



The Voter



The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast
www.lwv-spacecoast.org

Volume 37: No. 2

October 2017

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

October Timely Topics

Second Chance – Restoration of Rights



Join us in a panel discussion led by

Cecile Scoon, Esq. LWVF Rights Restoration Liaison.

In addition to her active role with the League, Cecile is a civil rights lawyer in North Florida.

Panelists will include Floridians with felony convictions who have served their time and will give the audience another perspective on why second chances are important for our communities.

When: Friday, October 20, 2017
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Where: Indian River Colony Club
1600 Old Glory Blvd. Viera, FL 32940
Cost: \$22.00 for members
\$25.00 for non members

Menu:
Entrées are : Chicken Marsala, Salmon with Dill Sauce or Vegetarian on Request
Chef's choice - Au Gratin Potatoes and Glazed Baby Carrots
Rolls and Butter, Tea and Coffee

Reservations: Deadline for reservations is Sunday, October 15 by 5 p.m..

Reservations can be made on line at www.lwv-spacecoast.org or members can call Doreen Archer at 321-622-4071 or e-mail her at doreenarcher1@gmail.com and give her your menu choice.

Public is invited.

Due to Hurricane Irma and power outages, some of our committee chairs did not have an opportunity to submit their articles before the deadline for printing the October Voter. Consequently the Voter is 4 pages this month rather than 8 pages.

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Diversity Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast will promote in all aspects of the League's activities, a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition and issues of the community.

Our new website has all the upcoming events with details on the **calendar** that you will find on the Home Page. Enjoy all the photos and visuals too. Address stays the same.

www.lwv-spacecoast.org



President's Corner

Kathy Wall and Barbara Williams

2018 State Legislative Priorities

1. Government -Election Law

a. Oppose any legislation that might discourage or prevent voting, or result in any action that may disqualify eligible voters.

b. Establish threshold criteria for write-in candidates that mirror current requirements for announced candidates. The presence of a write-in candidate as the only opponent should not close the primary.

c. Support automatic registration of all eligible voters by an appropriate government agency.

d. Support statewide use of an Open Primary election system that allows for the broadest possible voter participation.

e. Support retention of a 1968 Constitutional Amendment to ensure home rule for counties and municipalities, and oppose any legislation inconsistent with League of Women Voter positions.

2. Education

a. Support adequate funding for public education, and no use of public funds for the expansion of charter schools or through a voucher program.

b. Support stronger local district control over charter schools that includes greater fiscal management and accountability.

c. Support a statewide assessment and accountability system that provides the same data at appropriate intervals to measure student progress for all schools that receive public funds, directly or indirectly.

d. Support higher standards for early childhood education, for both staff and programs.

e. Support measures to improve district and community collaboration for pre-school programs, social services, and after school programs.

3. Natural Resources

a. Support full funding of the Florida Forever land acquisition program and proper implementation of the Water and Legacy Conservation Amendment adopted in 2014.

b. Support the ban of advanced well stimulation treatments (fracking) including but not limited to hydraulic fracturing and matrix acidizing.

c. Support legislation that would promote the use of solar power by measures such as: requiring installation of roof-top solar on all new construction, promoting support of partnerships and co-ops in support of the 2016 Solar Amendment 4.

d. Support legislation to address climate change through energy conservation and greater use of

renewable energy sources, and to promote compliance with the goals of the Paris Climate Accord.

4. Gun Safety

a. Support a ban of all semiautomatic assault weapons and large capacity ammunition magazines.

b. Support comprehensive universal background checks.

c. Oppose any legislation that would expand the right to carry a concealed weapon, to carry a weapon on a school or college campus and to have open carry in the state of Florida.

d. Support retrieval of firearms from anyone with restraining or protective orders and/or convictions regarding stalking or domestic violence against them.

5. Health Care

a. Oppose any legislative action that would negatively impact Medicaid funding or reduce access to health care for Florida residents.

b. Support expansion of health care access and affordable coverage for low income, uninsured and under insured Floridians.

c. Support funding of critical health care services such as KidCare, free clinics, mental health services, substance abuse and family planning services.

d. Support a woman's right to privacy regarding reproductive rights.



International Relations

Joyce Calese – Chair

The International Relations study group will resume meeting **Tuesday, Oct.10, 1-3pm at the Satellite Beach Library**. We will be discussing relevant books we have read over the summer break. **To be included will be Red Notice by Bill Browder** who was a hedge fund manager in Russia for over 10 years. It is topical as it reveals how Browder was instrumental in ascertaining the sanctions on Russia known as the Magintsky Act after the death of his Russian lawyer in a Russian prison. The book reads like an international spy thriller, but it is all very real. It is a True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice.

