



THE VOTER

March 2017

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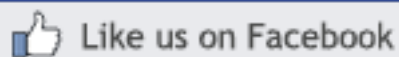
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LWV Events

Thr, Mar 16
Naturalization Ceremony

President's Message

By Sue Legg

There's a buzz in Gainesville.

Everywhere you look there is a new multi-story building going up. People are lining up to speak at commission meetings. The streets are crowded. Coalitions are forming. Gainesville is a 'happening' place. There is a sense of possibility but also a concern about probabilities.



Unfettered growth means sprawl and transportation issues. It can also shift focus to short-term profit making opportunities. These can create long-term problems, not only with our natural resources but our life styles. Blocking growth, however, means stagnation. The problems we already have with inequality, deteriorating neighborhoods, and under-funded schools worsen.

Change generates uncertainty and ignites people's passions. Yet, there is alignment emerging among the interests of the university, the business community and K12 schools. It could lead to a consensus about which directions are more beneficial to the entire community.

These three groups are major players, but they do not represent us all. We, the public, need to participate in this collaboration to ensure that change makes people's lives better, not just different. It sounds like time for the League way of problem solving: study, reach consensus, advocate!

Downtown Federal
Courthouse
11 a.m.

Thr, Mar 16
Local Issues Committee
Santa Fe, Downtown
Blount Center
401 NW 6th St.
4:00 p.m.

Tue, Mar 21
Oak Hammock Unit
Presentation: State
Constitution
Acorn Room
7 p.m.

Tue, Mar 21
Civics Class #1 of 8
Senior Rec. Ctr
5701 NW 34th Blvd
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Sat, Mar 25
**New Member Coffee
and Orientation**
RSVP to Kathy Kidder

Sun, Mar 26
Solar Solutions Panel
Unitarian Univ.
4225 NW 34th St.
2 p.m.

Mon, Mar 27
HOT TOPIC:
Secrecy & Conspiracy
Theories Today
LifeSouth Center
4039 W. Newberry Rd
6:30 p.m.

Tue, Mar 28
Ed. Comm. Meeting
Santa Fe College Downtown
Campus Board Room
11:30 a.m.

Tue, Mar 28
Vote for Her
Santa Fe College
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Tue-Thr, Mar 28-30
Tallahassee Legislative

Civics Classes: Come learn about how our government works

By Donna Waller

Please join us for 8 classes on successive Tuesdays: March 21 thru May 9 as we discuss our government's processes. Mark your calendar.

- 3/21:** History: The state and localities were first
- 3/28:** Federalism and the State Governments
- 4/4:** Principles of the Constitution
- 4/11:** The Congress
- 4/18:** The Executive Branch
- 4/25:** The Judiciary
- 5/2:** Political Parties and Interest Groups
- 5/9:** Voting and Participating

All classes will be taught by Dr. Donna Waller, Professor Emerita History and Political Science, Santa Fe College.
All classes are FREE

Senior Recreation Center
5701 NW 34th Blvd.
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

NEW MEMBER COFFEE AND ORIENTATION

GET ACQUAINTED!

Come out SATURDAY MARCH 25TH
9:30 - 11:30

New and prospective members--**along with any others who are interested** - are invited to a League of Women Voters orientation on Saturday, March 25, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

We will socialize over refreshments and learn about the League mission and procedures as well as opportunities for involvement.



Membership Chair, Kathy Kidder will host the event at her home.
Please respond to: kkidderfl@cox.net or 352-378-0562

Summit

Sat, Apr 1

O'Leno Olé Chili Cook-Off & Springs Celebration

O'Leno State Park

LWVAC table

For details: [Visit](#)

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Wed, Apr 5

Nat. Resource Comm. Mtg

Authors of 'Ditch of Dreams'

Presentation

Santa Fe Downtown

CIED Bldg, Rm DB-125

5:30 p.m.

Thr, Apr 20

Solar Social

Swamp Head Brewery

with Wes Wheeler

3650 SW 42 Ave

4:30-6:30 p.m.

Thr, Apr 20

Stormwater Management

Updated Plan Forum

Sr. Rec. Center

5701 NW 34th Blvd.

Time: TBD

Tue, Apr 25

Documentary: Equal means equal

Millhopper Branch Library

6:30 p.m.

