



THE VOTER

April 2015

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LWV Events

Thu, Apr 24
Citizenship Ceremony
Federal Building
11 a.m.

Mon, Apr 27
Hot Topic:
Mail Ballot Rejection
Dan Smith
UF Political Science
Millhopper Branch Library
7 p.m.

Tue, Apr 28
Education Team Meeting
SFC Downtown
Boardroom
noon

Mon, May 4
Oak Hammock Unit Meeting
2 p.m.

Mon, May 11
Hot Topic:
Voter Participation: Recent Trends and How to Improve It

President's Message

Happy Spring to League members! As you can tell from this newsletter we are going to have a busy spring with the League. I hope you will make time to attend two important events. The first is our annual meeting on May 21. Please, be there to honor our active members, to vote on our new officers, and enjoy a wonderful meal with friends.



Second, please, think about attending the state convention in Delray Beach on May 15 and 16. You can find more information [here](#). This is an opportunity to join the discussion and shape the direction of policy for the next two years. There will also be time to meet old and new friends in a tropical paradise. We are allowed 11 delegates and have space for YOU. Please, contact me (see side bar) if you would like to attend.

*In League,
Jean Robinson*

Hot Topics:

Mail Ballot Rejection on April 27



"Mail Ballot Rejection in Gainesville and Florida" will be discussed by UF Political Science Professor Dan Smith on **Monday, April 27 at 7 p.m. at the Millhopper Library.**

Professor Smith will bring a list of Gainesville women voters whose absentee ballots were not counted. Come to see if your ballot or your friends' and neighbors' ballots were rejected.

[Click here](#) for a flyer that you can print out as a reminder or forward to friends.

Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 21

Michael McDonald
UF Political Science
Northwest Grille,
Dinner 6:15 p.m.
Talk 7 p.m.

Wed, May 13
**Expanding Health
Insurance to all
Floridians**

Diane Dimperio
Oak Hammock
Oak Room
7:30 p.m.

May 15 - 17
**The Florida League's
2015 Convention**
Delray Beach

Thu, May 21
Citizenship Ceremony
Federal Building
11 a.m.

Thu, May 21
**Annual Meeting
LWVAC**
Trinity Methodist Church
5:30 p.m.

Tue, May 26
Education Team Meeting
SFC Downtown
Boardroom
noon

Community Events of Interest

Thu, April 16
Start-Up Democracy:
Innovating Citizenship with
the Ancient Athenians
Cynthia Farrar
UF Pugh Hall
5:30 p.m.

Wed, Apr 22
Rise Above the Mark
movie and discussion
JJ Finley Auditorium
6 p.m.

Tue, Apr 28
**Women's International
League for Peace and**

Be sure to save the date for our annual meeting on **Thursday, May 21**. Enjoy the catered dinner from Mi Apa which features Cuban food, including some vegetarian options, or just come for the business meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Everyone should receive meeting materials by U.S. mail; please bring those with you. **Dinner reservations must be received by Friday, May 15**, and you can [click here](#) for another copy of the mail-in form.



Another Excellent Hot Topic Program on Monday, May 11

"VOTER PARTICIPATION: Recent Trends & How To Improve It," is the subject of UF Political Science Professor Michael McDonald's discussion on **Monday, May 11** at NORTHWEST GRILLE on NW 39 Ave.

Dining is at 6:15 p.m. followed by the presentation beginning at 7 p.m. Dr. McDonald is also a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute. His research shows that turnout is not declining; the ineligible population is rising. Online registration may be discussed. Please RSVP by May 8 to Mitzi Austin at mcaustin@att.net or 475-2439. We will try to accommodate those who do not want to order meals.

Florida Health Care Bills Update

The Florida Senate is working on a bill to accept our tax money back from the federal government to provide health coverage to more than 1 million Floridians. While the LWV is not perfectly satisfied with every aspect of the bill, it is a good starting point and seems to have bipartisan support. The Florida House so far is refusing to consider a companion bill, without which there is no possibility of accepting the funds. The governor has stated his lack of support for the expansion.



The House is hoping that the federal government will agree to renew the waiver that provides funds to help hospitals cover the cost of caring for the uninsured. The other issue affecting the discussion is the question of how the Supreme Court will rule on the availability of subsidies for people who enrolled in health insurance through the federal website. This decision is expected in mid-June. Many are expecting the final budget to be determined in a special session which will be scheduled in June.

