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THE VOTER

February 2015

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LWV Events

Fri, Feb 13
Voter Services Planning Meeting
New Deal Cafe
11:45 a.m.

Thu, Feb 19
Citizenship Ceremony
Federal Building
11 a.m.

Tue, Feb 24
Education Team Meeting
SFC Downtown Boardroom
noon

Tue, Feb 24
City Candidate Forum
Downtown Library
6 p.m.

Thu, Feb 26
A Case for High Quality Education
Oak Hammock
1:30 p.m.

Sun, Mar 1
City Commission At-Large Candidates Forum
@ Oak Hammock



City Candidate Forum February 24

Our candidate forum for the upcoming Gainesville city elections will be held on **Tuesday, February 24** at 6 p.m. at the large upstairs room in the downtown public library. Although there are only two races up for election in March, there are multiple candidates. We need timekeepers and moderators. And of course we welcome any questions for the candidates in the various races.

A **planning meeting** to discuss questions etc. will be held on **Friday, February 13** at 11:45 a.m. in the meeting room at [New Deal Cafe](#) on University Avenue. All members welcome.

Or please contact Gail Sasnett if you can help. gsasnett@yahoo.com

Health Care Team to Encourage Coverage: Short-term Help Needed

The LWVAC/G is joining the statewide effort encouraging our state lawmakers to accept the federal



funding that would put the final segment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in place. The state can accept the more than five billion dollars annually of our own taxpayer money to expand affordable health care to more than 1 million Floridians, of which over 22,000 live in Alachua County. The legislature has turned down the funds the last two years and passing the enabling legislation is the Florida League's top priority for this session.

Our local league is forming a health care committee to develop a plan that will promote education and advocacy in our community. The group will meet only 2 or 3 times and will end its work when the legislative session is over. Members will be asked for ideas on how to expand the message to local residents with the goal being to influence lawmakers. Please contact Diane Dimperio at dimp@cox.net if you would like to join the committee.

2 p.m.

Mon, Mar 2
Oak Hammock Unit Meeting
2 p.m.

March 10 & 11
LWV-Florida Capitol Impact Days
Tallahassee

Wed, Mar 18
Hot Topic: Net Neutrality
Dr. Shubo Bandyopadhyay
Jason's Deli
7 p.m.

Save the Date

May 15 - 17
The Florida League's
2015 Convention will be
in Delray Beach

Community Events of Interest

Thu, Feb 19
Foreman Lecture on Race and Politics with Dr. Paula McClain
UF Pugh Hall Ocora
6 p.m.

Mon, Feb 23
Moving Florida's Children Forward
with David Lawrence and Vance Aloupis,
UF Pugh Hall Ocora
6 p.m.

Tue, Mar 17
Gainesville City Election

2014-2015 Leadership Team LWVAC/G

Pres: Jean Robinson
VP: Janet Allen
Secretary: Angie Choate
Treasurer: Karen Seabury

Elected Directors:

LWV & Floridians for Fair Democracy Coalition: Restoration of Felons' Right to Vote

LWVF and LWVAC are working to restore most felons' right to vote after they have served their sentences. Florida is one of the most extreme states in depriving felons of their right to vote and has disenfranchised almost two million Floridians. Florida's constitution provides that the governor and cabinet control the procedure for restoration of rights. Some governors, such as Bush and Crist, have made the process less of an obstacle; the current governor has made it more difficult.



We need your help now! LWVF is part of a coalition of legislators and civil rights groups trying to remedy this injustice and reintegrate people into society. Please help us get petitions signed so that we can place a constitutional amendment on the ballot. We need to submit our petitions to LWVF [in March](#).

The proposed amendment language, petition forms, and more information are available at the following links:

[Petition to Sign](#)
[Talking Points](#)

Please print out, sign and submit the original signed petitions to:
Angie Choate
5802 NW 57th Way,
Gainesville, FL 32653,
so that she can submit them to LWVF.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Bennett Brummer, LWVAC Criminal Justice Team chair, at bennettb53@gmail.com

New LWVAC Directory Available

An updated directory of our 244 current members and their latest contact information is available. Just click here gkidder@cox.net and write "Send Directory" in the subject line. Jerry Kidder will send you a file that you can print out (5 pages) or simply keep in electronic form. Last year at this time we had 223 on the membership list.

Of the 244, we have 55 at the Susan B. Anthony level! That's 22% of our members who send in \$100 for their dues plus a donation. As a result of this added revenue, LWVAC has not needed to mail an appeal for donations. Finally, we are honored to have 9 lifetime members (over 50 years of continuous membership in the League) on our roster.

Jim Galloway
Arlene Brummer

Voter Service:
Gail Sasnett-Stauffer

Communication/VOTER:
Colleen Porter

Dues Treasurer:
Barbara Scott

Oak Hammock Unit:
June Girard

Update contact information
or obtain a current
membership directory:
Jerry Kidder

Quick Links

Our local League website
<http://www.lwv-alachua.org/>

Florida League website
<http://thefloridavoter.org/>

LWV US website
<http://www.lwv.org/>

Oak Hammock Event



On **Thursday, February 26 at 1:30 p.m.**, The League of Women Voters Oak Hammock Unit will present, "**A Case for High Quality Education.**"

Representatives of the SOUTHERN LEGAL COUNSEL are taking the case to Tallahassee to improve education with positive policy changes and increased funding.