Thr, May 18

LWVAC Annual Meeting

Trinity Methodist Church

Fri-Mon, Jun 9-12

LWVF Biennial Convention

Ft. Lauderdale

GET UP-TO-DATE

CALENDAR information:

www.lwv-alachua.org

Solar Solutions Panel Sunday, March 26

By Shelby Taylor

Three Outstanding Speakers with new ideas and suggestions will discuss Florida's solar solutions!

- Dr. Wendell Porter, Professor of Agricultural and Biological Engineering University of Florida, sustainable construction practices and structures that conserve energy and resources
- Abhaya Thiele, Citizen Climate Lobby Region coordinator
- Wes Wheeler, Solar Co-op League of Woman Voters

Free and open to the public.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

4225 NW 34th Street, Gainesville Florida

2 p.m.

MARCH HOT TOPIC SECRECY AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES TODAY Monday, March 27

By Harvey Goldstein

Join us on **Monday, 27** when UF Law Professor, Mark Fenster, author of Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture, will lead a discussion. Professor Fenster is considered an expert on conspiracy theories, and is often cited and quoted in national publications. He expects to publish a new book on transparency and secrecy in June.

LifeSouth Center

4039 W. Newberry Rd.

6:30 p.m.

Celebrate Women's History Month VOTE for HER Tuesday, March 28

By Barbara Glass

In celebration of Women's History Month, the Office of Civic Engagement and Service will host a panel of women who have run for elected office to share their advice, reflections, and encouragement!

For full details: [Visit](#)

Santa Fe College

3000 NW 83 St.
Room 134, Building S
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

**2016-2017
Leadership Team
LWVAC**

Pres: [Sue Legg](#)
VP: Janet Allen
Secretary: Arlene Brummer
Treasurer: Karen Seabury

Elected Directors:
Diane Dimperio
Barbara Glass
Gail Sasnett-Stauffer
Wes Wheeler

Oak Hammock Unit:
[June Girard](#)

The Village Unit:
Rosalie Bandyopadhyay

Advocacy:
Katy Burnett

Citizenship Ceremonies:
Mary White

Communications:
[Barbara Glass](#)

Dues Treasurer & Roster
Manager:
Carole Fernandez

Education:
Jean Robinson

Events:
Billie Staff

Health Care:
Diane Dimperio

Hot Topics:
Mitzi Austin &
Harvey Goldstein

Internships:
Katy Burnett

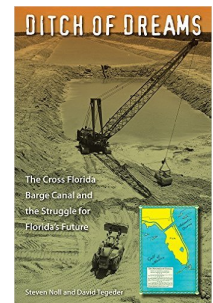
Local Issues:
Sue Hatch

Membership:
Kathy Kidder &
Mary Monahan

Natural Resource April Committee Meeting

By Julia Reiskind

Join us on **April 5th**. Since our study area is restoration of the Ocklawaha, we have invited Steven Noll and David Tegeder, the authors of '*Ditch of Dreams*' to speak to us. Their book covers the historical, political, and economic analysis of the Cross Florida Barge Canal.



**Santa Fe College, Downtown
CIED Bldg, Room DB-125
5:30 p.m.**

!!SOLAR SOCIAL!! SWAMP HEAD BREWERY Thursday, April 20

By Wes Wheeler

Come for fun!
Mingle with League friends. Share a great local brew!
Come to learn about Solar COOP in Gainesville!



**Swamp Head Brewery
3650 SW 42 Ave
4:30 PM**

Documentary: Equal means Equal Tuesday, April 25

By June Littler

The Alachua County/Gainesville League of Women Voters will have a showing of: Equal Means Equal, a 93 minute documentary, written and directed by Kamala Lopez, that asks: How far have women really come? The film features commentary from leaders of the women's movement, including Ellie Smeal and Gloria Steinem, and is narrated by Ms. Lopez.

Natural Resources:
Julia Reiskind

Social & Criminal Justice:
Bennett Brummer

Speakers Bureau:
Donna Waller

Unit Coordinator:
Rosalie Bandyopadhyay

Voter Service:
Gail Sasnett-Stauffer

Update contact information
or obtain a current
membership directory:
[Carole Fernandez](#)

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/>

A short discussion will follow the film.

Millhopper Branch Library
April 25, 6:30 p.m.

Gainesville City Candidate Forum

By Gail Sasnett

The Voter Services Committee held a Candidate Forum on Feb. 27 for the City Commission election. We are pleased that all candidates attended this informative forum.

The League has been recognized for 'setting the standard' about how these events are done! A special 'Thank you' goes to all who assisted in making the event such a success!



