



THE SPACE COAST VOTER

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

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Programs of Work Committees:

Voter Services
 Education
 Social Justice
 Local Government/Observer Corps
 Natural Resources
 Sustainability

More Committee Info here!

Non Program of Work Committee:

International Relations

Support Committees/Efforts:

Membership
 Publicity
 Speaker's Bureau
 Nominating
 Fundraising

Sign up to help! We all do as much as we can! Any little bit is a big help! You can address postcards, go to events in your area, time in any form is appreciated and NEEDED!

A Message from the LWVSC President

~ Suzanne Taylor, President

As we look forward to the weather starting to cool down even just a little bit, there is a lot happening in Brevard County's political climate. The County Commission has been taking money away from the Supervisor of Elections and Brevard Cultural Alliance. From the time I wrote this article and the time this is published, LWVSC will have appeared at the Sept 19, 2023 **County Commission Budget Meeting**. Tatiana Rosado, the 2nd Vice President of LWVSC, will have already spoken on our behalf to reverse its decision to defund the Supervisor of Elections. With bi-partisan support, that night the Commission reversed its decision and will fund the SOE. Many thanks to all the citizens who called in and emailed their county commissioner to support the reversal.

There are **municipal elections** scheduled for November 7, 2023 and several empty seats on the ballot without opposition. Perhaps if a seat opens in your area, you should consider announcing for it. Change starts from the ground up, and we need League Members in these seats. This election is practice for the 2024 election where people will be more interested in registering and requesting mail-in ballots. We need to be present and well-staffed at every possible event. **Everyone** is needed!

To get ready for these events, please take the **new Voter Registration Quiz**, which reflects the State's new rules for voter registration. If you haven't taken the quiz since July 1, 2023, you will need to do this. Please go to this link: <https://lwvfl.org/toolbox/register-voters/>

The password is SusanBAnthony (the capitalizations and lack of spaces is key!)

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LWVSC 2nd VP, Tatiana Rosado, speaks at a County Commissioners meeting, representing the LWVSC support of the continuation of the mailing of Sample Ballots to voters.

**I dusted once.
It came back!
I'm not falling for that again.**

UP NEXT!

September

- 9/28 Coffee Break with the League
9/28 Solar Co-op Information -
Cancelled

October

- 10/07 **LWVSC Board**
10/14 Membership Meeting-Cocoa
Public Library
10/16 Social Justice Committee
10/17 International Relations
Committee – China & the US
10/18 Education Committee
10/24 DEI Task Force meeting

November

- 11/07 **LWVSC Board**
Municipalities General Election
11/15 Education Committee
11/16 Membership Iron Oak Post
11/20 Social Justice Committee
11/21 International Relations
Committee – Iran at a Crossroads
11/28 DEI Task Force meeting

All events are open except Board meetings.

Continued from Page 1 – From Suzanne

We have a lot of events on our calendar! Our *Holiday Luncheon* at Tuscany Grill on Sat. Dec. 9th. Two fundraisers in December. *Coffee Break with the League* on September 28 at Panera in The Avenues. Join us for conversation, coffee, and help pack free contraceptives with Lily from Complementary Contraceptives.

Please check out the [Events Calendar](#) on our website from time to time (I suggest weekly) to see what meetings and events are coming up. There is something for everyone and I hope you will try to find the niche that works best for you. We can accomplish more with a little help from everyone.

Thanks for all you do for our Chapter. I love meeting members at meetings and events, so please keep coming out and say hello to me.



Bill McKay, Community Director of Space Coast Pride, presented at the August Membership meeting at Satellite Beach Library. He discussed issues such as suicide rates among teenagers, acceptance issues and mental health concerns within local schools. He encouraged our families and friends to attend PrideFest on September 23 2023.



Focus On Education

~Hilah Mercer, Education Chair

Remaining Brevard Public School Board meetings for 2023 are: September 19, October 10, October 24, November 14, and December 12. All begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Educational Services Facility at 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, FL.. Please wear your League T-shirt if you have one. We have observer buttons.

Your State Legislators in Action

The passage of HB 1 led to universal vouchers, now called scholarships. Step Up for Students (SUFS) is a private organization that serves as the conduit for funds for unregulated private and home schools that can take voucher money, usually about \$8,000 per student. Step Up is called a Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO) as it awards and manages voucher money. SUFS recently released its guidelines for how voucher money can be used by parents. The guidelines have caused heated controversy.

