



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

THE VOTER

March 2016

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Education: Focus for March

The League has always advocated for public education. Hear about current issues in our state.



Dr. Sue M. Legg,
Chair of the LWV
of Florida's Educa-
tion Committee,
will address us on
Privatizing our
Schools:
Who Profits?

When: *Saturday, March 19, 2016*

10 a.m.

Where: *Room 104 in Building ES of the*
Clearwater Campus, St. Petersburg Col-
lege at the corner of Drew St. and Old
Coachman. Drive south on Old Coach-
man to reach the parking lot. Follow
LWV signs

Look inside on page 3 for additional
information about Dr. Legg.

The public is invited.

Bring friends!

MARCH & APRIL MEETINGS

March 7, 2016 2 p.m.

International Relations Meeting

Privacy in the Digital Age

Mary Berglund, Presenter

March 19, 2016 10 a.m.

Privatizing Our Schools

Who Profits?

Dr. Sue M. Legg, Presenter

April 9, 2016 10:30 a.m.

Annual Meeting

Election of New Officers

Dr. Susan MacManus Presenter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The President is on vacation for this edition of *The Voter*. However, she wants to remind everyone to vote in the primary on March 15, 2016. In addition, please read the pages in this issue of *The Voter* about our Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 9, 2016. Besides having an excellent speaker in Dr. MacManus we have elections of officers, and consideration of some changes in the by-laws, a budget, program items, etc. Donna looks forward to seeing you on April 9th!

See page 4 for registration form
For the Annual Meeting.

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CALENDAR



- March 7-International Relations
- March 15-Florida Primary Election
- March 19-Sue Legg, Chair of State LWV Committee, 10 a.m.
- April 9 -Annual Meeting.

Dr. Susan MacManus, speaker
10:30 a.m.





Sue Legg graduated from Richmond High School, a large inner city school that has been in the national news. She earned her B.A. in Political Science from U.C. Berkeley, and later taught in the Richmond, California public schools. When she arrived in Gainesville in 1966, the city was struggling with desegregation. She joined the Gainesville Women for Equal Rights and became its president in 1970.

Sue earned her Ph.D. in Research, Measurement and Evaluation at the University of Florida and was a staff member there. She served as , Associate Director and Director of the Office of Instructional Resources (O.I.R.), at U.F. until she retired in 2002. While at O.I.R., she was responsible for many state-wide assessment programs including the Florida Teacher Certification examinations (FTCE) and the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST). O.I.R. also included: tutoring, classroom technologies, media, C.I.R.C.A., and the CITT online learning units. In 1999, she was appointed University Coordinator for Distance Education.

Dr. Legg's professional activities and publications include two terms as Chairperson for the College Board's SAT National Advisory Committee and President of two national and one state professional associations. For twenty years, she was the examination consultant for the Florida Bar Board Certification Examinations. She also conducted evaluation studies of the efficacy of online learning with funding from the Mellon and Hewlett Foundations. She has coauthored books and published articles on assessment.

After Sue Legg retired, she joined the Center for Latin American Studies at U.F. where she was the Director of the Partnership in Global Learning (PGL) an international university and K-12 consortium on online learning in Brazil, Mexico, and Florida. From 2005-2008, she was the Technical Coordinator for the *Aymara Online* grant from the U.S. Department of Education. From 2008-2011, she was Project Manager for a follow up grant from the National Science Foundation.

In 2011, Dr. Legg joined the Alachua County League of Women Voters. As Education Team Chair, she led both a local and statewide study of the financial and social impact of school choice for which she was named Florida League Member of the Year. Currently, she has organized a nationwide group of League education team members representing 32 states. Her League blog entitled *Education Issues* is online at: <http://lwveducation.com>. We recommend you take a look at the postings there.

Dr. Legg has investigated the ways privatizing education has enabled the management companies to make money from our taxpayer dollars. Thus, the title of her presentation to us, i.e. *PRIVATIZING OUR SCHOOLS: WHO PROFITS?*

Don't miss hearing Sue!

LOCATION: Room 104 in the ES building, St. Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus

The campus is at the corner of Drew St. & Old Coachman, just to the west of US 19. The ES building is in the southern part of the campus. Best to turn south on Old Coachman and turn in the last driveway into the parking lot. ES is the second building. A LWV sign will be out front and someone will be at the door directing people to the lecture hall.

Light refreshments will be served.