Education Team Update

The education committee met in March to discuss education-related legislation currently making its way through the Florida legislature as well as to make study plans for the upcoming year. SB 1448 and its partner bill in the House HB7037 as well as PCS SB 1552 deal with

**Freedom, Centennial
(100th) Birthday Party**
at Unitarian-Universalist
Fellowship
4225 NW 34th St.
7:30 p.m.

**2014-2015
Leadership Team
LWVAC/G**

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

Elected Directors:
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/>

LWV Education Blog
<http://lwveducation.com/>

many charter school issues. All would provide some increased accountability for charters.

SB 616 is related to testing while SB 7006 and HB 7017 deal with early learning accountability. For the upcoming year it was decided to concentrate on Alachua County schools with a focus on finances and special projects. All members with an interest in education in Alachua County are especially welcomed to join the committee for what is anticipated to be a busy but productive year.

The next education team meeting will be **Tuesday, April 28** in the conference room at the downtown Santa Fe College campus.



on the quality of life for all in the Alachua County School System."

On Wednesday, April 22 from 6-8 p.m. at JJ Finley Auditorium there will be a showing of the film "Rise Above the Mark" followed by a panel discussion in which our education team leader, Sue Legg, has been invited to participate. She said, "The goal for the event is to better inform parents about assessments given in Alachua County and their impact

Health Care Team Brochure

Diane Dimperio and Janet Allen spearheaded the efforts of our local Health Care team. They also were helped by our interns in crafting a brochure designed to be taken to businesses.

There are a limited number of print copies if you know of a business that would accept some copies. [Click here](#) to view both sides(not printable).

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

This legislation must pass this year. We need to stop donating our hard-earned tax dollars to other states when THOUSANDS of our own citizens need help.

Urge your legislators to **Close the Gap for a Healthier Florida!**

- Become better informed on this issue.
- Spread the word. Alert your family and friends.
- Ask your legislators to vote yes!
- Call (850) 486-134 or E-mail through (find your legislator's contact information at www.law.state.fl)
- Contact Governor Scott: Call (850) 717-8637 or E-mail through www.flgov.com/contact-govscot, email-the-governor/

The League of Women Voters (LWV) was founded in 1920 and is strictly nonpartisan. It neither supports nor opposes candidates for office at any level of government. The LWV takes a stand on political issues only after carefully studying them and coming to a consensus on a position. It works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy, as well as through political lobbying of Congress. The work is done primarily by committed volunteers operating at the local state and national level.

For more information go to <http://thefloridavoter.org> or call 1-855-355-6837

Demographic Characteristics of Florida Adults in the Coverage Gap

Distribution by Race/Ethnicity

White	42%
Black	25%
Hispanic	19%
Other	14%

Distribution by Age

18-24	12.2%
25-34	12.2%
35-44	12.2%
45-54	12.2%
55-64	12.2%
65-74	12.2%
75+	12.2%

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
www.lwv.org

DO YOU KNOW? WHO'S in the GAP? WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- The Federal Government wants to return \$5 Billion a year of our own tax money.
- This would provide health insurance to hundreds of thousands of low income Floridians who are caught in the "coverage gap".
- If Florida does not accept this money, our tax dollars will be used by other states.
- Refusal of this money will cause insurance premiums to go up even more.
- Not all low-income people are eligible for Medicaid.
- \$2 BILLION that Florida hospitals receive to pay for services to the uninsured will end in 2015.

Most people can afford health insurance because part of the cost is paid for by their employer or comes from public funds. However, many people with the lowest income in our state cannot get financial help to buy health insurance. They are not eligible for Medicaid nor are they eligible for premium tax credits through the federal website, called the Market Place. These people are in a "coverage gap". The Federal Government has offered Florida \$5 billion per year to help us close the gap but our legislature must accept these funds, which they have refused for the past two years.

People without health insurance tend to wait until they are very sick and then go to the emergency room where health care is very expensive.

Hospitals bill the insured population more to pay for the uninsured. (Each insured family now pays \$1900 more annually to cover this cost.) If we do not "Close the Gap", the cost of insurance will increase even more.

The University of Florida estimates that if we "Close the Gap" about 120,000 jobs will be created in all areas of the Florida economy.

People 0% - 400% of Federal Poverty Level

Medium income people who are eligible for financial help through premium tax credits when they buy health insurance through the Market Place

Low income people who are not eligible for Medicaid

These 752,892 people can't afford health insurance. These are the people in the Gap.

Low income people who are eligible for Medicaid

They must be 18 or under, 65 or older, primary caretakers, disabled, or pregnant.

0% FPL Children/Adults
100% FPL Parents (\$1,030 for an individual)
200% FPL Parents (\$2,060 for a family of 3)
400% FPL Parents (\$4,120 for an individual)

Some figures - eligibility for Market Place
Blue figures - eligible for Medicaid
Red figures - eligible for Medicaid, also includes disabled and those 65 and older

NOTE: Includes non-citizens and legal permanent residents who have the right to apply.
SOURCE: HFP analysis of March 2011 and 2012 and 2014 Medicaid eligibility needs.