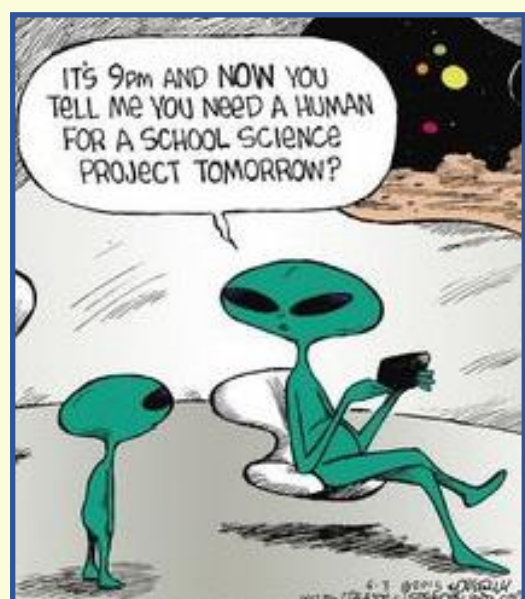
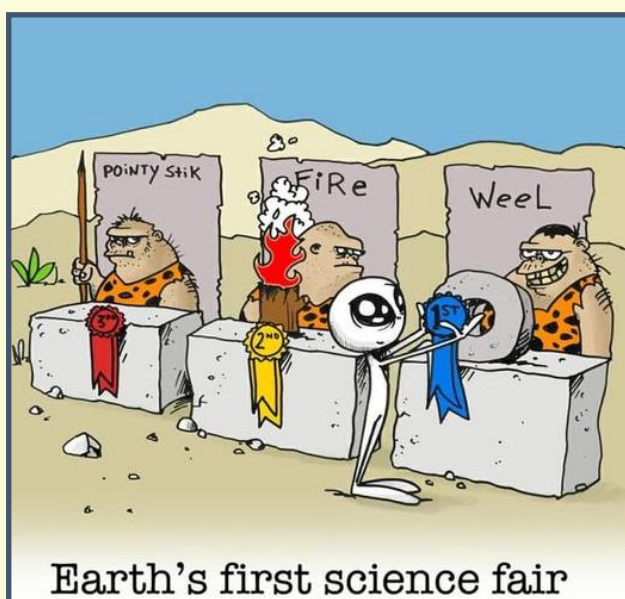
Step Up for Students Guidelines: <https://bit.ly/3EU6g6d>

Tampa Bay Article Reveals Allowable Items: <https://bit.ly/3EUT2pQ>

The **LWVFL Education Action Team** selected **four priorities** for this year from its *Education Issues for Action 2023-25*. They will guide what actions the League will take related to education legislation in the next session.

- Promote **adequate funding** of public education.
- Support a **statewide assessment and accountability system** that provides valid data and appropriate intervals to measure student progress for all students and schools that receive public funds directly and indirectly. Data should be used to identify areas where increased support is needed.
- Support **higher standards** for early childhood education staff and programs.
- Promote **diversity and nondiscrimination** based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, citizenship, socio-economic status, and ability status in all public-funded schools, including public universities and colleges.

Two new publications have been approved and are now posted on the LWVFL website: *"Partisan Election of School Board Candidates Paper and Candidate Comparison Trifold Checkoff"* *White Paper on Book Bans* by Dr. Jill Spector-Lewis



Voter Services Reaching Out to Voters

~ Tatiana Rosado, 2nd Vice President/ Voter Services Chair

The LWWSC volunteers have been out and about registering new voters, answering questions, and getting many, many petition signatures.

We can help new voters register using a computer at the venues. But the quickest and easiest way to register to vote is online. The Florida Department of Elections provides a printable version of the old form that can be filled out and mailed to your County Supervisor of elections. Select version 10/2013 pre-CS/SB 7066 to print and send the registration to your County Supervisor of Elections. Addresses are provided on the application.

The LWWSC participated in registering voters at all four campuses of Eastern Florida State College last month, having a lot of success collecting signatures for our two current petitions. We have made it our goal to ensure our involvement in at least two events a month to reach out to various communities. Upcoming events include **PRIDEfest** (the LGBTQ+ community) and a local car show at a black community church. These events allow us to ensure and provide insight into voting services matters and provide deep, in-depth information about the League of Women Voters of the Space Coast.

