



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARTIN COUNTY

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League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

April 2016 VOTER

President: Linda Grand
Editor: Jennifer Durrant



**Annual Meeting and Legislative Update
Florida House Representative Gayle Harrell
Monday
April 18, 2016**

Rep. Gayle Harrell was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2000. She was re-elected 3 times and served until 2008 when she was termed out. She was subsequently elected again in 2010, 2012 and 2014.

With over 16 years of service in the Florida House of Representatives, Rep. Harrell is a leader in setting policy for the State of Florida. She is currently Chair of Children’s, Families & Seniors Subcommittee, and is a sitting member of the Health & Human Services Committee, Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee, Judiciary Committee and the Criminal Justice Subcommittee. She has also served as Chair of the Health and Human Services Access Sub Committee, the Healthcare Quality Committee, Healthcare General Committee, and the Healthcare Standards Subcommittee.

Gayle Harrell also has over 28 years of experience in healthcare. She is President and CEO of Health IT Strategies, LLC and has worked as a Healthcare Administrator, managing the Ob-Gyn. practice of Dr. James E. Harrell and founder of the Breast Imaging Center, a mammography center specializing in preventive care for women.

In addition, Harrell is a nationally recognized leader in Health Information Technology and was appointed by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner to the national Health Information Technology Policy Committee as established under ARRA 2009 (Stimulus Bill). As a part of the Policy Committee she also was appointed to serve on the Health Information Exchange Work Group and the Privacy and Security Tiger Team. In addition, she was one of four legislators nationally to serve on the National Governor’s Association State Alliance for e-Health. She also serves on the Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Healthcare Reform Committee.

Harrell has won numerous awards for her legislative service. Among her many awards she has received the Legislator of the Year by the Florida Medical Association, the Legislative Leadership Award by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Legislative Award by the Florida Children’s Forum, an “A” Ranking by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Friend of Free Enterprise Award by the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Legislative Achievement Award by Keep Florida Beautiful, and the Distinguished Legislator Award by the Florida Police Benevolent Association.

Harrell has been married to Dr. James Harrell for 50 years, has four children and eight grandchildren, and is an active member of the First Presbyterian Church in Stuart.

\$18.00
(\$20.00 if paid at door,
but reserved ahead)

Manero’s Restaurant
2851 SW High Meadows Avenue
Palm City
11:30 a.m. (serving at 12:00 noon)

**Send to
Alice Kraus**
2784 SW Bear Paw Trail
Palm City, FL 34990
Phone: 772-223-9010

RSVP by April 14

Please include your menu choice with your reservation

Salmon on Rice with Cole Slaw
or Chicken Oriental Salad

or Soup and Salad (French Onion Soup and Manero's Signature Gorgonzola Salad)

Dessert and beverage included

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Donna Dupuy

Highlights of the 2016 Legislative Session

With more than 1,800 bills filed between the two chambers, and a very active lobbying effort by LWV/Florida, a report on the 2016 Legislative Session could fill a book – an extremely boring book that almost no one would want to read. So here, we will address only some of the highlights where League's priorities are concerned.

There is an old saying: "The House proposes; the Senate disposes." And that rang truer than ever this year.

Term limits for state supreme court justices and appellate judges: DOA in the Senate

A constitutional amendment, it passed the House 76-38; but by the time it landed in the Senate, where it was referred to three committees, it was too late to be heard by any of them. Note: This bill was considered by many to be the result of the displeasure of the GOP majority with a number of state Supreme Court rulings -- including the Court's order that congressional and state Senate districts be redrawn, resulting from lawsuits led by LWV/Florida.

Open carry/campus carry handguns: Shot down by two brave men

Both of these NRA-backed bills passed the House by wide margins (80-38 and 80-37, respectively) but a single courageous Senator from Miami brought that train to a halt. Miguel Diaz de la Portilla, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, exercised his prerogative not to hear the bills, so they died in the Senate without a committee vote. But not before a last-minute attempt was made to resurrect open-carry by amending it onto another bill. Fortunately, the Senate has more than one brave soul, and David Simmons, Chairman of the Rules Committee, called the maneuver what it was – a violation of the rules, after which open carry was finally laid to rest.

Fracking in Florida: Drill bill killed

The House approved their version of this environmentally disastrous proposal by a margin of 73-45, despite objections and appeals from municipal officials in 27 counties and 41 cities. No surprise there, since the House had passed similar bills in two preceding sessions. Once again, the Senate came to the rescue, with a 9-10 vote in the Appropriations Committee, effectively killing the bill.