EVERYONE IS INVITED.

Hot Topic on Wednesday, March 18: **Net Neutrality**



What is it, winners & losers, and how it affects consumers.

Professor Shubho Bandyopadhyay, UF College of Business Administration, will speak on **Wednesday, March 18** at 7pm at Jason's Deli meeting room, 6791 W. Newberry Road, near Oaks Mall.

Education Team Update

Early Learning

The education committee has been visiting childcare centers to better understand their needs. Two groups of Ed team members visited child care centers in Alachua and Gainesville on January 27 and 28th. Thanks to Andi Lybrand from the Early Learning Coalition, we visited Lee Nursery and Pre School, Love 'n Care, Pattie Cakes, O2B Supercenter, and Santa Fe. We saw small family day care centers and some as large as 63 young children.

In addition to the obvious needs of better funding and training, the staff identified two initiatives that have been developed but neither implemented nor funded. Early Learning Florida would provide ten hours of online training in material relevant to teachers and caregivers of children ages birth through age 4. Funding is included in the governor's budget this year but still needs to be acted upon by the legislature.

QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement system) would be a voluntary rating system for programs that choose to participate. Quality related criteria would be the basis of the rating. The rating would then be used to develop a tiered reimbursement system. Florida has yet to implement a statewide QRIS which would result in higher salaries for quality programs as well as more educational materials for lower rated programs to make them more competitive. Other states as well as some local programs have developed QRIS but there is a need for a Florida-specific statewide system that would assure that funding and quality were effectively supported.



Last year the legislation to improve standards and licensing regulations for preschools did not pass due to procedural problems. We expect it to be revived this year. We are studying how to support preschools as they strive to help all children be ready for kindergarten. Teacher salaries are extremely low, educational standards for teachers are rising, and improved access to teacher training is critical.

Other News

The next LWWAC column in the Gainesville Sun will be on Common Core standards and testing, that will appear in mid-February. Sue Legg has been invited to be a panelist at a conference sponsored by the Miami Council on Ethics in May. Her panel is titled: "School Choice and Public Resources: What are the limits for charter schools and private school subsidies?"

The LWV Education Issues blog continues to expand its reach; we have over 10,000 views. Current posts include a series on proposed legislation about achievement testing. A highlight was the Leon County Hot Topics on Testing with Patricia Levesque, Executive Director of the Foundation for Excellence in Education and Rosanne Wood, a K12 Florida Teacher of the Year and former principal of SAIL High School. SAIL is an alternative school in Tallahassee that was recognized by the College Board as one of the 6 most innovative schools in the country.

Upcoming meeting

The next meeting is at Santa Fe College downtown campus in the Foundation Board Room at noon, February 24th.

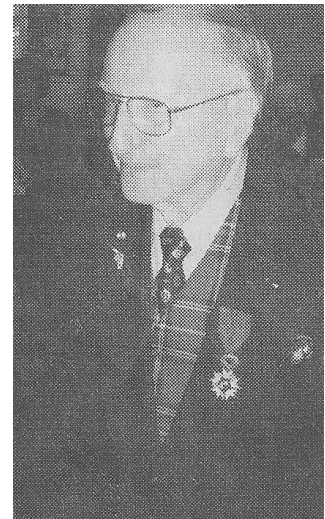
Charles Earnest Recognized for World War II Service

A January 26 article in the Gainesville Sun talked about the recognition given to one of our members.

By Natalie Cornell

Charles Earnest was born in Carrollton, Georgia on February 27, 1924, but spent most of his childhood in Miami. In 1944, he was part of the 26th Infantry Division of the Third Army that liberated France from the German occupation. Private First Class Earnest landed in Normandy in September, 1944. The 26th Division moved to the front and Charles was wounded when his truck ran over a mine near the German border. He woke up three days later just in time for Thanksgiving dinner in a field hospital in Commercy and eventually was shipped to England. The wounds to his head and back were extensive and he spent four months in the hospital.

Two years ago he received a letter announcing that by decree of President Francois Hollande, President of France, he had been appointed a "Chevalier of the Legion of Honor" in gratitude for his contribution to liberating their country. The honor was conferred by the Consul General of France, Gael de Maisonneuve, and the French Consular Representative, Claude Berthoin. Private First Class Earnest left the Army after the war and he and his wife Jeanne lived in Miami from 1949 to 1957. They married in 1950 and have five children, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



Charles had almost finished the work for his Master's Degree at the University of Florida and took his final course at the University of Miami. The University of Florida conferred his Master's Degree in Gainesville in 1951. Charles taught school in Dade County and one of his pupils was Robert Graham, later Senator Bob Graham. In 1957, the Earnests moved to Pensacola and Charles was Director of Admissions to Pensacola Junior College until he retired in 1988.

Around seven or eight years ago Charles joined the League. It came about this way: His wife, Jeanne, relates how he always went to meetings with her and started voting on various things. She told him he had to be a member to participate in that way and so he joined. Jeanne says he's "official" now. The thing Charles likes about the League is how informed people are about various issues. Charles and Jeanne are on the Education Committee.

The VOTER is the official newsletter of The League of Women Voters of Alachua County/Gainesville

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