Please Note: VOTER REGISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THOSE WHOSE RIGHTS HAVE BEEN RESTORED. There have been questions as we meet with people at various venues about those who have been released from prison and whether or not they qualify to vote. The League recommends that if they are not sure, there is a way to get help with debts to clear the way to voting. We have referral cards at all venues.



Young people signing LOTS of petitions at the Registration event at EFSC Cocoa.



PrideFest '23 LWWSC members registering and getting petitions signed by voters.

League Shirt Sale!
Sale is Ongoing!

Ladies' Shirts Sizes S-XXXL
\$25. each
(based on minimum 25 sales)

To Order Visit...
www.lwv-spacecoast.org



Poinsettia flowers have no petals however their internal flower structure resembles mouths. Muppets? Photo: <https://hasanjasim.online/>

Sustainability: Low Impact Development

- Maureen Rupe, Sustainability Committee

There is a lot of talk lately in Florida about Low Impact Development or LID for short. LID is utilized in a lot of states but is just beginning to get popular in Florida. According to the EPA, LID includes a variety of practices that mimic or preserve natural drainage processes to manage stormwater. This helps retain rain water and encourage it to soak into the ground rather than allowing it to run off into ditches and storm drains where it would contribute to flooding and pollution problems (see www.epa.gov/nps/lid).

In Brevard County, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection counts the Convair Cove LID and living shoreline project as one of their success stories. The living shoreline will be constructed to include mangroves, oysters, and grasses. A Channel 6 news story reported on the Jimmy Buffett-themed Margaritaville resort coming to the Melbourne shoreline. Melbourne Mayor Alfrey stated, "The low impact development project, which will bring the chain resort, restaurant, and riverwalk to Melbourne has been in the works for four years." He said it was important that the Margaritaville Landing and Riverwalk project not impact the health of the Indian River Lagoon and include stringent stormwater management to control runoff under the parking garage.

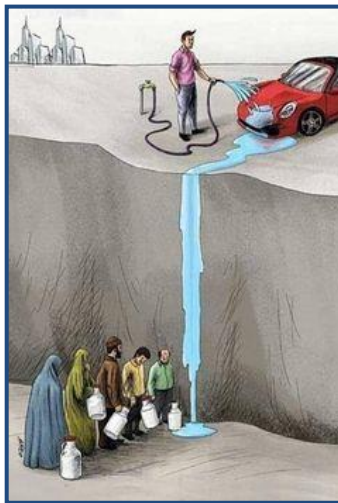
The only way we can stop stormwater from polluting our waters is LID. The county and every municipality must mandate LID in their Comprehensive Plans.

Reference:

<https://gsi.floridadep.gov/success-stories/>

<https://www.clickorlando.com/news/local/2022/05/26/its-5-oclock-in-melbourne-jimmy-buffett-themed-margaritaville-resort-coming-to-town/>

<https://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-3-210-10>



STEP UP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A Call to Serve – Sustainability Committee

~Susan Little, Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee is looking for a chairperson or two co-chairpersons to continue our work in educating the citizens of Brevard in the idea of a Sustainable World.

League of Women Voters of Florida Position on Sustainability
The League of Women Voters of Florida supports governmental action that results in sustainability: meeting the needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Environment, society and the economy must be integrated and balanced to achieve a sustainable Florida.

This committee has been in existence for almost four years. The first year was about organizing the committee itself. The second year, several educational programs were developed to deal with the environmental aspect of Sustainability. The third year, educating about the Social/Political facets of Sustainability was added.

Please view the video library under ***Get to Know Us*** at www.lwv-spacecoast.org. The committee also has a very active book club to try to understand Sustainability ourselves. Please contact Susan Little at regajn88@gmail.com to find out more about this important position and how you could help lead the Sustainability Committee through all the changes in the last couple of years.

