



THE VOTER

February 2017

Making Democracy Work

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.

**Love your
country by
supporting your
League!**

*See inside for information on these
special programs scheduled for this month.*

**Legislative
Preview**

Feb. 25

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**Ethics of
Interdependence**

Feb.18

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT, KAREN KARINJA

Following the success of the Women's Marches throughout the country and the world, the time is now to raise up your voice and be heard. Use this opportunity to talk to your government representatives about those issues which most concern you. Come to the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation public meeting on January 31, 2017, at the Largo Library, 9 a.m.-noon.

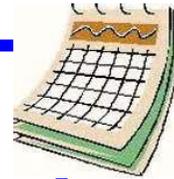
February has two important events for your calendar. The International Relations special event is Saturday, February 18, 2017 featuring Dr. William Felice, Professor of Political Science at Eckerd College. His subject will be **The Ethics of Interdependence: Global Human Rights and Duties**. Join us at 2pm at the Pinellas Park Library, 7770 52nd Street, Pinellas Park.

Reservations are required for the Saturday February 25, 2017 Hot Topic: **Legislative Preview** with Dr. Susan MacManus. This starts at 11 at the Belleair Country Club at 1 County Club Lane in Belleair. We will also conduct a consensus discussion on primaries in Florida.

Please plan to join us!

Karen

CALENDAR



January 31--Candidate Forum-Indian
Rocks Beach

January 31--Pinellas County Legislative
Delegation

February 6--International Relations
Committee Program: Climate Geopolitics

February 14--Board Meeting

February 18--International Relations
Committee sponsors Dr. William Felice who will
speak on The Ethics of Interdependence: Glob-
al Human Rights and Duties

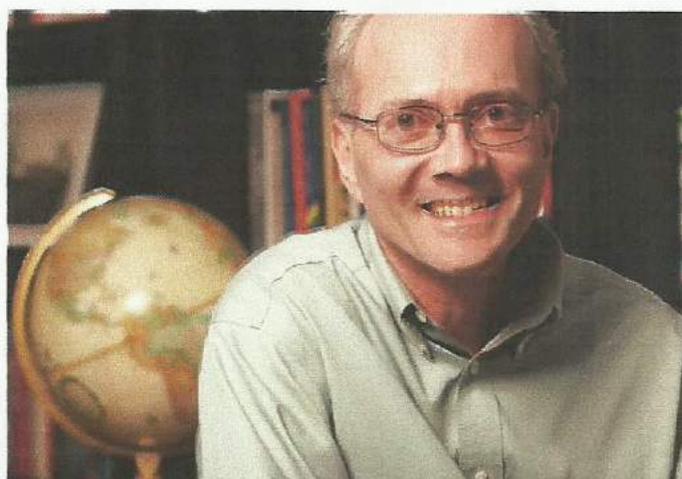
February 25---Legislative Preview with
Dr. Susan McManus

See inside for details.

*The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County
and
The League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area
present*

The Ethics of Interdependence: Global Human Rights and Duties

Dr. William Felice



William P. Felice is a Professor of Political Science at Eckerd College. Dr. Felice received his Ph.D. from the Department of Politics at New York University. He has served as a trustee of the board of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Relations and as President of the International Ethics Section of the International Studies Association. Dr. Felice has authored several books and articles on

his subject and has received awards for his excellence in scholarship and teaching.

Pinellas Public Library
7770 52nd Street in Pinellas Park
Saturday, February 18, 2:00 PM

PUBLIC INVITED - BRING A FRIEND!

For more information, contact Judy McSwine at 207-447-5493.

LWVNPC Hot Topic: Legislative Preview



FEATURING

Dr. Susan MacManus

- Florida's most quoted Political Scientist
- Ph.D. from Florida State University
- Distinguished University Professor at USF, Department of Government and International Affairs
- Since 2008, a featured columnist on sayfiereview.com
- In 2016, political analyst for ABC Action News (ABC affiliate)

"...one of the country's most sought-after political commentators."

