



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.

Monday, May 21, 2018
 Allegro Inspired Senior Living
 Hot Topic: Legislative Wrap-Up

May 2018
VOTER
 President: Madrienne Crow
 Editor: Jennifer Durrant

COME JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST MAY LUNCHEON!!!!

We love our snow birds and we will miss you. But while the birds are away the cats are going to play!

This month’s Hot Topics speaker will be Kloe Cuiperger, Legislative Coordinator for Martin County Board of County Commissioners. Earlier this month, Kloe prepared an EXCELLENT report for the county, which explains to all of us actions taken by the Florida legislature that affect Martin County. (Look for the complete report at the Martin County web site.)



“The 2018 legislative session was one unlike any other. In the fall, Florida was hit by Hurricane Irma, focusing much of the conversation on hurricane rehabilitation. ...Once the ball was rolling and the senate and house began steadily passing bills through committees and outlining the annual budget, the tragic shooting occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The entire capitol and the state felt the shock of the event. ...The focus and priority very swiftly shifted to improving safety in our schools.”

Please note, the luncheon will be held at Allegro once again. They did such a fantastic job last January when we were scrambling for a venue at the last minute, that we decided to give them a second try. We will be upstairs in the Community room so it will be easier to hear the speaker.

Since many of our seasonal residents will be gone, we are encouraging everyone to bring a friend or guest. Kloe’s presentation is of interest to all residents of Martin County. The League is not just for women, men are very welcome as members or guests. Parking can be a problem so carpool if you can!!!

RSVP by May 17
 Please include your menu choice with your reservation

Doors open at 11:30 a.m.
 (serving at 12:00 noon)

Grilled Salmon with Salad
 Chicken Salad Sandwich
 Vegetarian Plate
 Rolls, Dessert and Coffee or Tea are included.
 \$18.00 (\$20.00 if paid at door, but reserved ahead)

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



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Donna Dupuy

Not because I'm lazy (though I admit that I am), but because we will not cast any vote more important this year than our vote on the "work" of the Constitution Revision Commission (CRC), and I could not summarize what has happened any better, I offer here excerpts from an excellent editorial from the *Tampa Bay Times*, on 4/17/18.

"The Florida Constitution Revision Commission has wasted months as a politically motivated scam masquerading as a high-minded effort to ask voters to improve the state's fundamental document. The commission on Monday (4/16) added amendments to the November ballot that will force voters to accept unconnected or unpopular changes with ones they support — or reject the entire amendment. It's a cynical attempt to sneak through a conservative agenda that otherwise never would be approved, and voters should send a clear message they refuse to be manipulated.

If voters want to add protections for crime victims into the state Constitution, they also will have to approve tampering with the way judges consider the government's position in interpreting state law. If they want to improve benefits for survivors of first responders, they will have to make it harder to raise university fees. If they want to require civic literacy in public schools, they will have to embrace term limits for school board members and state control over charter schools. These are unpalatable trade-offs, and the commission has made it more likely voters will reject every one of its amendments."

In legislative language, what the CRC did was to "pair" unrelated, often contradictory proposals. In poker parlance, what they did is known as stacking the deck. Either way, they have not only jeopardized a full year's worth of "work," but they also insulted the intelligence of Florida's voters.

How LWVF officially responds to this Machiavellian maneuver – *which LWVF opposed vociferously* – remains to be seen. But it was just one more card trick by the CRC in a year filled with such chicanery, and if Shakespeare was right, and what's past is prologue, we may see a repetition of what took place in 2012, when 11 amendments were on the ballot and LWVF opposed all of them due to structural flaws. (Eight of them failed.)

To support that speculation, here's more from the editorial:

"This has been a rigged process from the very beginning, when the governor appointed that noted constitutional scholar Carlos Beruff, a Bradenton developer and a Scott favorite, as chair of the commission. The rules were in constant flux, the commitment to openness was flexible and even commission members were confused by the process and had difficulty getting information.

With the commission's final approval of amendments for the ballot, the political damage wrought by such a cynical power play is clear. This has been a colossal waste of time and a wasted opportunity that won't come around again for 20 years. Voters are too smart to accept such one-sided trades as civic literacy in exchange for neutering local school districts."

(Note: The reference above to Beruff as a constitutional scholar was totally sarcastic. He's a failed U.S. Senate candidate and a big donor to Rick Scott and related PACs.)

Again, LWVF has not issued an official position -- at this writing. So stay tuned. And check the LWVF website and Facebook page for updates.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Madrienne Crow



Dear Leaguers,

Do you remember May 2016? We were all just figuring out that it was going to be Hillary vs. Trump. Throughout the summer, the vitriol got intense. Our country became so divided that even some long time friendships were destroyed. Some family members still aren't speaking to each other. How sad! We ended up with one candidate who won the electoral college and one who won the popular vote.

This May, we are rolling into non-Presidential, sometimes called Mid-term or Off-year, elections. While the top of the ticket won't be presidential, it is still a very important election in our state, and in our county and in our city. I recently heard a gubernatorial candidate say "So goes Florida, so goes the rest of the country".

Let's all spend this summer doing our homework. Ok, even political junkies like us must admit that every once in a while we have picked a candidate or an issue based on a slick TV commercial, a slogan, or other gimmick without fully vetting all the relevant issues.

Republican, Democrat, Independent, this year is too important to let slide.

Florida has not elected a Democrat as Governor since Lawton Chiles in 1994. Is 2018 the year? Will we keep one Republican and one Democrat Senator, reflecting our state's purple attitudes or will a Republican with new ideas defeat Mr. Nelson? Will Representative Mast be defeated in the primary of his own party because of his new position on assault rifles? Will any of our current County Commissioners seek reelection? (No, I am not related to Daniel Crow.)

We expect a bunch of Constitutional amendments on the ballot, with the CRC meeting this year and don't forget the Restoration of Felon's Voting Rights that we all worked so hard for. And, I didn't even mention all our local issues such as elected school superintendent and closing the write-in loophole.

Very Important—Update Your Signature:

One last point. When you vote by mail, the Supervisor of Elections personnel compare your signature when you registered to vote with your signature on the ballot. If they don't match, your vote may not count. For people who registered to vote many years ago, and their signature has changed over time, this could be a problem.

The fix is easy. Just update your registration or re-register. Our friend and League member Vicki Davis, will be happy to help. (Also, thanks, Vicki for the logo below.)

To our seasonal residents, have safe travels home. See you in October. For our year round members, see you on May 21st at Allegro,

VOTE  **2018**
MAKE YOUR MARK

SAVE THE DATE



2018 Candidates Forum
July 25 and 26
5:30 to 7:30 PM
Blake Library

Come and Meet the Candidates.
Listen to their answers to our questions.
Spread the word!

Co-Sponsored by: The League of Women Voters of Martin County and the American Association of University Women, Stuart, (FL) Branch.

For more information or to volunteer to help, please contact Betty Paterson or Madrienne Crow.



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