ANNUAL MEETING OF LWVNPC

Saturday, April 9, 2016



PLACE: Belleair Country Club in the Belle Terrace, 1 Country Club Ln, Belleair, FL 33756

TIME: Meet & Greet-10 a.m. Annual Meeting begins promptly at 10:30 a.m. followed by lunch and speaker

FEATURING:

Dr. Susan MacManus

Dr. Susan A. MacManus, who received her M.A. from the University of Michigan and Ph.D. from Florida State University, is a Distinguished University Professor at USF in the Department of Government and International Affairs. For the last several election cycles, she has served as political analyst for WFLA NewsChannel 8 (Tampa NBC affiliate). Since 2008, she has been a featured columnist on sayfiereview.com—a widely-read Florida-based political website She has appeared on every major broadcast and cable television and radio network and been interviewed by major newspapers in Florida, the U.S., and abroad. She is Florida’s most-quoted political scientist.



Dr. MaManus has spoken to our League in the past and she never disappoints! Her views on the latest in happenings in the world of politics, both on the state and national level are well-informed and insightful. Don’t miss this opportunity to hear her!



RESERVATION FOR ANNUAL MEETING ON APRIL 9, 2016

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Guest(s): _____

Amount of Check Enclosed: _____ (If possible, please include payment with this form.)

Let us know if there are special diet restrictions. \$25 members \$30 visitors

Mail to: LWVNPC, P. O. Box 6833, Clearwater, FL 33758 before April 1.

ANNUAL MEETING 2016

As per our ByLaws, (Article VIII, Sec. 2), members need to be notified of items and board nominations to be voted on at the Annual Meeting at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Therefore, we are providing a list of items and nominations to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting which is April 9, 2016:

Board and Officer Nominations:

President: Karen Karinja

Second Vice President: vacant

Treasurer: Marti Folwell

Directors: Joy Comstock, Rita Garvey, Leigh Learning , Judy McSwine , Ashley Wilson Pimley, Judy Ramsey, Donna Sharpless

Continuing Board Members: Tamsen Martin, 1st Vice President; Anne Decker, Secretary; Lois Rogers-Watson; Peggy Toohey; Carolyn Underwood

ByLaw Changes: The following are proposed changes to the LWWNPC Bylaws to be effective April 9, 2016:

- Article III – Membership, Sec. 2: Types of Membership. Delete "or shall be state members at large."

- Article IV – Board of Directors, Sec. 1: Number, Manner of Selection, Term of Office. Delete "A director may serve only two consecutive two-year terms but may remain on the Board if elected to fill a different portfolio position."

- Article VIII – Nominations and Elections, Sec. 1: Nominating Committee. After the second sentence add: "In the event the League is unable to obtain three non-Board Nominating Committee members, the number may be less, but a minimum of one."

Proposed Program Changes:

Retain existing programs

Under III. QUALITY OF LIFE IN PINELLAS COUNTY, add a subsection titled Social Policy.

A. Support the reduction of poverty in north Pinellas County.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK:

Monitor the county to see if/how it has been implementing recommendations to departments to re-align their core services and work collectively to serve the populations of East Tarpon Springs, North Greenwood, and Highpoint.

[Background for this program recommendation: There was a study titled Economic Impact of Poverty of May 17, 2012. Five areas of Pinellas County were deemed to be at-risk communities, having 16% of their population living at or below 100% of the poverty level. Three of these areas lie within League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County's jurisdiction: East Tarpon Springs, North Greenwood, and Highpoint (north of Ulmerton Road). It was recommended that county departments re-align their core services and work collectively to serve these populations, including co-locating services and shifting focus to prevention as well as developing strategic initiatives in Health and Human Services, Justice and Community Services, (continued next page)

Annual Meeting continued

Community Development, Code Enforcement, Planning and Economic Development. The LWVNPC could begin a study project to find out how the county has been implementing these recommendations over the past four years and look, in general, as to how the county has allocated funding for the reduction of poverty.]

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY Proposed Budget 2016-2017

INCOME		Subtotal	Total
	Donations	\$500	
	Education Fund		
	Member Dues - Basic	\$4,600	
	Member Dues - Cornerstone & Extra	\$600	
	Fundraising Activities	\$800	
	Reserves Withdrawal	\$4,438	
	MEETINGS		
	Annual Meeting	\$1,000	
	Legislative Update	\$1,000	
	Hot Topics Other	\$1,000	
TOTAL INCOME		\$13,938	
EXPENSES			
	CONFERENCES		
	Conferences		
	Legislative (Tallahassee)	\$750	
	State	\$1,200	
	National	\$1,750	
	TOTAL CONFERENCE		\$3,700
	CONTRACT SERVICES		
	Accounting	\$700	
	Website	\$250	
	TOTAL CONTRACT SERVICES		\$950

