



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF PENSACOLA BAY AREA

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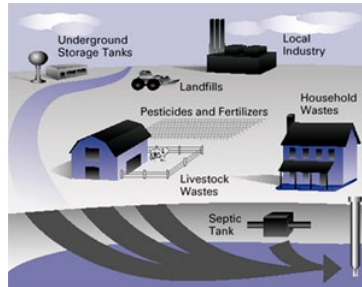
Note: LWV Florida has a new
website URL

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"Groundwater is Your Drinking Water - Protect it"

Saturday, November 17, 2012

Tryon Branch Library, Langley Ave.

NOTE: New Time

Coffee 10:15 a.m. Program 10:45 a.m.

Join us Saturday, November 17th from 10:15 - 11:30 as we discuss well field and well field protection areas.. Our Discussion Team will include *Keith Wilkins*, Escambia County Community & Environmental Department Director; *Tim Haag*, ECUA Communications & Government Affairs Director; *Wallis Mahute* and *Etta Lawlor*, Community Advocates and Water Well experts.

Water Utilities drill wells into large water-bearing formations, or aquifers, and then pump groundwater to the surface for use by area residents and industry. The land above and surrounding the wells drilled into an aquifer is called a "well field". Water collecting on the surface in the well field and surrounding area seeps through the ground into an aquifer. The area where the surface water seeps into the ground, to the aquifer and recharges the wells is called a "well field protection area".

So what is groundwater? Groundwater starts as rain (and melted snow). It seeps into the ground from the surface through soil, sand, gravel and rocks. Water collects in small pockets in between the sand and gravel (or "pores") underground. A large ground water body that is tapped by wells and pumped to the surface for use is referred to as an aquifer.

Ground water provides most of the water supply for northwest Florida. More than 80 percent of the area's potable (drinking) water is derived from ground water. Four major ground water systems can be found in this region: the Surficial Aquifer System (which includes the Sand and Gravel Aquifer), the Intermediate System, the Floridan Aquifer System and the Sub-Floridan System. The Floridan and the Sand and Gravel Aquifer supply most of the ground water in this area.

For the most part, the Floridan yields water of excellent quality that requires little treatment. In Escambia and parts of Santa Rosa counties, the water from the Floridan is saline and potable supplies are obtained from the Sand and Gravel Aquifer.

The process through which ground water is replenished is very important. Ground water replenishment varies from rainfall seeping very slowly through overlying sediments to a more direct recharge process where sediments of the aquifer lie at or near the land's surface and rainfall can move directly into the aquifer. Unfortunately, areas such as these are particularly vulnerable to pollutants from various land uses and land practices that occur on the surface.

Continue on page 4...Drinking Water

All League of Women Voters meetings are open to the public

Co President's Message

As I write this, the election is over, the political ads have ceased (thankfully), and we can give ourselves a big pat on the back about the disapproval of 8 of the 11 amendments that League has vigorously opposed, including the ones with the most potential for damage. No more speaking engagements giving pros and cons! Our Speakers Bureau has been very busy presenting both sides of the amendments in 41 talks, in our education role. Our other hat is advocacy, and this message will be primarily about that work as we enter the holiday season and look forward to the new year.

We all should be alarmed about the problems in administration of voting in Florida again this year. As a direct result of the law passed by the last Legislature, and in combination with the length and complexity of the Amendment texts, there were long lines at some polling places. In Santa Rosa County, "glitches" with vote tabulation machinery resulted in delayed reporting – called out on national television! As I write this, we still do not have a complete count from Miami-Dade, although mercifully given the circumstances elsewhere, IT DOES NOT MATTER.

It is my hope that the League of Women Voters will initiate and/or support action to revise the recently-passed election law so that it serves our voters better. We need (a) longer early voting hours and less restrictive locations; (b) a word limit on amendments proposed by the Legislature; and (c) adequate funding for the election process. In addition, our Legislature should be encouraged to address changes through LAWS instead of through AMENDMENTS whenever possible.

