evaluating current routes, examination of new revenue and delivery alternatives, prioritizing bus replacement, seeking new external partnerships, using a data-driven and customer sensitive approach.

Parks--Continued from P. 1

- ◇ In 2014 , 124 grants & scholarships were given to non-profit organizations! (Call the Pinellas Community Foundation to obtain its 2014 Annual Report to see the distribution of the grants and scholarships. The phone number is 727-531-0058.)
- ◇ The mission statement of Pinellas Community Foundation is "Building a better future for Pinellas by partnering donors who care with causes that matter."

## Message from the President:

**Thank you** to everyone who made the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting go so smoothly. This includes those who assisted in an active role: Diane Wheatley-Gilotti, Jan Gibson, Becki Snyder, Marti Folwell, Judy McSwine, Tamsen Martin, Susan Guise, Joy Comstock, Carolyn Underwood, Bill Jonson, and Sallie Parks. Many others helped behind the scenes. And welcome to brand new board members Anne Decker and Pona Piekarski. Finally, a great thanks to the Dunedin Golf Club for providing a nice room, friendly staff, and a delicious lunch.

I am starting my second year as President of the League. Year one was a lot of work, but I have learned so much and am looking forward to an even better second year (although I'm sure it will also be hard work). There are some great, energetic new members, as well as longer term ones who continue to help. We also want to get others of you involved to the extent you can be. For example, we intend to work actively on the three new programs that were adopted at the Annual Meeting; in addition, we have lots of great ideas for other projects (such as expanding new membership materials and orientation). Please peruse the list of current and future volunteer opportunities on page 6 to see where you can help out. The more people volunteering, the larger an impact our League can make.

By the time you read this, I will have e-mailed (or mailed if you do not have e-mail) out to all a copy of the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Program. If you were unable to attend the meeting, there are three things in the Program that you may want to specifically review: (1) the list of program changes (on page 3), the list of 2014-2015 LWVNPC accomplishments (pages 7 – 8), and the reports of Officers, Board Members, and other Leaders (pages 8 – 12). These last reports provide an update as to where we are in the various areas in which we focus.

The League will be taking a summer break from Hot Topics, *The Voter*, and International Relations Meetings. The Board, however, will continue to meet and plan for a great fall and thereafter. If you have ideas for Hot Topics presentations, International Relations, or articles for *The Voter*, please contact us.

Donna Sharpless, President of LWVNPC



## 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting 2015

Approximately 35 people attended the Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 25. Of that group, three were guests and three others became brand new members at the meeting (Susan House, Mary Griffith, and Rachel Doran). We had some longer term members (see the website for a group photo of all past LWVNPC presidents) and some newer members. Our speakers, Bill Jonson and Sallie Parks, were both wonderful. And, business was completed.

Three proposed program changes were adopted. They are:

- Advocate to ensure that the funds generated from the Water and Land Conservation Amendment are used as intended.
- Study and promote the use of solar energy.
- Continue to monitor and advocate regarding the effect of charter schools and vouchers which are depleting funding for traditional schools.

The Financial Report will be filed after one requested change is made. (To show the negative year-end balance was offset by a reduction in the amount held in the checking account.)

The Proposed Budget was adopted with one requested change. (Add another \$250 to send members to the Legislative Conference in Tallahassee and offset with a similar deduction from reserves.)

Board members and officers up for re-election, as well as two new members, were voted in. They are:

- Tamsen Martin, First Vice President (returning)
- Anne Decker, Secretary (new)
- Karen Karinja (returning)
- Pona Piekarski (new)
- Lois Rogers-Watson (returning)
- Peggy Toohey (returning)
- Carolyn Underwood (returning).

The Nominating Committee for next year was elected: Elizabeth Mannion. Note: After the meeting, Carol Bailey also agreed to be on the Committee.

Donna Sharpless gave the President's report which stressed the need for members to volunteer.

After the meeting was adjourned, Marti Folwell announced the speakers.