Control and governance of charter schools: Power grab gets an "F"

A naked attempt to continue the pattern of robbing Florida's public schools to benefit private ones, this constitutional amendment would have stripped locally elected county school boards of the authority to authorize, operate and control charter schools, and give it to a state-appointed board. Fortunately, this bill never made it out of committee in either house.

The good news is that LWV/Florida's lobbyist and volunteer team were there every step of the way to help defeat these bad bills. The bad news is that the bills will be back next year, so stay tuned...

NEW MEMBERS

Ruth Hardin
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Linda Grand

I know that we are all proud to be members of The League of Women Voters, but we should be especially proud this month. It was a winning legislative session for the league.

Some very bad bills that seemed destined for easy passage were killed:

Open carry and campus carry were killed despite strong attempts by the NRA for their passage.

Fracking in Florida failed on a 9-10 vote in the final Senate committee in the last days of their meetings.

A constitutional amendment promoting the privatization and growth of charter schools in our state will not come before the voters.

And another proposed amendment that would make Florida the only state with judicial term limits was swiftly laid to rest.

Additionally, The League of Women Voters of Florida's fight for Fair Districts and its evolutionary but historical changes in our state's political landscape is only beginning to be felt, and will impact Florida politics forever.

Be proud and remember to renew your membership today!

You will find a membership form on our league website, LWVMartin.org. Additionally, recent past issues of The Voter are archived on our League website.

We urge all members to consider support at the Susan B. Anthony level when you renew your annual membership.

We should also acknowledge the outstanding job that Martin League member Vicki Davis, our Martin County Supervisor of Elections, has accomplished in the recent Presidential Preference Primary. Congratulations, Vicki. All Martin County voters benefit from your expertise.

With the battle for the White House underway, the League has answers to voters' most frequently asked questions. We have once again teamed up with the Newspaper in Education Institute to produce *Electing the President*, a handy guide outlining all you need to know about the presidential election process. The guide will appear in newspapers nationwide as well as be shared with schools, community organizations and voters who need a helping hand as they navigate the election process. From helping you navigate the complex nomination process to providing succinct tips for making sense of the daily barrage of campaign coverage and advertising, *Electing the President* will serve as your go-to resource all the way up to Election Day. The League is working hard to distribute this and other educational materials to voters across the country, but we need your help. Download the guide at <http://lwv.org/files/ElectingthePresident2016.pdf> and share it with your family, friends, and any potential new voters in your life.

Also, if there are any suggestions for upcoming speakers or luncheon menu choices, please make me or any of our board members aware of your suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you at our next luncheon meeting, April 18, which is also our annual meeting. Please bring a guest; next month's luncheon meeting will be our last until October, so please attend.

Mark Your Calendar

Apr 18

Annual Meeting & Legislative Update Luncheon

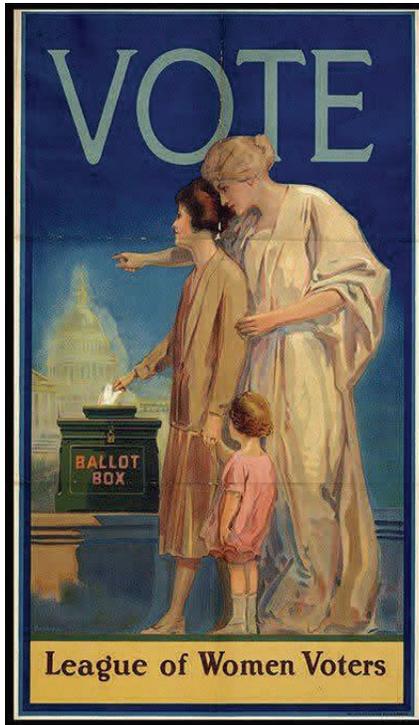
July 11 and July 14

5:00 to 7:45 pm

LWVMC-AAUW Candidate Forums at the Blake Library featuring candidates for County, State and US Congressional offices



LWV Martin President Linda Grand at a recent conference with the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs, Samuel Verghese, who advocates for Florida's 4.8 million seniors.



From left: LWV Martin member Eula Clarke, Vice Mayor of the City of Stuart; March luncheon speaker, international environmental advocate Kathe Thompson; and LWV Martin Legislative Affairs chair, Donna Dupuy.

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