Meanwhile, here in the Pensacola Bay Area, our October program meeting was a presentation on Medicare by Mr. Stephen Rome, a volunteer with the AARP Speakers Bureau. We learned a good deal about the various proposals to put Medicare on a more solid financial footing. AARP, like League, solicits input from members (and the public) to lobby more effectively for actions that seem in the best interests of its members and, we hope, the public.

We also came face-to-face with one of the consequences of "smaller government" from the State of Florida and Escambia County. A local funding shortfall resulted from the State's imposition of large Medicaid expenditures on the County. Library hours were severely curtailed at the various locations and the availability of meeting rooms for the general public's use has been impacted in a major way. Our Saturday meeting on November 17 will convene at 10:15 (instead of 9:15) because the Library will open later. We have also had to find new locations for some of our monthly Board meetings. League has written to our County Commissioners objecting to the drop in County funding and we urge individual members to do the same. The most



Rosemary Hays-Thomas

recent development, a proposal to use an existing special taxing district to fund the Library on a continuing basis, is very promising and represents positive problem-solving on the parts of the City and County.

And by the way, if you care about health care for our citizens, write to the Governor and our state Representatives and Senators about the need for Florida to do more for the good health of its citizens! Florida is not a poor state when we consider the income level of our citizens, but we surely ACT like a poor state because of the current philosophy of government. We urge Gov. Scott to reverse his decision to exclude Florida from participation in the expansion of Medicaid under the now-validated Affordable Health Care Act.

Our local program study this year deals with Ethics in Local Government. A committee has been organized and will function under the leadership of Jim Hunt. Members of the committee will include some use of electronic communication to help them move forward -- Please see information about the new Ethics Blog elsewhere in this Voter. The committee will gather information, formulate consensus questions, and schedule one or more informative sessions for us so that a position can be presented to the Board, and perhaps the membership, at this year's Annual Meeting. If you are interested in working with this committee, please contact Jim Hunt at jameschunt@aol.com.

In view of the vast expenditure of funds on elections campaigning after the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, the National League has taken as one of its emphases the topic of Money in Politics. During the next few months, we hope to hold one or more sessions to inform our members about the magnitude of this problem, and suggestions for dealing with it. Just think of what could be done for our country's productivity if that money could somehow be channeled into the many needs of our citizens!

We have been working so hard on Voter Registration and subsequently on Amendment speaking engagements that we decided to throw ourselves a CELEBRATION! We are fortunate to have a competent, dedicated, and forthright Supervisor and staff in the Elections offices and we would like to thank and celebrate them as well. Stay tuned for more information!

Rosemary

p.s. I have been traveling in the Northeast recently, and everywhere I've been, people know of the League of Women Voters and its great service on behalf of the public. Many people have thanked me for the Amendment Guides and talks we have provided as a service to voters. Keep up the good work, and stay proud of our organization!

NOW IT IS YOUR TURN TO ACT!

The cost of printing registration forms and various printed materials used by the Voter Service members to provide information to the citizens, along with the Special Election Edition of the Florida Voter, has surpassed the amount budgeted for this election season.

Your financial help is needed. Please make a check to LWVPBA, designate it to Voter Service or for a tax deductible contribution, LWVF Ed Fund and mail to: LWVPBA, PO Box 2023, Pensacola, FL 32513.

Thank You

For your contributions to the mission of the League!

Memorial contributions were made in memory of Phyllis Bunting by John L. Bunting; in memory of John deLorge by Gene & Sandra Pettis, Haley Richards and Susan Metzger.

Voter Service contributions were received from Greater First Baptist Church in Cantonment, Mable Knight and Mary Ann Thomas.

Education Fund contributions have been received from Suzanne Carpenter and Bessie Vallianos.

