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YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

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Vivian Faircoth, *2nd Vice Pres.*
Hugh Ed Turner, *Treasurer*
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Mary Gutierrez - *Natural Resources*
Ray Hudkins - *Open Primaries Study*
Elizabeth King - *Money in Politics*
Carolyn Kolb - *Natural Resources*
Shirley Lewis-Brown - *Social Policy*

Courtney Winstead - *Program Planning*
Cathy Scott, *Membership*
Paula Montgomery, *Education*

Off-Board

Gene Feicht, *International Relations Naturalations*
Janet deLorge - *Constitutional Amendment Study*

Nominating Committee

Betty Vickers, *Chair*
Ann Davis
Carolyn Kolb
Cathy Scott

www.lwvpba.org
[LWVPBA facebook page](#)
lwvpba at gmail.com
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Appointed School Superintendent
August 15, 2015

Speakers: Robert de Varona & Lou Ray

Tryon Library, 1200 Langley Ave. ☐ Coffee 10:15 am - Program 10:30 am

In 1962, the League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay Area studied whether the local school superintendent should be elected or appointed by the school board. Our members reached consensus favoring the appointment process with the superintendent to be responsible to carry out the policies of the elected school board. This has been part of our Local Program since that time.

Interestingly, this issue was on the Escambia County ballot for the first time in 1967. Sherlee Aronson, local League president, spearheaded the campaign for the appointed superintendent and it was defeated by 1 vote in the county.

Continue on page 2...

Panel discussion : School to Prison Pipeline

August 31, 2015 - 5:30 pm

Franco's Restaurant, 523 East Gregory Street
Reservations: August 26 th, Dinner is \$15 as Dutch Treat at the Restaurant. Contact Paula Montgomery, 438-8891, montpns@aol.com



A panel made up of members of the judiciary, law enforcement, penal, and school communities will discuss how we can help to put a stop to the incarceration and consequent

loss of potential of so many of our young people. The panel moderator will be Pensacola News Journal Executive Editor *Lisa Nellesen-Lara*.

Join the Action: Be a part of one of the new League Studies

MONEY AND POLITICS

The LWVUS has adopted principles on campaign finance. These are: Improve methods of financing political in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

If you are interested in studying whether our current campaign finance laws, regulations, and practices adhere to these principles please join the Money In Politics Study Group. For more information contact Elizabeth King at kinge3324@gmail.com or 920-246-0904.

OPEN PRIMARIES IN FLORIDA?

Complaints about Florida's 'closed primary system' have been heard for years in our state. LWVF is undertaking a study to examine whether a change should be made and if Florida should move to open primary elections. Ray Hudkins is serving as chair of this study and wants you to get involved as the committee interviews elected officials, political party officials and others in the community.

Continue on page 2...

Co-Presidents' Message

The 2015 League Year has already begun with a very successful board orientation hosted by Co-President, Haley Richards, providing the opportunity for the new board to plan for the upcoming League Calendar and other activities to make democracy work. Here are the monthly program topics for this year's general membership meetings held on the 3rd Saturday at the Tryon Branch Library:

- *August* – Education Committee organizing speakers on Appointed School Superintendent
- *September* – Education Committee inviting Patty Hightower, Escambia County School Board
- *October* – Natural Resources Committee presenting Deep Well Injection White Paper
- *November* – Consensus meeting on Constitutional Amendment National Study
- January* – Consensus meeting on Money in Politics National Study
- *February* – State of the Cities
- March* – Discussion of Civics Education
- *April* – State of the Counties

In addition to the program meetings listed above the Board is planning some new and special League activities. More details to come!

On June 20th the League hosted the first of many *New Member Orientations*, which was very successful. The next one will be in the fall. Recent new members attending were: **Susan Lightfoot, Marie Smith, Melinda Beckett, Dee Calloway and Rita Manley.** Welcome to you all! We hope these orientations will educate new members about how the League works and offer many opportunities for new members to get involved. The Membership Handbook has now been updated and will be distributed to all members this month via email.