Program will be held at the
Belleair Country Club
1 Country Club Lane
Belleair, FL 3375

Meet and greet 11:00
A short business meeting,
lunch at 11:45 followed by
our guest speaker!

www.lwvnorthpinellas.org

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RESERVATION FOR LWV NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW, FEBRUARY 25th, 2017

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

\$25.00 members or \$30.00 non-members

Deadline: February 15th, 2017

Make check to: LWVNPC

Mail: c/o Ms. Rita Garvey, AAUW/LWVNPC

1715 Estelle Drive

Clearwater, FL 33756

LWVNPC Voter Service News

CANDIDATE FORUMS

The Voter Service team has been very busy in January with three Candidate Forums. January 17 the candidate forum in Tarpon Springs went very well with Marti Folwell moderating, Becki Snyder and Mary Rao timing, and Gladys Garcia, Arlette Limen, and Beth Hovind assisting.



January 19 the Safety Harbor candidate forum also went smoothly. At that Beth Hovind was moderating, Dusty Walters and Mary Rao timing, and Arlette Limen and Candy Ryan were assisting.

Our next candidate forum is January 31 in Indian Rocks Beach. It will be held at the Art Center on 1515 Bay Palm Blvd starting at 7pm. Beth Hovind is moderating, Arlette Limen and Gladys Garcia are timing, and Kathy Woods-Masalski, Marti Folwell, and Clare Dyer are assisting.

From the LWVNPC Education Committee

Pona Piekarski, Chairperson

Let our legislators hear us! That's exactly what the LWVNPC Education Committee intends to do! We will be attending the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation meeting on January 31st and the March Legislative Summit in Tallahassee. Our committee will advocate for: increased transparency of charter school management companies; strict delineation of guidelines for qualifying as an innovative charter school; and adherence to the Florida State statute requiring not for profit charter management companies. We will continue to monitor the State's control of the teacher evaluation system and will work to support the current State Senators supporting equity in the accountability system for public and charter schools.

Our committee members continue to monitor all school board meetings, and workshops. We are currently observing the meetings of the District's Monitoring and Advisory Committee, a court ordered community based group that makes recommendations to the school board concerning issues of equity and diversity.

Coming in March!

The committee will host Dr. Lewis Brinson, minority achievement officer from the Pinellas County School District, on March 21 at 6:30 p.m. at the Largo Library. Dr Brinson oversees the districts Bridging the Gap program, which has been charged to eliminate or greatly narrow the achievement gap between minority students and non-minority learners. This will be an important meeting for anyone interested in the Pinellas County School District and our students!

2017 Legislative Priorities

The League of Women Voters of Florida is a grassroots organization, and as such, we focus on the issues that our members care the most about.

Each year, our membership is polled to see which issues are most important to them. Every local league submits priorities. After tabulating each local league's submissions, the top five areas become priorities for the Legislative Session.

Here are the **2017 Legislative Priorities**:

1. Education

- Restore district authorization to levy 2.0 mills for capital outlay funding for school facilities construction and renovation.
- Increase operational funding to pre-2008 levels so that districts may increase the school day and curriculum choices.
- Revise the sole focus of the state accountability system from test scores to measures that more accurately reflect districts' progress in raising student achievement, meet the needs of diverse students and improve access to high quality academic and career programs for all students.
- Improve fiscal and operational oversight of charter schools by increasing transparency in student admission and retention data, ensuring the independence of charter boards from charter management companies and providing guidelines to reduce self-dealing opportunities in real estate transactions and other charter services.
- Eliminate the growth of corporate-tax credit scholarships to private schools and require private schools currently receiving these scholarships to participate in the state accountability system.

2. Election Law

- Support the automatic restoration of voting rights for former felony offenders, including support for a constitutional amendment to achieve same.
-
- Support legislation to reduce from 29 days to 19 days the time voter registration books must be closed before each election.
- Support legislation to restrict the ability of an elector to file as a write-in candidate, the goal being to minimize what has become a problem, as "ghost candidates" file in order to close primary elections.
- Monitor and support the progress of online voter registration implementation to ensure that it meets its 2017 deadline, and adopt legislation for Florida to join the at least 26 other states that are members of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) " statewide.

