



**LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®**
OF NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY

THE VOTER

June/July 2015



SEPTEMBER KICK-OFF MEETING

Saturday, September 19, 2015

9:30 a.m.

Dunedin Public Library

On-Line Voting and More!

LWVNPC Voter Services Education invites all to an informative presentation by Ms. Deborah Clark, our Supervisor of Elections in Pinellas County, at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 19, 2015 at the Dunedin Public Library. Join us in the Community Meeting Room just to the left of the entrance to learn about the voting processes in our county as well as new and upcoming innovations such as on-line voting.

"NATIONAL VOTER

REGISTRATION DAY

Sept. 22, 2015

*Call Karen Karinja and
volunteer to help.*

The Dunedin Public Library is located at 223 Douglas Avenue, Dunedin, FL 34698. The phone number is 727-298-3080.



National Voter Registration Day 2014

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From our President, Donna

I hope everyone is enjoying this summer. I saw a sign on a store in my neighborhood recently. It said "If I go to hell, at least I'm used to the heat". It made me laugh.

I am so happy that some of our newer members have jumped right in and are helping in many ways. To name just a few: Judy Ramsey is not only heading up the Solar Petition Drive, but she has offered to help our Publicity Chair, Joy Comstock. Jemea Douglas has joined the Voter Service Team and is in talks with Kay Pitchon to perhaps be her back-up. Pona Piekarski, new member and new on the Board, is on the Education Committee chaired by Lois Rogers-Watson. And both Beth Hovind and Barbara Letvin are working with Karen Karinja, Voter Service Chair, on the Open Primary Consensus study. If you are interested in helping with any of these things, let us know. In addition, National Voter Registration Day is Sept. 22 and Karen is looking for members to help register voters. Contact us!

Your Board has been busy putting together a schedule of interesting presentations for this year. These include gun safety, charter schools, and the Suffragettes. Next up is Supervisor of Elections, Deborah Clark, coming to discuss Online Voter Registration. Further information on that is in this Voter.

There have been some important decisions made recently - some (in my opinion) good and others not so much. For example, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the subsidies under the Affordable Care Act. This ensures that many people will continue to have health coverage that they can afford. However, in our state, Medicare expansion was not approved, thus continuing that there is no viable health insurance for roughly 800,000 people. We need to keep in mind that the League's advocacy efforts don't always work i.e., Medicare expansion), but they often do (online voter registration). Each of you can make a difference by sending letters and emails, as well as making phone calls to our representative on issues that are important to you. Thank you so much for those of you who have done this in the past and will continue to do so in the future. Remember, members cannot

do so in the future. Remember, members cannot speak on behalf of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County, but you can speak on behalf of yourself.

And one more reminder, if you haven't sent in your dues for the May 2015- April 2016 year yet, please do so. After this month (July), those who haven't paid dues will have to be dropped from our membership. That doesn't mean you can't rejoin, but until you do, you will not receive updates from us nor get into events at the members price.

Thank you all for being a part of this League!

Donna Sharpless



Some Future Meetings:

October 10 at 10 a.m.:
Rick Wolfe on charter schools in Pinellas County

November 14 at 10 a.m.:
Paula Dockery

WHY IS LWVNPC SUPPORTING THE SOLAR PETITION DRIVE?

LWV Florida supports the Solar Petition Drive. In addition, we at the local level are as well. Why? To answer: Currently Florida is one of four states that by law denies citizens and businesses the ability to buy solar power electricity directly from someone other than an electric utility. Florida law also denies property owners the right to sell solar power to tenants or to a neighbor with a common boundary line, thus restricting solar choice for many Florida families and businesses. This allows big utility companies such as Duke Energy and Florida Power & Light to continue their



Visit www.flsolarchoice.org

Please mark Sept. 22 on your calendar, come out, and help us gather signatures. You are needed!

—Judy Ramsey

Environmental
Portfolio

monopoly on the state's energy market. In a recent poll, 74% of Florida voters said they support a proposal to change the state's current law and allow Floridians to contract directly with solar power providers for their electricity. That's why the solar initiative, started by Floridians for Solar Choice, was created: To remove barriers to solar choice and give Floridians more options to choose from amongst current energy suppliers - to level the playing field. This is a bi-partisan issue, supported by both conservative and liberal groups and businesses. (Of course, it has its critics and nay-sayers too.) At this time the Constitutional Amendment Petition is in the hands of the Florida Supreme Court. They won't be hearing oral arguments regarding legal wording of the solar initiative until September 1. It is unknown when they will give their decision. In the meantime, the LWVNPC is going to be gathering petitions for the solar initiative to be placed on the November, 2016 ballot. We will have petitions available to sign in conjunction with National Voter Registration Day on September 22 and at all our other meetings and presentations. We will be seeking volunteers to help with the petition drive as well as registering voters.



National Voter Registration Day

National Voter Registration Day: Tuesday, September 22, 2015

Leaguers throughout the nation will be out in force registering citizens to vote on Tuesday, September 22, 2015 as part of our participatory democratic form of government. Each year the fourth Tuesday of September is designated as National Voter Registration Day. The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County will be among thousands working on behalf of this effort.

At present LWVNPC has confirmed registration sites at Pinellas Technical College Clearwater Campus, the Drew Street SPC campus and New Port Richey Pasco/Hernando Community College.

We are seeking other sites that would be willing to permit us to hold registration; if you know of such a place, please email Karen Karinja, LWVNPC Voter Services, at Karen.karinja@gmail.com



Marti Folwell

Marti, our Treasurer, former President, and long-time member had a serious auto accident which left her with a badly broken ankle on which she cannot put weight for 12 weeks. It will be a long recuperation period.

She is currently in Belleair Rehabilitation Center at 1150 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Clearwater,. She has a direct line and the number for that is 727-437-4729.

Your get well wishes and visits would be welcome.



SPEAKING OF VOTING...LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE SUFFRAGISTS!

On Monday, June 22, 2015 at the office of the League of Women Voters of the Saint Petersburg Area, Jane Lockett of the League of Women Voters of Orange County graciously presented a Power Point Presentation on the Suffragists. As we approach the 100th anniversary in 2020 of the Nineteenth Amendment the League of Women Voters is gearing up to provide educational opportunities for the community and local schools about the important work of our foremothers who worked so valiantly for us to have the privilege of voting. The Power Point presentation shared by Jane is available to the Leagues in Florida.

Five members of the LWVNPC attended the presentation: Joy Comstock, Karen Karinja, Lois Rogers-Watson, Donna Sharpless, and Carolyn Underwood. These members also learned about the Speakers Bureau of the LWV of Orange County and other Power Point programs they have prepared. Jane Lockett is the chair of the Speakers Bureau for the LWV of Orange County and is happy to share materials with other Leaguers. (Email lwwcspeakersbureau@gmail.com) All found Jane very knowledgeable and it was a joy to be able to go to lunch afterwards where we could have further conversations.

Jane is in the red jacket in the picture below..



Officers 2015-2016

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

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Lois Rogers-Watson—Newsletter
Peggy Toohey—Transportation
Carolyn Underwood —Membership
Karen Karinja-Voter Service
Nominating Committee Chair
Elizabeth Mannion

LWVNPC

P.O. Box 6833
Clearwater, FL 33758
Phone: 727-447-1564

Visit us on the web at

www.lwv.northpinellas.org

**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 and Active Citizen Participation

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 & payment to: LWVNPC, P. O. Box 6833, Clearwater, FL 33758