First up was Bill Jonson, Clearwater City Council, PTSA Board Chair, and LWVNPC member. He talked about what the PTSA is planning "post GreenLight Pinellas"

Then Sallie Parks, immediate past Chair of the Board of Governors for the Pinellas Community Foundation and LWVNPC member, discussed how the LWVNPC was instrumental in getting the Foundation started, as well as explaining more what the Foundation does.

Both were very interesting and informative. Unfortunately, other business caused Mr. Jonson to have to leave after his presentation. However, Ms. Parks was able to stay and enjoy the delicious lunch provided by the Dunedin Golf Club. Carolyn Underwood was in charge of another successful Silent Auction and "Donation" Ticket event.



Donna presides



Susan Guise (at left) installs new and continuing officers and board. After Susan from L to R: Elizabeth Mannion (Nominating Committee), Carolyn Underwood, Lois Rogers-Watson, Anne Decker, Pona Piekarski, and Karen Karinja.



Marti introduces speakers



Bill receives new LWV pin from Donna

Welcome New Members: Rachel Doran, Jenea Nicole Douglas, Mary Griffith, Jane House, and Judy Ramsey



Past Presidents of LWVNPC: L to R: Sallie Parks, Susan Guise, Marti Folwell, Diane Wheatley-Gilotti, Fay Law, Judy McSwine, Elizabeth Mannion, Carol Bailey

## **FAY P. LAW**

### **A SEASONED AND EXCEPTIONAL LEAGUE LEADER**



First, some personal data - Fay Pfligger Law was born in 1930 in DeRuyter NY. She earned a BA and MED from Utica College of Syracuse. She married John in 1953 and relocated to the suburbs of Rochester NY, the home of Susan B. Anthony of suffragette fame. (Seneca Falls, NY where at Susan and others initially advocated for the franchise in 1840 is due East.) They have two sons.

Second, some career data - She taught a combination of English/social studies/science retiring in 1985. She joined the greater Rochester LWV in 1961 primarily to access League developed materials to use in her social study classes. She remained a consumer of League materials until retirement. There and then, THURSDAYS were League days for membership meetings or unit meetings or voter events. Meetings were in the day time. The biggest challenge to attendance was baby-sitting. Whereas the Rochester League undertook state and national League originated studies/consensus, this League was mostly involved with advocating for local issues especially education.

Third, lots of Florida League data - She moved to Ozona in 1987 and became active with the then LWVCUP (LWV Clearwater Upper Pinellas) serving as President from 1992-1994. She recalls huge voter registration/voter education events at the enclosed Clearwater Mall with various candidate forums, including judges scheduled daily attended by mall shoppers and interested voters drawn to these mega events.

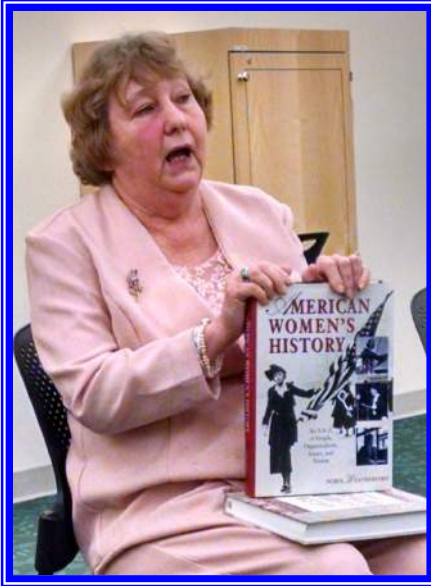
Her leadership skills were quickly recognized by LWVF leaders. She joined the state board and served as President from 1997-2001. She not only spent considerable time in the League Tallahassee office but also endeavored to visit each Florida local League (over 30) during each two-year term in office. With the local Leagues she strived to meet their needs: speaking at membership meetings ...she desired to inform on the ways the state League helped local Leagues; ..conducting local League board orientations; moderating a local candidate forum; registering voters etc. She is proud to have continued the state League tradition of developing and distributing voter guides statewide that presented unbiased and objective voter information about state candidates but probably more importantly about any proposed amendments to the Florida Constitution. Her Board issued the first Spanish edition.