We are also participating this year in three studies – two national and one state. Participating in League studies is a great way to understand how the league arrives at its positions, so we hope many of you will join one of these study committees. **See details on the studies in this edition** of *The Voter*.

The *Voter Service Committee* has also been busy this summer distributing about 10,500 *Guide to Elected Officials* but we still need help with the 2,000 left to go. So, if you have a club or other organization that doesn't already have the Guides, please contact Vivian Faircloth to pick up some copies. The *Guide to Elected Officials* is a tri-fold brochure published by the League to inform citizens in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties of how to contact their elected representatives after an election cycle.

We look forward to your participation this year working in the areas of voter service, education, environment, study & action, and more!

Haley Richards and Ellen Roston

Appointed School Superintendent

Continued from page 1 ...

One advantage of having the school board appoint the Superintendent would be in the widening of the field from which candidates could be recruited. The School Board which is made of elected officials would be charged with finding the best person for the job. This person would not have to be from the local area but could come to us from another district or even another state where their record could be evaluated and their skills assessed. The current system requires that the person who runs for election to the office of County School Superintendent have as its only qualification that he live in the county.

On Saturday, August 15th, Mr. Robert de Varona will discuss the advantages of appointing our Superintendent. Attorney Lou Ray will discuss the steps that will be needed to make this change. Come to the Saturday meeting at 10:15 and learn about this issue.

Open Primary Continued from page 1...

- **Purpose:** Investigate open primary election systems to determine benefits of replacing current closed primaries. Determine if current LWVFL position supporting Instant Runoff Voting elections should be continued or replaced.
- **Scope:** Local (City/County) primaries; State (Governor/Cabinet/Legislature) primaries and Federal Congressional primaries
- **Timeline:** Complete no later than April 29, 2016 (Council date)
- **Approach:** Interview Supervisors of Elections; Interview other State LWVs; Conduct college campus surveys; Interview Political Parties; Conduct voter polling (may be deleted); Analyze various types of voting systems. Local Leagues are encouraged to conduct interviews in their counties and/or participate in conducting research at the state level.

Contact Ray Hudkins, 850-346-5199, rhu66@gmail.com to participate on this study committee.

Calendar



July

24 Friday, 10:00 **Naturalization Ceremony**,

August

4 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at the Downtown Library on Spring Street in the Conference Room. Members are always welcome.

18 Saturday, 10:15 coffee, 10:30 am program. **General League Meeting, Speakers: Appointed School Superintendent**". Speakers: *Robert de Varona and Lou Ray*, New Tryon Branch Library, 1200 Langley Ave. (See page 1)

31 Monday, 5:30 pm, Dinner at Franco's Restaurant 523 East Gregory Street, **Panel discussion: School to Prison Pipeline.** Reservations by August 26. (See page 1)

Annual Meeting Speaker Quint Studer

Andrea Walker, 723-2112

Local entrepreneur Quint Studer spoke at the May 2015 annual meeting held at the Pensacola Yacht Club. Studer says he is sometimes questioned why he does so much for Pensacola since he is an outsider. However, since he resides in Pensacola, a city that he loves, he considers it his hometown. He believes the human responsibility is to make a difference in people's lives wherever you live. Trying to maximize human potential is his goal. "We are all on earth to do work with a purpose."

His message is he wants to make a commitment to people and likes being accessible. As CEO of Baptist Hospital, he gave out his cell number and has asked the Pensacola News Journal to make his number available to people who write letters to the editor about him. Regarding health care, he says the biggest current threat is physician burnout due to loss of control. Capping health care cost is a challenge because there is a lot of waste in health care. Put pressure on hospitals to be more efficient.