Social with Mayor Poe

By Sue Legg

We had about 40 people come to the League Social at Public and General Restaurant. Mayor Poe spoke about key city issues including UF and city of Gainesville collaboration, the challenge to bring greater equity among racial and economic groups, and the status of Gainesville as a Welcoming City.

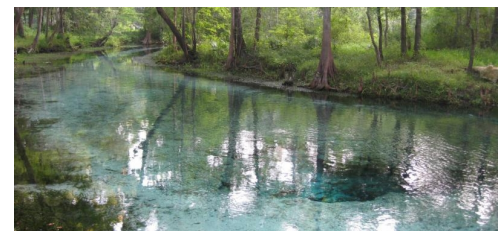
On to Swamp Head!



Natural Resource Committee Meeting

By Julia Reiskind

At our March 1st meeting Tatiana Borisova (Associate Professor, Food and Resource Economics Department, UF) presented preliminary findings for the initial phase of a study (Recreational Use of Ocklawaha River and Rodman



Reservoir) and on needed economics of restoring the Ocklawaha River. She presented data of a two-year survey of visitors to Rodman Lake and various sites along the Ocklawaha, and vehicle counts at 15 locations throughout the locale. Companion data included the local/regional economic impacts, and present and future recreational value of the area.

Visitor surveys were conducted at five different locations during late winter/early spring 2016; three of the locations were primarily

focused on fishing. There were 340 respondents, the majority of whom were there to fish.

Vehicle counts indicated an annual average of close to 370,000 "group" visits, 65% to the reservoir itself. Over 14 years that number has remained relatively stagnant. A calculation of average daily visitor expenditure was \$26; estimated visitor annual revenue to the area (total \$31,509,456) was heavily weighted toward activities at the reservoir (74%), also true for jobs created and related expenditures.

An additional questionnaire asked the respondents their opinion regarding restoring the river or retaining the *status quo*. Again, as expected, 54% favored leaving things as they are with 17% opposed; the remaining were not sure or refused to answer.

Those who attended the talk had lots of questions, ranging from the accuracy and relevancy of the vehicle counts and the related large number of annual visiting groups. In addition, the economic reports were "self-reported" and thus there is the question of validity. There were no data reported on the comparative costs of the continued retention of the dam versus breaching it and restoring the Ocklawaha.

The next phase will include surveys on "would you come if the dam was breached and the river restored". However, I think those present would add that future analyses include the ecological, biological, geological and hydrological impacts on keeping the dam as opposed to removing it.

Our next meeting is April 5th at 5:30 in room DB-125, CIED Building (530 W. University Avenue); it will be a discussion with Steven Noll and David Tegeder, authors of *Ditch of Dreams*, a historical, political, economic analysis of the Cross Florida Barge Canal.

Education Committee February Report

By Jean Robinson

The Education Team met on February 28th at the SFC downtown campus. Our speakers were Donna Kidwell, Student Support Services Director, and Jennifer Taylor, Guidance and Student Services Supervisor, from the Alachua County School Board.

They described discipline disproportionality, the difference between the number of discipline referrals of white and minority students. Alachua County has the largest discipline disproportionality of all counties in Florida.

There currently are programs in the trial stages of implementation at several schools to address this issue. If they are successful, these programs may go county-wide. This was a very informative program with an abundance of interaction.

The next Education Team meeting will be on Tuesday, March 28th at the Santa Fe College downtown campus. Our speaker on March 28th will be Dr. Gunnar Paulson who will update us on the education

website

Social and Criminal Justice Committee

By Bennett Brummer

The Social and Criminal Justice Committee (SCJC) promotes assessment and treatment that will "divert" or "deflect" children and adults from entry into the criminal justice system. To that end, we also seek to improve coordination among a wide range of interested agencies.

SCJC has formed a sub-committee to attend System of Care (SOC) meetings and help us coordinate with the SOC. Southern Legal Counsel is a participant on that sub-committee.

SCJC continues to work to extend prevention programs, such as Reichert House, to Alachua and High Springs.

At the state level, LWVF is supporting the following legislation: CS/SB 196 regarding Juvenile Civil Citation and Similar Diversion Programs has been recommended by an appropriations subcommittee. CS/SB 192 regarding Juvenile Justice direct files is in an appropriations subcommittee. The direct file bill is supported by The Florida Bar's Legal Needs of Children Committee.