Fay served again as LWNPC president from 2007-8. She groomed a succession of leaders and fostered stability at the local level.

Fay is too modest to share her various successful League campaigns with this interviewer except to note that League was working on redistricting from the time she moved to Florida. She values her contact with League members and notes that at a League meeting the focus was issues. For instance, one did not know personal stuff about a fellow Leaguer... origin? married? single? children? working outside the home? homemaker? education? politics etc. However, she did share her gratitude for the relationships .

**Note:** Many thanks to Dianne Wheatley-Giliotti, herself a seasoned and exceptional League Leader who interviewed Fay for this article.

## Doris Weatherford: Gifted Researcher & Author



The Doris Weatherford presentation on March 28, 2015 to the American Association of University Women and the League of Voters of North Pinellas County was absolutely inspiring and informative. Dr. Weatherford told many stories of American women, some whose names are familiar and some of whom most of the audience had never heard, but all made contributions to our country. The anecdotes were delightful!

As an expert researcher, Dr. Weatherford has made available very important information to the American public. Her work is a treasure and needs to be shared widely. Members might want to consider giving some of her books to friends and relatives. Males and females need to know about the contributions of American women.



Her first book was *Foreign and Female*. The next was *American Women and World War II* followed by *American Women's History: An A-Z of People, Organizations, Issues and Events*. Following that was *Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History* and *A History of the American Suffragist Movement*. *A History of Women in the United States: A State by State Reference* came out in four volumes and includes all fifty states as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. One of great interest locally is *Real Women of Tampa and Hillsborough County: From Prehistory to the Millennium*. *American Women During World War II* was published as an encyclopedia. *Women in American Politics: History and Milestones* is a two volume set. Do check out your local library and see if these publications are on the shelves. If they are not, we

need to request that they be.

### Learn where the League stands on issues

Go to <http://thefloridavoter.org/resources/study-action/> and click on

**Study and Action 2013-2015**

which will take you to the study items and positions of the League.

**You can download a copy!**

**The LWV of FL is in favor of expanding Medicaid. See article on pp. 7, 8.**

## Insurance Coverage and Health Outcomes

by Diane Dimperio, member of *League of Women Voters* of Alachua County

Recognizing the important role that social determinants play in health outcomes is a credit to the Florida Department of Health. Current research supports the focus on development of policies that facilitate healthy behaviors, a clean environment and improving the social and economic status of high-risk populations. This policy approach is an effective long-term strategy and consistent with national best practices. Access to quality health care while only accounting for about 20% of outcomes is a short term strategy that has proven to improve health outcomes.

Scientific literature demonstrates that expanding health insurance coverage to the million or so adult Floridians who would qualify will improve their health outcomes. In addition to the health impact on adults this expansion is likely to increase enrollment of eligible children in health coverage. (1)

Prior to the insurance mandate instituted by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) several states and other entities expanded access to health care coverage through Medicaid or similar programs. Below is a brief summary of some of these projects and preliminary results from post ACA observations.

### Improving Health Outcomes

Three states that expanded Medicaid to adults experienced a significant decrease in mortality that was not seen in similar states that did not expand coverage. The decreased mortality was more pronounced in areas of highest poverty. (2)

Low-income adults who gain access to health coverage are more likely to participate in primary and preventive care. Studies report between 36.7% to 50% increase in primary care visits (3,4). Another found fewer reports of "delayed care". (2) Low income people with coverage reported better health (2,5) and were less likely to use the emergency room. (3) They were also more likely to participate in health screenings for colon cancer (4) breast and cervical cancer (4,5,6) as well as heart disease (5). Those with insurance reported less depression, better access to anti-depressants and improved mental health. (5) Health insurance coverage reduced financial stress and lowered out of pocket costs (5,7,8). Medicaid coverage nearly eliminated catastrophic expenditures (out of pocket medical expenses exceeding 30% of income). (5)

