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Join the LWV—where men and women like yourself are actively engaged in making change happen on the local, state and national level!

FOR 90 years the League of Women Voters has been respected as the one of the leading organizations with **IMPACT** across the United States. Nationally respected, locally engaged, our volunteers work on a non partisan basis to understand issues and encourage informed and active participation by our nation's citizens.



Health Care Reform: what does it mean for me?

Panel of experts from Sacred Heart, Baptist and Santa Rosa Medical Center

New Lucia M. Tryon Branch Library, Langley Ave.
 Coffee 9:00 am - Program 9:30 am

The Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act was signed into law by President Obama on March 23, 2010. What is in this new health care law that runs more than 1,000 pages? How will the changes it brings affect us individually, locally and as a nation? These are the issues that will be discussed at our next monthly meeting.

The first item on our agenda will be the viewing of a 20-minute video prepared by the Kaiser Family Foundation. This video covers in understandable terms, the problems in our current health care system and how the new law addresses them. One main issue is the cost of health care coverage to individuals, businesses and the Federal and State governments. Another issue is the gap in coverage, even for those who have insurance.

Some measures, such as extending coverage for children in school up to the age of 26, are already in place. Other measures will be phased in by 2014. After the video, we will meet a panel made up of the CEO's of Sacred Heart Hospital and Santa Rosa Medical Center and a representative from Baptist Health Care. These are people who deal daily with the effects of laws on the care that their institutions are able to render to the people in our community. We anticipate a lively Q & A session to follow.

Don't miss this meeting on a topic that affects us all. For further details, contact Dr. Paula Montgomery, 438-8891.

LWVUS Position: Health Care
 Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Action Alert: Don't Go Backwards on Health Care Reform

In the next few days, the House is scheduled to vote on repealing the Affordable Care Act, the comprehensive health care reform law passed by the last Congress and signed into law by the President. The Affordable Care Act is a major step forward in health care for all. It has already made a difference by improving health care access and coverage for millions of Americans. Repealing it now would be a step in the wrong direction.

Urge Florida Representative Jeff Miller to oppose repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Rep. Miller's Pensacola phone number is 479-1183.

President's Message

*Greetings everybody and
Happy New Year!*



President Deborah Nelson

First, I'd like to reiterate some good news for anyone who hasn't yet heard - after extensive League advocacy, Santa Rosa's Commission voted to use the original proposed language to preserve existing public land on Navarre Beach in their resolution to Congress. The resolution is part of the process to obtain fee simple title authority from the Federal government for beach land.

A large group of concerned citizens, including several high school students, attended the final meeting, urging commissioners not to weaken the language which would open the door to future land sell-offs. I heard from a number of people who said their regard for the League and our timely press release was what prompted them to contact the BOCC and attend the meeting (thanks also to Navarre resident, Etta Lawlor, who passed information and our press release through the grapevine).

Everyone in the League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay Area can be proud of our role to help ensure Navarre Beach remains in public hands, should the County obtain fee simple title. Our reputation is built on the hard work and attention to government by our many members and active volunteers. The League is a group effort, built on the individual contributions of many. Today, we made a big difference, and I thank everybody who works so hard to make our League the community asset that it is.

Many thanks also to all our Voters Services and other volunteers who worked so diligently to ensure our election's season work was once again a great success. As we head into a Florida with a new government and new priorities, it is incumbent on us to remain actively involved. There is some discussion of making changes that could possibly abolish key state agencies, which currently protect citizens and the environment against special interest influence. Agencies that oversee environmental issues appear to be especially vulnerable, and the League must take appropriate actions when requested by LWVF, as well as address local environmental issues.

We should be particularly concerned about potential threats to weaken our public schools. The League has always supported public education as a key cornerstone of our democracy. We have faced down opponents of free, accessible, universal education before, and we must continue to be vigilant against potential efforts that may threaten public education. On those and other issues, we'll be monitoring the local impact of coming policies and keeping you posted on their effects and what you can do to help.

If anything portends the problems associated with privatizing key services, it's our private insurance health care

system. This month, please join us at our Saturday, January 22, meeting, when we will host local health care administrators and get their perspective on the existing system and changes wrought by the recently enacted health care legislation.

Indeed, now more than ever we need volunteers to attend local meetings, speak to officials, and help our League carry out its central mission to monitor and educate citizens on government policy and activities. As our success with the Navarre Beach issue affirms, even a few hours a week can make a big difference.

Once again, Happy New Year and I hope to see everyone on January 22.

Deborah, 449-1746

Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS President, Speaks for Us

"For more than 90 years, the League has stood for and worked towards the civil exchange of different points of view. As we continue to honor those who were killed in Tucson and pray for the survivors, I wanted to pass along our statement on the tragedy. We will not slow down in our work to demand a forum for safe political conversation in our democracy. The future of our nation depends on it."

The League of Women Voters joins with all Americans in expressing our shock and dismay at the tragic shootings in Tucson last weekend. We express our deep sorrow to the families of the victims, and offer our sincere hopes for the recovery of Representative Giffords and the other survivors. We applaud the courage of the individuals, thinking they were just out for a Saturday conversation, who took immediate action to help the injured and end the rampage.