LWVF is participating in the Campaign for Criminal Justice Reform (CCJR). Visit their [Website](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) account for more information.

LWVF has established a new Facebook page to share information: "LWV Juvenile Justice Florida."

Gainesville4All has developed a set of criminal justice priorities that are similar to those developed from the LWVAC Community Conversations. Hopefully, LWVAC and Gainesville4All will work together to realize these goals.

Two Alachua County middle schools, Kanapaha and Lincoln, are requesting that our members volunteer as mentors. Mentors would make a commitment of a 30-minute weekly lunch meeting with a student. The day is determined by the mentor. Please contact the schools for details and to apply.

March Education Forum

By Sue Legg

About a 100 people came to share their views about Alachua County and our Schools of the Future. Judy Boles from the Education Foundation introduced the voice for teachers of the future, Peggy Brookins, CEO of National Certification Professional Teachers. Sue Legg moderated an interactive panel discussion with the audience, many of whom were concerned with the 'here and now' challenges of finding time to meet the needs of students in increasingly specialized programs for students with disabilities, low achievement or gifted classes, or those who learn best by collaborating in hands on projects. The constant state testing requirements strain the 'art of teaching' due to the focus on test preparation.

Thank you to the panelists:

Karen Clarke, Deputy Superintendent
Donna Jones, Director of Curriculum
Kevin Berry, Elementary Curriculum Supervisor
Lauren Marlowe, 2017 Teacher of the Year, and
Khanh-Lien Banko , President, Alachua County Council of PTAs

Local Issues Committee Summary Thursday, March 16

By Sue Hatch

Our speaker, Alachua Commissioner "Hutch" Hutchinson began his discussion by telling us that during the day he had had two meetings with immigrants in his office. The residents voiced fear of being arrested or deported in the wake of the present political climate. This was just one of seven local issues which Hutch feels could benefit from the research and work of the League.

He went on to discuss several issues. The first focuses on the problem police have when picking up someone for a lesser or nuisance crimes. The police's choice: To take them to a crisis stabilization unit--or jail. Hutch suggested we might look into a third option implemented in other counties: a central receiving facility.

Next, Hutch introduced a topic that wasn't "sexy"--but had been a problem for many years: fire services. He described the system as it exists in the city and county today and the benefits and barriers to consolidating it into one single system. Detailed studies have looked into this issue and the time may have come to take another look at them and reassess the situation.

During his presentation and our discussion, Hutch pointed out that homelessness is a very real problem in Gainesville and the county. Many of those without homes suffer from mental illness and others end up in the ER or spending the night in the county jail. In fact, Hutch said the average homeless person ends up costing the community \$30,000 per year. The problem is compounded by a lack of affordable housing. Our large student population tends to snap up all the cheaper housing in Gainesville, which drives up the prices. The commissioner suggested that given the costs, in financial and human terms, perhaps it is time to delve deeper into housing solutions.

Annexation, storm water and land acquisition rounded off a fascinating presentation. We appreciate Commissioner Hutchinson taking the time to speak with us. His years of study and service in local government give him a unique insight into our local issues from which we greatly benefitted.

Our next meeting is on Thursday, April 13, from 4-6 pm in the Conference Room of the downtown Santa Fe Blount campus. We will be discussing issues to add to our agenda. Join us and take part in our selection! It is not too late to have your ideas heard.

For more information, or if you would like to be put on the email list for the Local Issues committee, please contact [Sue Hatch](#).

Call out for Volunteers

Throughout the year the LWVAC participates in 'Table Events' that support voter registration as well as the social positions of the League. These events provide an opportunity for the League to engage with the public.

Jaime Brannen has agreed to serve as coordinator and will be the contact person responsible for finding **volunteers** to staff voter registration/information tables and for providing them with whatever forms, signs, flyers, tablecloths and other items that they will need.

If you would like to be added to Jaime's list of volunteers, please contact Jaime [here](#).

Also, if you are aware of any upcoming event where it would be appropriate for us to have a voter registration/information table - please let her know!

IN case you missed it..... A Couple things:

By *Barbara Glass*

Did you know that LWV has teamed up with Teachers Union? Listen to the radio broadcast as Sue Legg, President of the LWVAC discusses school choice. [Visit](#)

Do you know: Who cares for our children? Gainesville Sun, Sunday, March 19, 2017. Check it [out](#) here.

Keep your calendar current: [Visit](#)

Education Blog: [Visit](#)



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