We hope you will join us for interesting conversation and bring additional books that you found interesting.

Other members have suggested:

A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order by Richard Haass

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder

Rebel Mother: My Childhood Spent Chasing the Revolution by Peter Andreas

Copies of these books can be found in the Brevard County Library System.



Natural Resources

Chair – Susan Little

Development, Indian River Lagoon and Hurricanes

–by Maureen Rupe

A recent August 29th Washington Post investigative story by Shawn Boburg and Beth Reinhard, titled “Houston’s ‘Wild West Growth, How the City’s development may have contributed to devastating flooding,” should be a wakeup call to Brevard County. In Houston, zoning is virtually unchecked, building in flood-prone areas, and a resistance to stringent building codes. No green space was left to ensure sufficient drainage for periodic rain events.

Brevard County Commissioners like most elected officials want growth, as it adds tax funds without raising taxes. Brevard County is having lots of funding issues as our roads are in a distressed state due to years of neglect. Economically, the County is starting to prosper. The Kennedy Space Center is attracting business. Embraer aircraft is expanding and attracting other businesses to Melbourne International Airport. The North Brevard Economic Development Zone is flourishing. Unemployment is at its lowest in years.

Unfortunately, Brevard has another issue to think about, the Indian River Lagoon. Every precinct in Brevard County voted for the Indian River Lagoon tax. The citizens understand we need to take care of the lagoon. But wait, didn’t we cause the lagoon issues due to our development? There is storm-water runoff from a large number of our manicured lawns. Palm Bay is considering expanding dock length to 500 feet. Brevard County commissioners continually allow higher densities on a regular basis, including in flood zones.

We must revisit our Brevard County Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Ordinances, to ensure we don’t stop growth, but do ensure we have smart growth. There is a current proposal from a developer to weaken our Land Development Regulations. The consequences, if passed, would be devastating.

Wetlands

The “no net loss” of wetlands functionality, mandated by the Comprehensive Plan would be undermined.

The Indian River Lagoon and the St John’s River would be degraded.

Site Plan

Elimination of pre-application conference requirements for smaller projects would negatively impact the Indian River Lagoon, St. John’s River, and other natural resources to increase in allowable impervious area for commercial and industrial projects.

Would negatively affect water bodies like the Indian River Lagoon and the Florida Aquifer.

Flood Plain

Deletion of residential density requirements, as well as commercial density requirements, would be harmful to the St. John’s River.

Would open agricultural land in the 100-year flood plain to urban style development.

Surface Water

Reduction of Surface Water protection buffer

Would result in major pollution to the Indian River Lagoon.

Landscaping, Tree Protection, Land Clearing, and Land Alteration

Weakening or eliminating canopy and preserved tree requirements, i.e., land can be cleared, but if the project fails to materialize, the land does not have to be restored to minimum tree and landscape standards.

Would degrade natural resources and the quality of development in Brevard County.

We must protect the \$340,000,000 investment to the Indian River Lagoon. We can’t allow our current rules to weaken. If anything, we need to strengthen the rules as what we had in place wasn’t sufficient to prevent the Indian River Lagoon to becoming a cesspool. Please tell your elected officials to protect what we have, not throw our Quality of Life away to the highest bidder.

If anyone wants a copy of these proposed changes, email me at rupe32927@earthlink.net.

Reference:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/investigations/harvey-urban-planning/?utm_term=.be4b4c5f92de
<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/local/environment/lagoon/2017/09/06/hurricane-irma-experts-doubt-muck-will-wash-back-to-indian-river-lagoon-brevard-county-florida/637878001/>
<http://www.floridatoday.com/videos/news/2017/08/20/video-palm-bay-could-change-indian-river-lagoon-dock-length-rules/104791768/>

In Memoriam

Condolences to **Vince Lamb** and family in the
loss of
League Member
Helga Ruth Lamb



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Men Are Welcome to Join LWV!

PLEASE CHECK YOUR INTERESTS

- Education
- Fund Raising/Finance
- Health Issues
- Hospitality/Events
- International Relations Study Group
- Justice
- Legislative Action
- Local Government/Observer Corps
- Membership
- Natural Resources
- Publicity & Public Relations
- Recycling
- Social Media/Facebook
- Speaker's Bureau
- Telephone Committee
- Voter Service
- The Voter (monthly newsletter)
- Website
- Women's Issues

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete the information below and return with your check made payable to League of Women Voters of the Space Coast

Mail to: LWV Space Coast
6629 Canal Road
Melbourne Village, FL 32904

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip _____

E-Mail Address _____

Phone _____

New Member _____ Returning Member _____

ANNUAL DUES

- \$60.00 for Individual Membership
- \$85.00 for Household Membership
- \$25.00 for Student Membership