



LWV of the Villages/Tri-County Area

February 2012 Vol. 6 Issue 7

www.lwvtri.org

Nationally recognized! Locally active!

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February 27, 2012

10 a.m.

Lady Lake Library Community Center

Guava Street

Lady Lake

Guest Speaker

The Honorable Buddy MacKay

Topic

"How Florida Happened"



Be Ready to Vote!

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization.

We do not endorse political parties or candidates.

We encourage informed and active participation in government and work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

President's Message

Thank you to **Caroline Emmons-Schramm**, former state League president, and LWVUS National Coaching Team Ruth Shur Fellow, who guided members and guests through the League program planning process. The group discussions provided us with many suggestions for the coming year and the next step will be to tally the results and present them to the Board. Once this is done, they will be presented to the membership at the April Annual Meeting. Thank you to those members who participated in this meeting and shared their ideas.

By now you know that we are very pleased and excited to say that **The Honorable Buddy MacKay** will be our guest speaker on **February 27th**. He is a native of the Ocala area, and served in the Florida House and Senate as well as the U.S. House of Representatives. Following his time in Congress, he served eight years as lieutenant governor with Gov. Lawton Chiles. After Gov. Chiles' sudden death, he served as

Membership

We extend a warm welcome to **Cynthia Oatley** who joined our League at the January meeting.

In advance of her foot surgery, we extend good wishes to **Betsy Brody**, and to **Nancy Bell** who recently underwent a cardiac procedure.

Rest up I and return to League activities! Our thoughts continue to be with **Frances Spedding** who is greatly missed.

*Happy 92nd Birthday
League of Women Voters!
February 14, 1920*

Florida's 42nd governor until Jeb Bush was sworn in. Whether you are a newcomer to Florida or native born, you will not want to miss this meeting. As the election 2012 election cycle gathers steam, come and learn about politics "Florida" style! Please note that we have changed our meeting venue to the **Lady Lake Library Community Center** in order to accommodate a larger audience. Please invite a friend to this most informative meeting.

In **March**, our general meeting will be at the Leesburg Public Library, and our guest speaker will be **Dr. Charles Mojock, President of Lake-Sumter Community College** which is currently serving over 7500 students on three campuses in Lake and Sumter counties. Carpooling will be arranged for those members who do not wish to drive by themselves.

Check the calendar for additional League activities and become involved!

Joanne

MEETINGS & GATHERINGS

February

Friday, February 3, 3 p.m.

Voter Service & Education Committee

Panera's Bread Co., Main Street, The Villages

Monday, February 13, 10 a.m.

Board Meeting

Monday, February 27, 10 a.m.

The Honorable Buddy MacKay

"How Florida Happened"

Lady Lake Public Library Community Center

Lady Lake

March

Tuesday, March 20, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Women's History Month Celebration

Lake-Sumter Community College, Leesburg

Monday, March 26, 10 a.m.

Dr. Charles Mojock, President

Lake-Sumter Community College

Leesburg Public Library

Main Street, Leesburg

Voter Service & Education Committee

Grab a cup of coffee and join the committee on **Friday, February 3, 3 p.m., Panera Bread Co., Main Street, Spanish Springs, The Villages**, as they review the changes to the voting and election laws, as well as possible amendments on the 2012 ballot. With voter service and education being at the core of the League's mission, this is a good opportunity for those members who are new to the League to participate. Two speaking dates have already been scheduled. For further information, contact **Richard Coen** who is cochairing this committee with **Betsy Brody**.

The Presidential Primary is now over, and next up on the election calendar is **the Florida Primary, August 14** (book closing is July 16) and the **General Election, November 6** (book closing is October 9).

If you, or someone you know, want to check their voter registration status, the League of Women Voters has made it easier for you to do so. Just go to <http://bereadytovote.org/> and you can instantly find out your status. If you have a smartphone, you can scan the Be Ready to Vote Tag shown here:



Because local Leagues across the state are under a self-imposed moratorium with regard to registering voters, this is a fast and easy way to make sure your information is up-to-date. If you need to make a change, you will then be connected you to your local Supervisor of Elections via phone, email or website link to register, change party affiliation, address, name, signature or renew your absentee ballot request.

Don't know what a tag is: Find out by going to <http://tag.microsoft.com/what-is->

tag/home.aspx and then go to your smart phone and get a free download for the tag mechanism at <http://gettag.mobi>. Once that's on your phone you can scan the tag from the image above.

You should be receiving your weekly online issue of "Capitol Report" which is prepared each Friday by the League's advocate during the legislative session. Go to <http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1103316066537-302/Capitol+Report+January+27+2012.pdf> to receive the latest issue. If you are not receiving this weekly update, please let **Richard Coen** know.