(Continued on next 2 pages)

- Support legislation necessary for Florida to join the at least 10 other states that are members of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC), so that Florida's Presidential Electors would be required to award all their votes to the candidate who wins the overall popular vote in the 50 states and District of Columbia.
- Ensure the adoption by Florida of the National Voter Registration Act ("Motor-Voter" law) requirement that every citizen be automatically provided voter registration update services when she/he applies for, renews or changes her/his address on a driver's license or state-issued identification card.

3. Gun Safety

- Support proposals that would expand background checks in Florida, thereby closing the gun show and Internet loopholes.
- Support proposals that would impose a statewide ban on semi-automatic assault weapons and large capacity magazines.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry firearms on Florida's public college and university campuses.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry openly firearms in public places.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Floridians to carry concealed weapons without a permit.
- Oppose any proposals that would expand the current "Stand Your Ground" law.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Florida School Boards or School Superintendents to designate employees or others to carry concealed firearms, for security purposes, on school grounds at K-12 schools.

4. Health Care

- Correct the Florida KidCare program's coverage so it will provide insurance to children ages 0 to 1-year old who are not eligible for Medicaid.
- Develop legislation to accept 2017 Medicaid expansion dollars for Florida, without being bound for future years, or develop a budget for a comprehensive plan to provide health insurance for working.
- Amend Florida's Public Health statute, Chapter 390, to remove the provision providing that a physician must delay at least 24 hours before terminating, with a pregnant woman's voluntary and informed written consent, her pregnancy.

5. Natural Resources

- Support sustainable energy solutions for Florida, including adoption of renewable energy standards and legislation promoting the expansion of solar energy.
- Support efforts to improve water quality of both surface water and aquifers through legislation to reduce pollution and excessive withdrawals, including prohibiting "fracking" statewide.

(Continued from previous page)

- Support full funding of the Florida Forever land acquisition program and proper implementation of the Water and Land Legacy Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) adopted in 2014.

CHECK THIS LINK FOR QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LEGISLATORS EITHER IN PERSON OR VIA EMAIL: <http://thefloridavoter.org/issues-2/legislative-questions>



A Message from Dave Sillman

Tel: 727.807.3911

Cell: 678.642.7305

[www/beyourbestinc.com](http://www.beyourbestinc.com)

Hi all,

I was reaching out to ask for a little help as we as we ramp up our NPLWV/FL Sun solar co-op. Specifically, I am hoping to tap into your experience & connections for suggestions on whom may be good -

- · Groups/people to target as Community Partners for our FL Sun group (details below).
- · Any potential volunteers to assist me in our effort

I can do the legwork to reach out – I could just use your help with a little brainstorming.

The initial step in forming the co-op is to pursue Community Partners who will help us:

- · Market the program thru their memberships (preferably large)
- · Lend credibility thru their trusted names
- · Potentially provide venues for us to hold Solar Information meetings (where we welcome the public to come learn about the many advantages of residential solar)
- · In some case can provide funding to support the overall FL Sun program in its efforts to grow solar throughout the State ***though we do not need to seek funding as a part of our effort*

Examples of good partners are:

- · Environmental groups (ie Sierra Club)
- · Community Foundations (ie Gulf Coast Community Foundation)
- · Local media
- · Civic organizations
- · Faith groups
- · City & County governments and local politicians
- · Anyone with a broad reach and trusted name

Here is a list of Partners we are targeting and/or have already reached out to:

- Sierra Club
- Southern Alliance For Clean Energy
- City of Dunedin Environmental Quality Commission
- Creative Loafing
- Physicians For Social Responsibility
- FL League of Cities
- County Commissions and Mayors offices, City Councils, Chambers of Commerce, etc of all the cities in our N. Pinellas geography.
- Church of the Ascension (Clearwater); Bayside Community Church (Safety Harbor)
- Colleges or (K-12) schools or school systems

Thanks in advance!

Check out the FL Sun website: <http://www.flsun.org/>

State League Heads Up Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence

"No one is trying to take away your guns. We are just trying to increase gun safety. Too many people are dying from gun violence in the state of Florida."