Entrepreneur Quint Studer

Studer believes in talent and says most of his employees are women. He believes there is much talent in Pensacola, and we have come a long way, but we are playing catch-up. The Gallup studies show that having a University presence, particularly classrooms, improve the downtown area. Bringing people downtown for entertainment and growing vertically to conserve greenspace are key to economic health. Studer maintains that no businesses are getting rich downtown, but they are committed to make Pensacola grow.

The Greater Entrepreneurial Growth Fund was created in June by Studer and his wife Rishy Studer. "It's all about jobs. There are no manufacturing jobs in Pensacola because there are no manufacturing jobs in the country. The biggest industry is service jobs. Cities that grow have a 'saintly entrepreneur' and small entrepreneurs." Private entrepreneurs drive the community; for example, the Belmont Devilliers area is growing economically. Palafox and Main Streets have become a vibrant corner. Don't count on government he advises; the people who want Gallery Night should pay for it. However, parking in an urban environment is always a problem, i.e. the Wahoos Stadium. Concerning a community for bikes, walkers and the aging, individual rights supersede community rights.

Studer believes leaders need to have more backbone and we should let leaders know if we don't like a decision. This area has a great deal of dysfunction, specifically within the County Commission, School Board, and Community Maritime Park Association. "What you permit, you promote." Studer refers to Tipping Point, by Malcolm Caldwell who advises that we diagnose the real problems without blinders: education and wages. Wages are the

biggest detriment to Pensacola's growth. He believes one key to success is to increase employee wages and cites The Generosity Factor by Ken Blanchard and S. Truett Cathy. "You have to give away to grow," he says. When he bought BLAB-TV, they had to make pay adjustments.

Education must start at age zero. Mentorship should be at home to guard classroom time. The Superintendent of Education should not be elected (nor should the property appraiser).

The Studer Community Institute is merging with *Pensacola Today*. Studer predicts a building boom in Pensacola within six months which will include a hotel across from the Pensacola Museum of Art, the YMCA, the apartment complex at the old PNJ site, a four-story office building and a project from Bobby Switzer. He expects the employment of 400 to 450 construction workers on an average day. For more information see:

<http://studercommunity.institute/>



Leaguer Muriel Wagner with Pakistani guests, Ms. Shazia Bashir & Ms. Irum Rashid, and Gulf Coast Citizen Diplomacy Council volunteer Susan Senkarisk are ready for the luncheon speaker.

Just for Fun

Paula Montgomery, 438-8891

Eleven League members and guests shared dinner and a very pleasant evening with Jennifer Mack at O'Charley's on June 17. Jennifer is a bio-archeologist and author who told us how she became interested in her most unusual field. Her interest in burial grounds began with her childhood exploration of cemeteries, including St. Michael's and St. John's.

Jennifer related her travel expediences in exploration of excavations in Ireland, Germany, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and seven U.S. states. There were even some mysteries she worked to solve. She specializes in excavating and researching historic American graveyards. Human osteology is her vocation. She is co-author of Dubuque's Forgotten Cemetery: Excavating a Nineteenth-Century Burial Ground in a Twenty-First-Century City.

An alumna of Washington High and Emory University, presently, Jennifer lives and works in Ft. Walton, Florida, where she is currently working on a project. She is the daughter of Diane Mack, League friend and local activist.

Plastic Paradise: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch

Natural Resources Portfolio
Mary Gutierrez, 549-7472

The Plastics Outreach and Education Campaign was initiated by our local League in Earth Day. The first event included the showing of the film, Plastic Paradise: The Great Pacific Garbage



Barbara Mozur

Patch, and included a Skype interview with Director Angela Sun. A panel discussion, led by Dr. Enid Sisskin and Barbara Mozur of Ocean Hour, emphasized the detrimental effects of the widespread use of plastics in our daily lives.

Funding for the event was provided by the law firm of Taylor, Warren &

Weidner.