Annual Meeting continued

Annual Meeting	900	
Legislative Update	\$900	
Hot Topics Other	\$900	
LUNCHEON/MEETING EXPENSES		\$2,700
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Bank Charges	\$40	
Printing	\$80	
Postage	\$30	
Incorporation Fee	\$63	
Insurance	\$400	
Post Office Box Rental	\$150	
Telephone	\$625	
Miscellaneous	\$150	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES		\$1,538
PROGRAM EXPENSES		
Membership	\$200	
Publicity	\$200	
Voter Service	\$350	
Education	\$100	
Other	\$200	
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES		\$1,050
SUPPORT EXPENSES		
National PMP	\$2,500	
State PMP	\$1,500	
TOTAL SUPPORT EXPENSES		\$4,000
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$13,938

Dues Increase:

Members are asked to vote on increasing dues beginning with the 2016-2017 fiscal year to \$55.00 per individual member; \$110 per family household, \$30 for students, and \$110 per Cornerstone member (\$165 per household Cornerstone member). Lifetime members (50 years +) would continue to have no dues.

We are on the Web: <http://www.lwvnorthpinellas.org>
and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVNPC>

LWVNPC Voter Service News

VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PUSH TO GET REGISTRATIONS BEFORE THE PRIMARY DEADLINE



Voter Service Chair, Karen Karinja, and Joanne Lentino, chat during Voter Registration Drive

Teams of two hit as many venues as they could to educate and register voters before the 29 day deadline for the March 15 Presidential Preference Primary. League members know how a closed primary limits voters, but the general public may not realize they need a party affiliation as well as a registration in advance. It has been an experience! Tables were set up at Pinellas Technical College, St. Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus, the Pinellas County Teachers Association Bldg., the Clearwater Bus Depot, and the Land O'Lakes library. Predictably there were more party affiliation changes than new registrations! The SOE reports a significant number of party affiliation changes as well. It's difficult to know what this means – hopefully a wave of educated voters who want to have a voice.

CANDIDATE FORUMS OVER FOR NOW

Thanks to all the volunteers who staffed the Candidate Forums. Tarpon Springs, Oldsmar and Indian Rocks Beach are completed. Of the three, IRB was the most well-attended. The SOE had registration tables at all three locations and Voter Services will now move on to lining up the pre-November Candidate Forums. If you haven't attended a forum, try it...they are enlightening and offer us an opportunity to remind citizens of how important the League is.

I N D I A N R O C K S C A N D I D A T E F O R U M :



Left to right: Bert Valery, RB Johnson for Mayor, Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy, Jeremiah Carmody, Edward Hoofnagle, Marti Folwell was the moderator.



OLDSMAR CANDIDATE FORUM



Becky Afonso council seat 4; Jerry Beverland council 4; Jerry Dustin, Director BME Upper Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2015-2016

Lively discussions on timely global issues

Meetings are the first Monday of the month

2 p.m.

Pinellas Park Library at 52nd St. & 78th Ave.

Pinellas Park

at Pinellas Park Library



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SCHEDULE

March 7, 2016

Privacy in the Digital Age

Mary Berglund

April 4, 2016

Human Trafficking

Kay Lahdenpera

May 2, 2016

Sectarianism in the Middle East

Pat Budlong

Questions? Call Judy McSwine 727-447-5493

In Memoriam



We were saddened to learn of the death of Herbert L. Donald, a member of the LWVNPC. He died peacefully at age 100 on January 30, 2016. Herb lived a remarkable life of service to his country and to his community. A celebration of his life was held on February 21, 2016 at the Hale Senior Center in Dunedin.

KAY PITCHON ANNOUNCES A WEBSITE CHANGE

At the February Board meeting, Kay Pitchon, webmaster, announced that in the near future you may notice a slight change in our website. We are moving to Responsive Web Design which will give us easy access from our cell phones as well as other improvements. Be sure to visit the web page often and stay abreast of League happenings. Thank you, Kay, for your excellent work for all of us.