Report from Our LWV Interns

Donna Waller supervised interns from Santa Fe College this semester, including bringing them to the LWV Florida Impact Days in Tallahassee. One came to our April board meeting to give an oral report, and another shares his poster presentation below.

By Zack Swartz



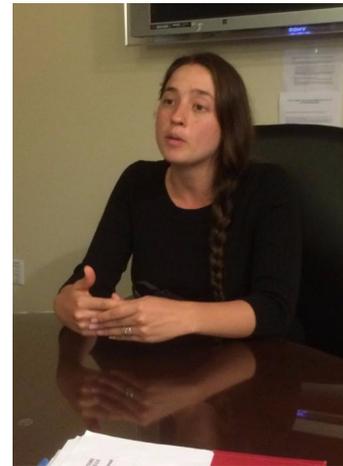
I'm from St. Augustine, Florida, and moved to Gainesville to go to Santa Fe College then transfer to the University of Florida. I'm working to attain my Bachelor's in Political Science, while also holding a part-time job. After I graduate from the University of Florida, I aspire to obtain a career with the C.I.A. as a political analyst.

My time spent as an intern for the League of Women Voters has been priceless; I have always had an appreciation for politics and always intended to have a career relating to it, but until now, I could never describe this appreciation as a passion. Thanks to Katy and Donna, as well as my fellow interns Giselle, Cody, and Ariella, my desire to be politically aware and civically engaged has never been so well-defined.

While I learned a lot about myself and what I want from life, I also learned some valuable lessons that are sure to be helpful in furthering my future career. I gained extensive field experience interacting with state legislators on a face-to-face basis, maintaining a professional composure in chaotic high-stress environments, and have had countless opportunities for networking with peers in my field of study. While I hope to continue my involvement with the League of Women Voters in the coming future, it also became clear to me in my time spent this past semester that there's only so little time in a week, and I learned that it can be extremely easy to spread yourself too thin. [Click here](#) to read Zack's poster presentation.

By Giselle Zamorano

I grew up fending for myself. My mom says I grew like wild grass. I laugh at her apologetic comment, now, remembering how hard she worked to give my brother and I shelter. Life was that way for many kids I knew; it was normal. Voting, however, was never a norm. I never saw anyone I knew vote or even talk about the subject. We were all just worried about having something to eat, somewhere to sleep, and making sure everyone was safe. As I grew up, I became more familiar with the idea of voting. I learned people had died to have the right to vote and I learned the philosophy behind it. Later, I was told it was all just a farce. That the people at the top didn't care about the people at the bottom and that we just had to accept it. Some people said we should revolt and others opted not to be part of "the system" at all, living off the grid and fending for themselves in the wild. I wondered why we couldn't just fix the system. I thought, why don't we just vote for what we do like and against what we don't? So, when I turned 18, I registered to vote and when elections came around, I voted.



Reporting to LWVAC board

Although I don't remember anyone else in my life voting, I do remember plenty of complaints. No one seemed happy at all. From the punks crying anarchy, to the gangbangers and drug-dealers complaining about the jail system; the illegal immigrants wanted to be legal, the National Women's Organization wanted women to be treated as equals and the environmentalists blamed the creeping death of our planet on our government ... no one was ever happy. "The system" seemed to have failed everyone around me, yet I saw opportunity for improvement [\(Read More\)](#)

Summary of Hot Topic Program on Net Neutrality

By June Girard

League members met at Jason's Deli on Wednesday, March 18 to hear Shubho Bandyopadhyay discuss Net Neutrality for a Hot Topics meeting. He has a Ph.D. from Purdue University and his areas of research include Net Neutrality and Information Systems Policy. His work has been cited by Google in its filing to the FCC in support of Net Neutrality.



He illustrated how the cloud or broadband enables information from a variety of sources to be sent to remote data centers that repackage the data and pass it on to users. Some large and wealthy firms could pay for their data packets to have priority delivery. The FCC voted on February 26 to reclassify broadband Internet Service Providers (ISP's) as public utility firms like water and electricity providers. This reclassification makes them subject to much more federal regulation than they had as telecommunication firms.

In an effort to make the internet equal to all, regardless of size or money, the FCC will make regulations to accomplish that "net-neutrality." Professor Bandyopadhyay explained that "band width is simply enormous" and not the limiting factor for information transfer. Europe's and many other countries' internet are much faster and cheaper than the United States, so it is not an internet problem. Without "net-neutrality" the concern was that big companies or paid users would get the fast lane and the rest a slow lane. This will change as a result of the FCC decision.

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

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