What can we make of this madness, this senseless act of violence? And terrible though this event was for all of us now, what might the long term effects be? Will it make public figures - politicians, media figures, celebrities - more mindful of the potentially harmful impact of their angry words - or will everyone continue to put their own agendas first, without regard to the climate they create? Will it make the public more trusting of the patriotic motivations of their elected leaders - or will respect for them be further diminished? Will it make our elected leaders more willing to reach out to meet and hear from their constituents directly - or will it reinforce the growing gap between voters and those they put in office? Will it allow Americans to feel comfortable and welcome in the public space - or will they conclude that it is safer to stay home and drop out of the conversation? It is clearly time for each of us to consider these issues, individually and as a community.

Pensacola State College Report

by Andrea Walker, 723-2112

Dr. Ed Meadows, President of Pensacola State College since June, 2008, spoke to the League at the Tryon Library on November 20. He talked about the role of Pensacola State College as a new four year institution and presented a brief overview of the programs of the college, including:



Dr. Ed Meadows

- The Collegiate High School (former adult high), an alternative, no frills high school, currently the recipient of a \$1.6 million donation;
- Corporate and Professional Workforce Training, a cost recovery program, which is located at the Downtown center;
- Continuing Education, including its largest program, Kids' College, which offers academics, sports, fun and some remediation every summer.
- Several community outreach programs, such as Upward Bound, which counsels parents and students on what it takes to go to college and stay there.
- Certificate Diploma and Associate Programs, which are the mainstays, with 75 percent of graduates going on to UWF.

The Four Year Programs

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

Thirty students per year currently complete the nursing program but this does not fulfill our area needs. It is projected that, in conjunction with UWF, one hundred students will graduate each year.

Health Care Management (BAS)

This health care management degree is designed for students with the Associate of Arts degree (AA) and work in technical fields, to earn a bachelor's degree with the inclusion of two years in the management program.

Public Safety

This is a specialized area for public safety and is designed for those anticipating careers as policemen and firemen.

Commercial Graphic design.

This degree will allow those students who have earned the AA to complete the bachelor's degree without having to transfer to another college. Two local

companies hire a large number of individuals in graphic design.

Future programs may include a bachelor's program for veterinary technicians, pharmacy technicians and the aesthetic arts (skin care).

Other Changes

With almost 14,000 students each semester, Pensacola State College is expanding its campuses with the construction of the South Santa Rosa Center, to be opened in the summer of 2012. This 33,000 square-foot center will meet the mission of accessibility for students in southern Santa Rosa County. Discussion is underway for possible expansion into Baldwin County, Alabama.

Dr. Meadows noted that renovations will be made at the main campus, including the expansion of the Ashmore Auditorium to a 900 seat theater. Additionally, parking lots will be expanded on the various campuses, beginning at the Milton campus.

In closing, Dr. Meadows said, "Education is the best answer in a democratic society for an individual's chance for success."

Rehabilitation Programs for Local Inmates

At last year's annual meeting of the League, the membership approved a study of the expansion of rehabilitation programs for inmates in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. Several League members who are interested in this public policy issue have found the initial meeting informative with new approaches and techniques for dealing with this population.

The committee learned that one approach underway in the two counties was the formation of the Re-entry Task Force last year. This coalition is made up of representatives from a wide range of public and private agencies and has regularly scheduled meetings. Several sub-committees have been designated, including housing; employment; children and families; education; job entry; gang activities and behavioral health. League committee members will attend these meetings to gain information in order to establish the focus and parameters of our study.

Interested members are invited to join the committee. Your input is needed and you can determine how much time you are willing to commit. Contact the LWVPBA at 937-7769 or lwvpba@gmail.com.

Committee members are: Andrea Walker, Kelly Richards, Vivian Faircloth, Haley Richards, Lauren Anzaldo and Janet deLorge.

Welcome New Members!

Judith (Judie) Betts

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 939-0642 janddbettsfam@mchsi.com

Lauren Anzaldo

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 437-1323 laurenanzaldo@gmail.com

It's easy! Just send your check to:

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 Pensacola FL, 32513

\$55 Individual membership
 \$27.50 each additional household member
 \$27.50 student membership
 Here's my extra contribution to the League \$ _____

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Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

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(Tax deductible contributions require a separate check
 written to LWVF Ed Fund and sent to the treasurer.)

Calendar

January

- 18 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace Auditorium; bring a clipping to discuss and purchase the new Great Decisions book. For further information, contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 or gfl@students.uwf.edu
- 18 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Natural Resources Committee**, meeting at Caldwell & Associates at 116 North Tarragona Street. Contact Ellen Roston, 453-0730.



General Meeting
Saturday, January 22, 2011
 Coffee 9:00 am - Program 9:30 am
Health Care Reform:
what does it mean for me?
 New Tryon Branch Library, 1200 Langley Ave.

February

- 1 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at new Tryon Branch Public Library, 1200 Langley Ave.
- 15 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace Auditorium; For further information, contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 or gfl@students.uwf.edu
- 19 Saturday, 9:00 am coffee - 9:30 am program, **General Meeting, Septic Tanks Flap**, New Tryon Branch Library



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