Dr. Enid Sisskin

The League, in partnership with Ocean Hour, Florida Clean Water Network, Earth Day Pensacola, and Earth Ethics, Inc, is undertaking this campaign to educate as many people as possible about the impacts of plastics on public health, the environment and marine life. People are

being encouraged to take the plastic pledge - TO REDUCE THEIR USE OF PLASTIC. These include:

- ✓ Bring your own cloth bags to the grocery store (or any store).
- ✓ Kick the bottle - stop using single-use plastic water bottles.
- ✓ Ditch the (drinking) straws.
- ✓ Pack your own lunch for work or school.
- ✓ Store food in reusable containers.
- ✓ Ditch the single-use beverage containers.
- ✓ Buy food in bulk to reduce packaging.
- ✓ Avoid plastic wrapped produce.
- ✓ Recycle or reuse plastic materials that you MUST use.
- ✓ Avoid plastic products altogether.

The film has also been shown at the Imogene Theatre in Milton. Two similar events are tentatively scheduled in Escambia County in the coming months. The League will be moving this campaign into the classroom as well. Stay tuned for more details as they unfold. Interested in becoming involved? Contact Mary Gutierrez at 549-7472 or at mary.earthethics@cox.net ◇

League Supports Solar Ballot Initiative...Please Help!

At Convention in Delray Beach this past May, the LWV of Florida voted unanimously to support and collect petitions for the proposed "Solar Choice" Amendment to the Florida Constitution.

Locally, our League needs a member to coordinate this effort. Tell co-president Haley Richards, or Ellen Roston at presidentlwvpba@gmail.com that you want to work on this issue.

The Solar Choice Amendment will allow individuals to install solar electric panels on commercial and residential rooftops, and to sell the electricity to the tenants or nearby landowners. Currently, Florida is one of only four states that prohibit the sale of electricity by anyone other than an established utility.

The Solar Choice Amendment is backed by a broad cross section of groups including the League of Women Voters of Florida, environmentalist, and the Southern alliance for Clean Energy. If enacted, the Solar Choice Amendment will allow price competition, enhance the freedom to use one's property, and make substantial progress toward carbon reduction. It will be a meaningful step towards putting real sunshine in the Sunshine State. You can learn more at www.flsolarchoice.org. ◇

LWV Florida Annual Convention

Ray Hudkins, 346-5199

The 2015 Florida LWV annual convention was held in Del Ray Beach, FL on May 15-16. If you have never been to the state level convention, I highly recommend attending future events. This was my first LWV Convention and I plan on attending future meetings to better understand League activities and to establish relationships with other Leagues members. What impressed me most was the professional atmosphere in meetings coupled with the camaraderie during evening celebrations. I found outgoing President, Deidre MacNab business like, gracious, approachable, dedicated, and passionate about League work. Pam Goodman will be a great follow-on President. All Board members were very approachable, helpful, and made my wife (Mary Collins) feel like we were members of a family.

Thirty-one chapters, ranging from Key West to Pensacola, attended the convention. Being new to the Pensacola Bay Area League, I was surprised to learn that we are the eighth largest chapter in the state. In fact, we have a larger presence than Miami-Dade and are nearly as large as Hillsborough County and St. Petersburg Leagues.

One of the highlights of the caucus meetings was the lobbyist presentation by our league lobbyist Debbie Harrison Rumberger. She is a dynamic person who exudes confidence, has in depth knowledge of issues, and presents herself as a person that will be hard for legislators to say no to. She gave us a quiz at the beginning of her presentation. She asked us what one word is most important to league lobbying efforts. If you guessed, passion, knowledge, or our vote, you would be wrong. (See [elsewhere in this Newsletter for her answer.](#))

Continued on page 5.... **Convention**

Convention... from page 4

Another highlight for me was the Open Primary Study caucus on Saturday morning. Ms. MacNab was very supportive of my involvement in the Open Primary Study Group advocacy at the caucus and during the afternoon discussion before the vote. Ms. Michele Levy (Orange County) led the caucus discussions based on the preliminary work her chapter did to bring the project to the convention for approval. The caucus discussion indicated strong support for the study to see if our closed primary system should be replaced with an open primary. The idea of an open primary is to increase voter turnout and to include the No Party Affiliate and minor party voters in primary elections. The study passed on a voice vote.