Contributions to the League were made by Betty Salter, Carolyn Kolb, Charlyle Parrish, Doris Lea, Enid Sisskin, Gene Feicht, Jan Hervieux, Miriam Birdwhistell, Muriel Wagner, Dr. Charles Rogers, Steve Marvin and CeCe Hines and Jacqueline Young.

Susan B. Anthony Membership

anonymous	Bea Belous
David & Sherlee Aronson	Elizabeth Cook
Elizabeth Vickers	Gene & Sandra Pettis
Janet deLorge	Marilyn Badessa
Renee Osborne	Rosemary Hays-Thomas
Shirley Lewis-Brown	Susan Metzger
Vivian Faircloth	

Legislative Priorities 2012

The top three LWV priorities for the 2013 legislative session are: Government, Social Policy and Education in Florida. Our task is to write questions to be used in interviews with legislators prior to the 2013 legislative session. The questions will be considered for inclusion in the LWVF Legislative Interview packets. Submit your questions to Janet deLorge, jgd1 at aol.com. League members will have the list of questions when we interview our legislators before the next session. If you would like to be a part of the interview team and get to know our legislators better, email lwvpba at gmail.com.

VOTER SERVICE REPORT

by Janet deLorge, Chair, 607-970

Where to begin?

This has been an unbelievably busy year for Voter Service activities of the League of Women Voters. Read the myriad activities our dedicated members have initiated, coordinated and carried out leading up to the November 2012 election.

THE VOTE IS IN YOUR COURT

League members distributed thousands of brochures, published by the Florida Bar Association, to explain merit selection and retention of judges.

SPECIAL ELECTION VOTER GUIDES

League volunteers handed out 15,000 copies of LWVF brochures that included pro/con explanations of the proposed amendments, as well as questions for statewide candidates and biographical information on the Supreme Court Justices who are being considered for retention.

Our League coordinated the distribution of thousands of the Guides to all of the public libraries in Escambia & Santa Rosa counties.



VOTER REGISTRATION

The following local League members were actively involved in voter registration events prior to the October 9th deadline for registration: Charlyle Parrish, Doreen

Swartz, Cathy Scott, Lisa Wright, Carolyn Kolb, Haley Richards, Janet deLorge, Paula Montgomery, Rosemary Hays-Thomas, Shirley Lewis-brown, Vivian Faircloth, Amanda Jo Combs Bowden, Ellen Roston and Art Parrish.

Voter registration locations:

Bellview Middle School - Open House

UWF student organizations:

Gay Straight Association

Hispanic Student Association.

UWF Student Government Association - assisted David Stafford's office with registration at UWF

Movement for Change Voter Rally

America's Night Out at Magee Field

Pensacola State College: Pensacola, Milton, Warrington and Navarre Campuses.

Joe Patti's Seafood

Blue Wahoos Baseball Game

Gulf Breeze Flea Market

Englewood Missionary Baptist Church

Continued on page 4 ... **Voter Service**

Continued from page 3... Voter



AMENDMENT PRESENTATIONS

League members have given talks to 41 groups in Escambia and Santa Rosa, presenting the pro/con information on the proposed amendments, as well as answering questions from the audience.

Accolades to the following speakers: Rosemary Hays-Thomas, Paula Montgomery, Shirley Lewis-Brown, Charlotte Schipman, Gene Pettis, Bob Husbands, Mary Gutierrez, Lauren Anzaldo, James Hunt, Amanda Combs-Bowden and Janet deLorge.

These speakers were assisted by very capable members, including, Doreen Swartz, Vivian Faircloth, Carolyn Kolb, Steve Marvin, Hugh Turner, Haley Richards, Carol Michalski, Cathy Scott, Chelsea Schwitzerlett, Marilyn Brown and Ellen Roston. ♦



Leaguer Charlotte Crane was awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award by Gerald Adcox. Charlotte is a longtime supporter of and advocate for Habitat for Humanity. She recently wrote a book detailing the 30-year history of the Pensacola Habitat. Congratulations!