With these words, Patricia Brigham, Vice President of the Florida League of Women Voters and leader of the Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence for the Florida League of Women Voters, held a joint session with the LWVPC and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) on January 19, 2017. This was the first in what is hoped to become a regular cooperation between the two groups.



Formed after the Pulse massacre in Orlando, the Coalition is seeking two goals in the 2017 legislative session in an effort to prevent gun crimes, injuries and deaths: 1) a state ban on all semiautomatic assault weapons and large capacity feeding devices, and 2) comprehensive and universal background checks before a gun purchase can occur. Patricia explained that semi-assault weapons allow for mass killings within a short period of time, such as what occurred at the Pulse nightclub.

Brigham stated that Florida has the highest number of mass shootings in the country. Florida rates among the top in the U.S. with 1.7 million concealed gun permits. 92% of Americans support background checks – because they do make a difference, but 22% of gun sales go unchecked due to loopholes. This means there is no checking of criminal records or mental health records to determine potentially dangerous gun purchasers.



The Coalition now has over 100 member organizations and is working with their legislators to promote these goals. Unfortunately, new legislation is being offered to increase gun use. Bills to allow guns on campuses, in airport terminals and government buildings are all being introduced this session as are bills to put the onus of Stand Your Ground claims on the prosecution instead of on the shooter. Patricia encouraged League members to watch closely new legislative attempts that

will reduce gun safety and to contact legislators in support of legislation to increase gun safety. Brigham's motto: "No campus carry, no open carry, and no stand your ground."

Further information about the Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence can be found on their Facebook page and at the website: <http://csgv.org/>. Note that the member organizations are listed on the website.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2016-2017

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



Questions?

Contact Judy
McSwine

judymcswine@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SCHEDULE

February 6	Climate Geopolitics Joe LeBas
February 18	The Ethics of Interdependence: Global Rights & Duties Dr William Felice
March 6	United Nations Post 2015 Linda McGeehan
April 3	Rise of Isis Judy McSwine
May 1	Korean Choices June Bedford

WELCOME, NEW LWVNPC MEMBERS!

****Patricia Ambler***

****Dianna Chinnici***

****Greta Finney***

****Stephen Finney***

****Christine Gasco***

****Marita Lynch***

****Janis Rosser***

****Cyndi Silverman***

****Roberta Thorpe***



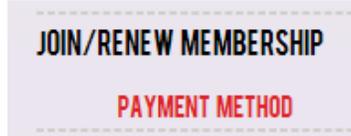


LWVUS OFFICIALLY PARTICIPATES IN WOMEN'S MARCH

AS DID LWVNPC and many affiliates around the nation. Several of us were in St. Petersburg on Saturday, January 21, 2017.



Now You Can Join the League Online...Just go to our Website



PayPal payment services are there for your convenience. .

Just go to the [LWVNPC Website](#), select **Payment Method**, and follow the instructions.

NOTE: There is no extra charge to you for the PayPal service when you use your credit or debit card to pay LWVNPC membership dues.

You can also donate to the LWV Education Fund which is tax deductible. http://www.lwvnorthpinellas.org/donate_form.html

If you prefer to join via mail, here is the form to use:

League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

NEW MEMBER? PREVIOUS MEMBER? WHERE? _____

Annual membership is \$55. Household memberships are \$85 (2 people). Student membership is \$30. Cornerstone membership is \$110. Household Cornerstone is \$140. After LWV membership for 50 years, dues are waived.

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 OR Join online at [LWVNPC!](#)

We are on Facebook!

go to:

League of Women Voters - North Pinellas County



Informed and Active Citizen Participation

Visit us on the web at
www.lwvnorthpinellas.org

LWVNPC

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

President: Karen Karinja

1st Vice President: Vicki Adelson

2nd Vice President: Beth Hovind

Secretary: Anne Decker

Treasurer: Marti Folwell

Directors

Rita Garvey

Judy McSwine

Lois Rogers-Watson

Peggy Toohey

Webmaster: Kay Pitchon

Speak up for Democracy.

Join the League!