There were no surprises regarding approval of the 2015-2017 proposed state programs. All programs and Issues for Action were approved by voice vote. Many of the programs are a continuation of prior year programs. See below for most highlights and be sure to visit the state website for the full program.

- Restore felon voting rights including the constitutional amendment (If coalition commitments are honored)
- Monitor On-line voter registration state-wide (passed by Governor Scott)
- Complete Open Primary Study
- Support a curricular framework that includes broad common standards developed by educational experts that serves as a guide to local districts
- Support national assessment that informs teachers, students, parents about how well students have mastered curricular standards
- Grant driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants
- In absence of comprehensive immigration legislation, support federal executive actions such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action of Parents of Americans (DAPA)
- Change laws to allow local communities to enact ordinances for any type of gun safety measures
- Expand mandated background checks and three day waiting periods for ALL gun sales or transfers including gun shows and unlicensed gun sales
- Monitor implementation of the Water and Land Legacy constitutional amendment
- Support the local solar citizens constitutional amendment initiative

A very specific ask from the state League was to call, e-mail, and write Florida legislators in support of Medicaid expansion. NOW is the time to reach legislators since they are home and won't be in special session until June 1. The State Board also highlighted

the importance of giving accolades to legislators where warranted. They specifically highlighted Andy Gardner (State Senate Chair) for his courage in standing up to Governor Scott and the Florida House on Medicaid expansion and funding. They also praised Senator Jeff Clemens for his work on Florida healthcare.

Earlier in this article I highlighted the question our lobbyist Debbie Harrison Rumberger posed to caucus participants. She asked us what one word is most important to league lobbying efforts. The answer is "*access*". Without access to legislators we have nothing. She highlighted the need to build personal relationships with legislators as one way of gaining access. Find common ground with them. Follow them on Facebook to learn their personal histories. Debbie also talked about league strength in numbers. She said she was a "nobody" without our members. Our presence in Tallahassee and on-line lets legislators know we are watching.

[Editor's Note: Ray Hudkins wrote this after the convention thus reference was made to the upcoming June 1st. session.]



ALL HANDS ON DECK

2016 is going to be a busy year in preparation for the Presidential Election in November. I hope many of you will be able to participate in many of our activities. Our first meeting will be in October (Date and time to be in the September newsletter). This will be a planning meeting and a training session conducted by the offices of both the Escambia and Santa Rosa Supervisor of Election. Activities include:

- ★ Coordinating and participating in a variety of voter registration events
 - We will have our first voter registrations events in January and early Feb for the March 15th Presidential Preference Primary.
- ★ Giving talks at various community organizations, churches etc in an effort to educate our young citizens in the importance of voting and how to interpret their ballots.
- ★ We anticipate a candidate forum in conjunction with WSRE in July (before the August Primary) and in October (before the election in November).

Charlyle Parrish, Voter Services Portfolio, 850-221-4945, ccparish@usa.net

P.S. During the months of June and July, Voter Service members joined the Escambia and Santa Rosa County Supervisor of Elections personnel to register voters, change signatures and addresses at the Council on Aging Senior Dining Sites. Thanks to the efforts of Janet deLorge, Viivian Faircloth, and Carol Scott.

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.

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.

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

Education	Natural Resources	Social Policy	Speaker's Bureau
Voter Service	Growth Management	Website	Observer Corps
Membership	Legislative Action	Hospitality	Naturalization
Newsletter	Voter Registration	Publicity	Social Media

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 our local treasurer.)

LWV Diversity Policy
 The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. The LWVPBA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs

Remember
Appointed School Superintendent at the League
General Meeting August 15 & the
Panel discussion: School to Prison Pipeline on August 31 Dinner
 at Franco 's Restaurant (See page 1 for details).



League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay Area
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