*Our Condolences to Marge Wein
on the death of her son, Michael S. Wein*

Continued from page 1...Drinking Water

Why should you care about a well field? For many years we believed that our groundwater was protected from contamination because it is underground. We now know that this is not completely true. We now know that if we are not careful, we can contaminate our precious aquifers which is our water supply. People living and working in well fields need to be especially careful to keep contaminants off the ground where they can seep into our underground drinking water supply.

What are the contaminants that can pollute our water supply? Contaminants include chemicals which are used in the home, business and industry and agriculture. Chemicals such as furniture strippers, lawn and garden chemicals, cleaning chemicals and solvents, gasoline, oil, road salt, etc. can all contaminate groundwater supplies if poured on the ground or improperly used or stored.

For more information about this program, contact Mary Gutierrez, LWVPBA Natural Resources & Growth Management Chair, at mary.community at cox.net or 850.549.7472. ♦

The LWV Board regrets Michelle Reese has resigned as treasurer and has accepted a new position in Alabama.. Congratulations on your new job, Michelle

Calendar

November

- 14 Wednesday, **Board Meeting** - 5:30 pm at Janet deLorge's . Members are welcome to attend.
- 15 Wednesday, 11:30 am - 1 pm, **Natural Resources Committee**, Tu-Do Vietnamese Restaurant, 7130 N Davis Hwy. For more information contact Mary Gutierrez, *gutmry at cox.net*.
- 20 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace Auditorium; Speaker: **Bob Ammann**, *Energy Geopolitics: quandaries intensify*. For further information, contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 or *gf1 at students.uwf.edu*.



General Meeting

Saturday, November 17, 2012

"Groundwater is Your Drinking Water- Protect it"

Discussion Team (see page 1)

Coffee 10:15 am - Program 10:45 am

Tryon Branch Library, Langley Avenue

Notice: West Florida Public Library announced a reduction in operational hours due to significant cuts in their budget. Thus, our meeting time has changed.

Report on October LWV Meeting

by Andrea Walker, 723-2112

Steven Rome, a retired chemical engineer and member of the AARP Speaker's Bureau, addressed the LWVPBA Saturday, October 20, at the Tryon Library. His topic was Medicare, specifically the *You've Earned a Say* program sponsored by AARP. Rome contends we must contact legislators to let them know how we feel about what they do to reduce the deficits in Social Security and Medicare. These programs are not entitlements; we have paid into them.

Medicare has four parts:

- A. Helps pay hospital bills
- B. Helps pay doctor bills
- C. Medicare Advantage
- D. Prescription Drug coverage - famous for the "donut hole" According to Rome, the Affordable Health Care Act (AHCA) will close the gaps in the donut hole.

Social Security recipients will receive a 1.7 percent COLA in 2013. Since the medical expenses have risen approximately 4 percent, we're hardly keeping up. Medicare is projected to run out of money in 2016 although the Affordable Health Care Act may extend that to 2024.

Rome addressed five of seven concepts believed to strengthen Medicare:

- 1 Raise the Medicare eligibility age.
- 2 Raise Medicare premiums for higher-income beneficiaries.
- 3 Change Medicare to a premium support plan.
- 4 Generate new revenue by increasing the payroll tax rate.
- 5 Increase penalties for health care fraud
- 6 Raise Medicare premiums for everyone.
- 7 Add co-pays for Medicare services.

Raising the eligibility age to 67 would be less critical overall. This would be done slowly over 10 or 15 years and would reduce the cost of Medicare by about 5 percent over the next 20 years. Opponents believe the effect on the government would be insignificant compared to the burden on individuals.

The AHCA reduces payments to physicians for repeat visits for the same event (not a chronic illness). Electronic filing of medical records lessens the repeat of the same event; however, the privacy issue with e-filing concerns some people, although privacy can be an issue in other situations. Preventive care lessens cost overall and preventive care requires no co-pay, for example, mammograms and prostate exams are now free under Medicare.