RESOURCES FOR THE VOTER

<http://bereadytovote.org/>

<http://www.vote411.org/>

<http://www.votepinellas.com/>

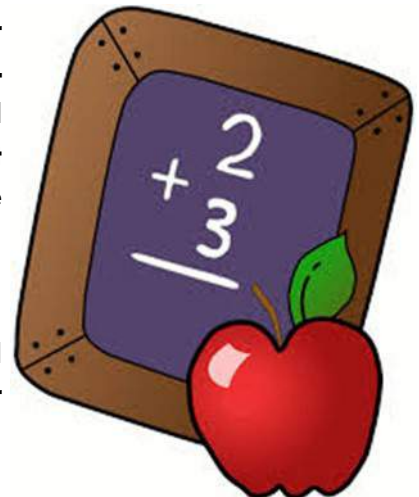
<http://www.myflorida.com/>

EDUCATION COMMITTEE URGES YOU TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

No doubt you have seen the articles in *The Tampa Bay Times* about some of the education bills before the Florida State Legislature. After our study two years ago of charter schools, our League has been concerned about the trend in our State Legislature to lessen local school district control over charter schools and the overall conflict of interest so evident in these bills created by persons who themselves have close ties with some of the charter schools.

Public school education is one of the pillars of our democracy and when more and more of our tax dollars are being dedicated to charter schools at the expense of the traditional public school it is alarming.

If, by the time you receive this *Voter*, House Bills HB 873, HJR 759, and HB 669 have not been passed by the full House, PLEASE call your Representative and urge a vote of "NO!" on each of these bills. If you need more information on them, go to: <http://www.tampabay.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-the-florida-houses-power-grab-for-charter-schools/2266106> That editorial appeared in the *Tampa Bay Times* on Sunday, February 21, 2016. It echoes the concerns that your Education Committee has.



Lois Rogers-Watson, Chair of the LWVNPC Education Committee

PAULA DOCKERY WRITES ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION

(reprinted from OpEd piece of January 7, 2016 by permission from Paula Dockery)

The Constitution Revision Commission is a big deal, and voters should pay attention. This group of unelected appointees will have the power to put constitutional changes directly on the ballot. The CRC is required to meet every 20 years to review and recommend changes to Florida's Constitution. That's pretty heady stuff. The politically well-connected will be jockeying for seats on this influential and prestigious panel.

The CRC can put forward amendments to clean up outdated or conflicting provisions or to remove language that is no longer binding. It can also introduce new issues, amend existing constitutional language or undo what citizens accomplished through the initiative process. It's one of five ways to amend Florida's Constitution. The Taxation and Budget Commission is another appointed body that has direct ballot access but a more limited scope. A constitutional convention could be called, but that is unlikely. The Florida Legislature can also place proposed amendments to the Constitution directly on the ballot with a supermajority vote. The fifth method — by citizens' initiative — is not as simple. The 10-step process to just get on the ballot is difficult, costly and time-consuming.

Voters angry with their representatives for ignoring their pleas — for medical marijuana, solar energy and land conservation — started jumping through the hoops. It's a tool that's being relied on more frequently out of voter frustration.

The Florida Constitution is the basic governing document of our state. It is supposed to outline our guiding principles and government structure, while the Legislature is to set specific policy and programs through statutes. The U.S. Constitution is a much leaner document — only 8,700 words — compared to Florida's with many times that (over 87 pages and growing). The Florida Constitution has been amended many times and is voluminous beyond its intended purpose. Some argue — rightfully so — that we should be selective about what goes into our Constitution. Others believe it's the people's document — which it is — and if the Legislature ignores the people, they have the right to act.

Elected officials blame citizens' initiatives for the burgeoning Constitution. But who's really cluttering up the Constitution?

Here's the scorecard:

- 136 proposed constitutional amendments were on the ballot from 1978 through 2014, and 101 passed.
- The Legislature put 78 on the ballot, and 61 passed.
- Citizens had 34 ballot initiatives, and 27 passed.
- The Taxation and Budget Commission had seven amendments, and five passed.
- The CRC met twice, in 1978 and 1998, proposed 17 amendments, and eight passed.

The Legislature was responsible for 60 percent of the changes to the Florida Constitution during the past 38 years. Citizens' initiatives account for 27 percent.

It's likely the Legislature will try to place some constitutional amendments on the ballot in 2016. One worthy proposal would return the appointed education commissioner to an elected position and a member of the Cabinet. Fortunately, voters have the final say.

LWVNPC

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

Visit us on the web at
www.lwvnorthpinellas.org

President: Donna Sharpless

1st Vice President: Tamsen Martin— Health

2nd Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Anne Decker

Treasurer: Marti Folwell

Directors

Joy Comstock: Publicity

Karen Karinja: Voter Service

Ashley Wilson Pimley: Environment

Pona Pierkarski

Lois Rogers-Watson: Voter & Education

Peggy Toohey: Transportation

Carolyn Underwood: Membership

Nominating Committee Chair: Elizabeth Mannion

Webmaster : Kay Pitchon

Informed and Active Citizen Participation

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.

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