Panel Discussion at Iron Oak Post

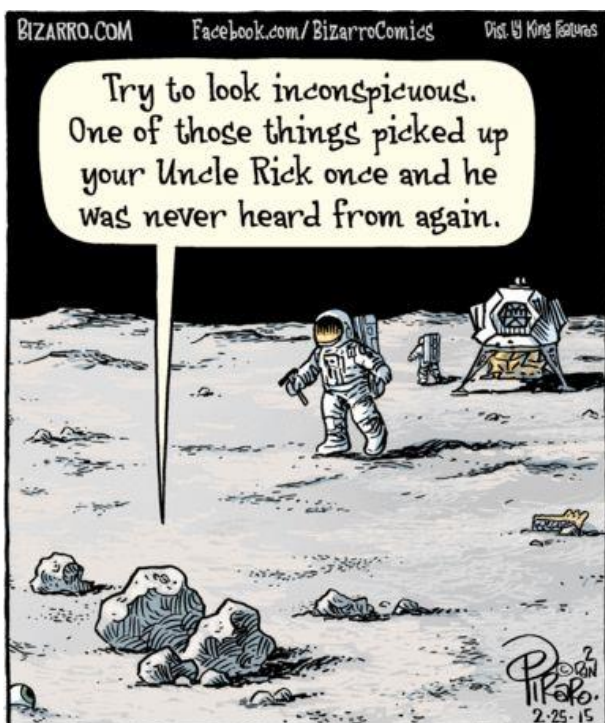
~ Jessica Travis & Sabrina Dion, Social Justice Co-Chairs

The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast hosted a panel discussion on “The Intersection of Policing and Community” was held on September 14th at The Iron Oak Post. The event brought to light efforts by the Cocoa and Melbourne Police Departments to protect and serve. Both departments have hired mental health responders to go into the field and help officers de-escalate mental health related matters and set the individual up with services afterwards. Cocoa PD has a citizen advisory board that reviews officer discipline. Melbourne PD works with a community relations board to keep its citizens updated. Many thanks to the panel participants- Cocoa Police Chief Evander Collier, Melbourne Deputy Chief David Waltemeyer, and Melbourne City Council Member and President of the Melbourne Community Relations Board, Yvonne Minus. The panel members were eager to inform the league members and other community members of their progress and took questions afterwards.

The event was organized by the league’s Social Justice Committee co-chairs, Jessica Travis and Sabrina Dion. The committee would like to see similar events in the future to encourage all police departments to implement similar programs. If you have ideas or would like to be involved in the social justice committee, feel free to email Jessica Travis at Jessica@DefendBrevard.com.



Panel discussion at September 14 2023 meeting with Melbourne Deputy Chief David Waltemeyer, Commissioner Yvonne Minus, Cocoa Police Chief Evander Collier at Iron Oak Post

BREAKING NEWS!

How Does a Solar Co-op Work in Florida?

~--Susan Little, Sustainability Committee

When a solar co-op is announced in a specific geographical area, the online portal of the co-op begins to accept members within that area. The Space Coast Solar Co-op opened in August 2023 and will close on November 30, 2023.

After the first 30-35 homeowners have signed up, there will be a meeting of co-op members and representatives from Solar United Neighbors of Florida (FL SUN) to determine what criteria is important to the homeowners when thinking of purchasing rooftop solar. Using that information, FL SUN will draft a Request for Proposal and send it to local solar installers. Interested contractors will send their bids to FL SUN who then put all the information from the bids into a spreadsheet to make comparison easier for homeowners. FL SUN also vets the contractors to make sure their licenses and insurances are active.

The next step is another meeting with co-op members and FL SUN to compare the bids and select a contractor. Once a contractor has been chosen, they are notified by FL SUN and the contractor is given the information from co-op members who wish to purchase rooftop solar. The contractors then set up times to view co-op members' homes to determine their energy needs and feasibility for solar. During this process, FL SUN representatives are available to answer questions should they arise. Then the co-op member decides whether or not to sign with the company. If they sign with the company, plans are drawn up with parameters agreed upon in the group bid. Then installation is scheduled.

Again, the Space Coast Solar Co-op portal is open to homeowners until November 30, 2023. It is advantageous to sign up early and become one of the decision-makers.

Sign up here: <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/florida/> at the Space Coast tab.

Joining a co-op does **NOT** mean you have to purchase rooftop solar. It only means that you are interested enough to spend some time with friends and neighbors to learn more about the equipment involved and the process of purchasing and installing solar on your roof.