### Special Populations

People with diabetes were more likely to access needed care and medicine (5,8) and to follow provider advice regarding diabetes care. (8) Administrators report that the homeless who are getting Medicaid coverage are healthier, more able to work and likely to secure housing. Because of broader access to health resources, providers are better able to manage the homeless and can provide better services because of provider reimbursement. (7) About half of prisoners have a mental health problem. (9) Those with untreated health conditions are more likely to return to prison, so access to health care and medications for managing mental health and other chronic conditions is expected to help reduce recidivism. (9,10) Minorities are more likely to be low income and uninsured so increasing access to health insurance may help to reduce racial disparities in health outcomes. (11)

### Concluding Comments

The Commonwealth Fund just released a report describing insurance related indicators for the largest four states. The two that expanded Medicaid coverage, California and New York, were compared to Florida and Texas, which did not. (12) Compared to New York and California, Florida has a higher percent of uninsured, especially among low-income populations. Floridians are more likely to delay/forgo needed care and experience problems paying medical bills. These are all issues that have been foreshadowed in the studies cited above.

Access to the LIP funds is not going to improve health outcomes as it provides economic assistance to hospitals to help pay for care to the uninsured. Only a small percent of the funds is used for primary care. Expanding health coverage will help improve health outcomes and reduce the burden on hospitals.

(Continued on p. 8; Sources are also listed on p. 8)

(Insurance Coverage and Health Outcomes continued from page 7)

It is clear from the research that although not sufficient to insure good health, access to high quality ongoing comprehensive care is **necessary** for good health. Florida is already paying for the care that will quickly benefit the million low-income people who need it.

## References

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## LWVNPC Volunteer Opportunities

### Current Needs:

**Website.** We love our Webmaster, Kay Pitchon, but we believe that everyone needs a back-up. If you have any interest in “techy” stuff, Kay will show you all about the website. Contact her at: (727) 9454-7912 or [kpitchon@gmail.com](mailto:kpitchon@gmail.com).

**Publicity.** We also love our Publicity Chair, Joy Comstock, but publicity is a BIG job. Joy needs a person who can work with her, as well as be back-up when she travels. It would be wonderful if you know anything about social media. Contact Joy at (727) 736-2746 or [joy.comstock3@gmail.com](mailto:joy.comstock3@gmail.com).

**Answer the telephone.** We have a LWVNPC telephone message service. It needs to be checked frequently and calls referred to the appropriate person. If interested, contact Donna Sharpless, (727) 784-1772 / [dsharpless@verizon.net](mailto:dsharpless@verizon.net) OR Marti Folwell (727) 559-7498 / [mhfolwell@verizon.net](mailto:mhfolwell@verizon.net).

**Membership.** Several of us are involved in creating new membership materials and/or working on the 3 R’s (Recruitment, Retention, Relationships). If you are a new member, what would you like to have received when you joined? Let us know and help create them. Contact Donna Sharpless, (727) 784-1772 / [dsharpless@verizon.net](mailto:dsharpless@verizon.net) OR Carolyn Underwood (727) 442-7757 / [cmunderw@aol.com](mailto:cmunderw@aol.com).

### Needed Shortly:

**Education.** Lois Rogers-Watson is in charge of the Education Committee that will be working on the program to “monitor and advocate regarding the effect of charter schools and vouchers which are depleting funding for traditional schools”. This committee is gearing up, so join her now. Lois: (727) 785-7157 / [glwatson@verizon.net](mailto:glwatson@verizon.net).

**Environment.** We are still forming the committees to (1) make sure amendment 1 monies are used as intended and (2) to study and promote the use of solar energy in Florida. If you are interested in either of these, please contact either Donna Sharpless, (727) 784-1772 / [dsharpless@verizon.net](mailto:dsharpless@verizon.net) OR Ashley Wilson Pimley, (727) 692-8450 / [ashley7276928450@gmail.com](mailto:ashley7276928450@gmail.com).