The topic of universal health care came up, and it was noted that citizens in France carry a plastic card with their medical history. Some people fear universal health care is a

slippery slope to socialized medicine.

In some cases, more money goes into administration than goes to the cost of premiums. For example, United Health Care recently was forced to refund millions to policy holders.

The United States ranks #37 among other nations on mortality rate, yet our health care costs twice as much as the next industrialized nation. The AHCA eliminates the issue of denial for a pre-existing condition.

Raising premiums for higher-income beneficiaries will put more money into the system but those people already pay more. Therefore, they may drop out of parts B and D altogether which would make Medicare more expensive for almost everyone.

The premium support plan amounts to vouchers. Proponents believe vouchers reduce the burden on taxpayers. Opponents believe benefits will become inadequate because costs will increase as insurance companies pass the increase on to the customer.

Medicare Advantage is part of the overall Medicare program but is run by individual insurance companies. This program provides basic services plus some reduction in payments to its members. It became part of Medicare after large insurance companies asserted they could provide Medicare more cheaply than the federal government. However, that has not proved to be the case; Medicare Advantage costs the government (i.e. you and me) 14 percent more than regular Medicare.

Prescription drug care is based on two formularies: Tri Care and Medicare. Tri Care's formulary for military and government employees is lower than Medicare's formulary. Averaging the formularies would be fair, but the drug companies are against this because they say it reduces money for drug research.

In Florida, Governor Scott has refused to increase the number of people on Medicaid to 133 percent of the poverty level. The result is the passing of Medicaid costs to the counties, which results in budget cuts such as the one Escambia County recently experienced with reduction of library funding. This shortfall has caused the public libraries to be opened for fewer hours each week.

Keep in mind that half the seniors in the United States live on less than \$50,000 per year. One-fourth live on less than \$20,000. Rome recommended contacting a local agency called SHINE at 494-7100 or 494-7101 with specific questions on particular cases. Rome concluded with "It is important to let our elected

officials know how we feel."

Rome distributed a brief, mail-in questionnaire to the attendees. Your responses will let your legislators know how you feel about various aspects of health care in our nation. You can also go online to: www.earnedasay.org or call 1-888-OUR-AARP to fill out the questionnaire by phone. It's worth your time.



Steven Rome and Rosemary Hays-Thomas share coffee and ideas before his October presentation. Photo by Steve Marvin

Janet deLorge wishes to thank League members for their many acts of kindness following the death of her husband, John.

The League of Women Voters of Florida, 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.

Welcome New Members
Marcia K. Boney Suzanne Carpenter Gwen Gore Gayle P. Piret Nancy Wolfe

Join the League of Women Voters Today!

It's easy! Just send your check to:

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ♦ P.O. Box 2023, Pensacola, FL 32513

Name _____ Birth date _____ New Mbr? Yes/No

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone (____) _____ Other (____) _____ E-mail _____

Add Family Member(s): _____

DUES: \$55.00 _____ Additional Mbrs @ \$27.50 _____ Contribution _____ TOTAL _____

Dues are \$27.50 for a student enrolled in a certificate or degree program.

I'm renewing my membership. **Reminder: 2012-13 dues are payable now.**

I am interested in the following areas (Circle all interests)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Education | Natural Resources | Social Policy | Speaker's Bureau |
| Public Relations | Library | Voter Service | Website |
| Transportation | Growth Management | Membership | Legislative Action |
| Hospitality | Photography | Naturalization | Restoration of Felon Rights |
| County Government | City Government | State Government | National Government |
| Newsletter | Voter Registration | Publicity | Social Media |
| Ethics Study | Historian | Research | Observer Corps |

Membership dues and gifts to the League of Women Voters are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes. (Tax deductible contributions require a separate check written to the LWV Florida Education Fund and should be sent to the treasurer.)



League of Women Voters
of the Pensacola Bay Area
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