From LWVUS

Citizens United Decision Two Years Later

January 20, 2012 by Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS

The U.S. Supreme Court issues many opinions each year and it is safe to say they all greatly impact the lives of Americans in some way. The Supreme Court's opinion two years ago in *Citizens United v. FEC* is by all accounts one that has dramatically changed the landscape of modern political campaigns in America.

Looking back, the League's commentary on the decision accurately predicted the impact we are now seeing in the 2012 elections – the birth of SuperPACs:

"The Supreme Court has made a tragic mistake. Their decision announced today in *Citizens United v. FEC* is constitutionally irresponsible and will surely bring about an anti-democratic revolution in how we finance elections in this country. Today, basic pillars of democracy have been undermined—that

elections should not be corrupted by vast corporate wealth and that the voters should be at the center of our democratic system.” (LWVUS, 1/21/10)

SuperPACs are popping up everywhere. In 2010, we caught a glimpse of what was to come in American politics under *Citizens United*. Now as we sit back and watch the 2012 campaign season begin to unfold, we see that the very integrity of our elections is at stake. And the federal agency that is responsible for regulating money in American politics – the Federal Election Commission (FEC) – is totally dysfunctional. Of the six commissioners at the agency, three of them simply refuse to enforce the law, and five of the six are serving despite the fact that their terms expired some time ago.

Business as usual is not working. It is time to clean house and President Obama is the one that needs to do something about it.

How can you fight back against the big money pouring into the political campaigns this year? **Sign the petition** on The White House website* <http://www.lwv.org/content/step-step-instructions-signing-white-house-petition>, urging President Obama to appoint new FEC commissioners. We need at least 25,000 signatures of support by February 10, 2012 in order to get a response from The White House.

Elections: Voting Rights Act Under Attack

A challenge to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act has been on the radar of voting rights groups across the country as numerous new voter suppression laws are being implemented. Section 5 requires all or parts of 16 states (called "covered jurisdictions") to "pre-clear" proposed changes in voting or election procedures with either the U.S. Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia. Last Friday the U.S. District Court in DC heard arguments to overturn Section 5. We

anticipate that this argument could be heard by the US Supreme Court before the November elections and could jeopardize a key provision that has been used to protect millions of voters. Find more information go <http://nbcpolitics.msnbc.msn.com/news/2012/01/20/10200523-key-provision-of-voting-rights-law-under-court-scrutiny>

From LWV of Florida

LWV of Florida Responds to January 31, 2012 Federal Redistricting Ruling

Today's federal court ruling against U.S. Reps. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-Miami) and Corrine Brown (D-Jacksonville) upheld Florida's new constitutional redistricting standards, which were passed in 2010 as Amendment 6 by 63 percent of voters.

"Today's decision further underscores the League's long-held assertion that Amendment 6 is clearly constitutional," League president Deirdre Macnab said. "This decision should send a clear message to Florida's elected leaders to stop spending taxpayer money on litigation that fights the will of the people."

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"...The question that we ask ourselves, not out loud, but we ask it just the same is this: Why is that those of us who enjoy the League of Women Voters so much, believe in it so deeply, and have found it the key to real participation in the mainstream of American political life--why is it that we cannot communicate this same feeling more widely--more widely even within the League itself? Why aren't there more us?" Ruth Phillips, LWVUS President 1964



Celebrate Women's History Month

with the

League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area

American Association of University Women, Lake/Sumter Branch

Business and Professional Women, North Lake

Democratic Women's Club of Lake County

Lake-Sumter Community College's New Directions Program

and

Lake-Sumter Community College's Equity & Diversity Committee

on

Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 5 - 7 p.m.

at

Lake-Sumter Community College - Magnolia Room

Guest Speaker: Ms. Jakkí Perry,

Women's Education - Women's Empowerment

Human Resources Director for the City of Leesburg



LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area
Be a Voice for Citizens! Be a Force for Change!
Be Involved in the Process!
www.lwvtri.org

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Address _____

Email _____

Zip Code _____

Village, if applicable _____

Community, if applicable _____

Former League Member: Yes___ No___ Where: _____

Your active participation is needed. Are you interested in?

___ Government in Florida

___ Education in Florida

___ Justice in Florida

___ Social Policy in Florida

___ Natural Resources

___ Growth Management

Could you help with:

___ Newsletter (Electronic) ___ Membership ___ Public Relations ___ Fundraising

Dues are paid annually on the anniversary of joining:

Individual \$ 50.00 + Local Dues of \$10 _____

Household \$ 75.00 + Local Dues of \$10 per person _____

Student \$ 25.00 _____

Susan B. Anthony \$100.00 Membership Dues +Donation _____

A check should be made payable to **LWV of Florida** for the applicable amount. In addition, the check for **Local Dues** should be made payable to **LWVTRI**. Both checks should be mailed to **Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, and FL 32162**. Your dues include membership in the LWVUS and LWVF as well as a subscription to the *Florida Voter*.