(Continued on next page )

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## ***Volunteer Opportunities –continued***

Future:

**Voter Registration:** We want to register voters. We will definitely need people to help at the next “Voter Registration Day” which occurs mid-September. There is a simple on-line training and then you are qualified to help. Contact Karen Karinja (214) 929-8984 / [Karen.karinja@gmail.com](mailto:Karen.karinja@gmail.com).

**Candidate Forums:** We will need both moderators and time keepers when the next election cycle comes around. Get trained now, so you will be able to help us in 2016. Contact Karen Karinja (214) 929-8984 / [Karen.karinja@gmail.com](mailto:Karen.karinja@gmail.com).

**Note regarding the Education Committee:**

**We will meet on June 17, 2015 at 11 a.m. at Perkins Restaurant, 2375 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor. Please join us!**

**Call Lois Rogers-Watson fo confirm 727-785-7157**

### **New Member Social**

**O**n March 24, 2015, the League had a new members’ social at the lovely home of life time member Virginia Howie. We enjoyed the opportunity of introducing ourselves to each other and sharing our passion and focus as a member of the League. As we chatted and laughed while watching the sunset, we learned about the diversity and educational backgrounds of our members. It was so interesting hearing comments from a labor lawyer, administrators, an archiver, teachers, a realtor, etc. What a wonderful networking potential.

**W**e were honored to have a past state president, Diane Wheatley –Gillotti. What an asset she is to the new members as they transition into today’s League. Virginia Howie has a story that is worth hearing over and over again about the early League activities and being active with children.

**S**o as the League organizes for the next year being guided by our president, Donna Sharpless, we are sure to make an impact to inform the public, to improve the lives of citizens, and to embrace future League members. The League celebrates the 95 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment this year. We are excited about the activities that we can develop for the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the amendment. If you would like to be directly involved in this endeavor, let Carolyn Underwood know. We need your help in recruiting new members, retaining members, and building relationships. Carolyn Underwood (727) 4423-7757 or [cmun-dew@aol.com](mailto:cmun-dew@aol.com)

**LWVNPC**

P.O. Box 6833  
Clearwater, FL  
33758

Phone: 727-447-1564

**Officers 2015-2016**

President: Donna Sharpless  
1st VP: Tamsen Martin  
2nd VP: Vacant  
Secretary-Anne Decker  
Treasurer-Marti Folwell

**Directors**

Joy Comstock-Publicity  
Rita Garvey  
Ashley Wilson Pimley  
Pona Piekarski  
Lois Rogers-Watson-Newsletter  
Peggy Toohey-Transportation  
Carolyn Underwood  
Karen Karinja-Voter Service

**Nominating Committee Chair**

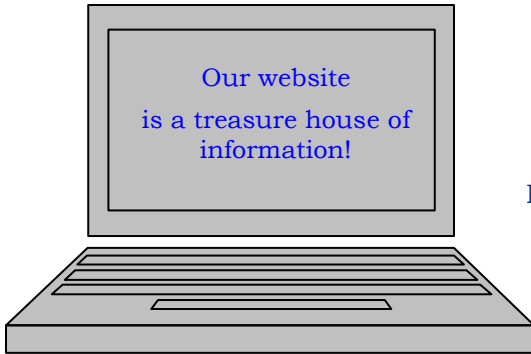
Elizabeth Mannion

**Webmaster**

Kay Pitchon

**LWV MISSION STATEMENT**  
*“A non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.”*

**Informed & Active Citizen Participation**



Our website  
is a treasure house of  
information!

[www.lwvnorthpinellas.org](http://www.lwvnorthpinellas.org)

**Become a member! Membership/Membership Renewal Application:**

**League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
NEW MEMBER?  PREVIOUS MEMBER?  WHERE? \_\_\_\_\_

Annual membership is \$50. Household memberships are \$25 for each additional member residing at the same address. Student membership is \$25. Cornerstone membership is \$100. After LWV membership for 50 years, there are no dues.

Dues are payable to the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County on \_\_\_\_\_ or before May 1 of each year.

Please mail the membership application and payment to:  
LWVNPC,  
P.O. Box 6833  
Clearwater, FL 33758