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"Good citizenship requires not only knowledge but ability to act."

— Marguerite Wells
President
League of Women
Voters, 1934-44



2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION GETS UNDERWAY, AND OUR LEAGUE IS ENGAGED!

By Chris Straton — LWVCC President
President@lwvcolliercounty.org

Can you believe that it is almost March?

It seems like we were just hosting our Welcome Back luncheon and now people are talking about when they will be going back north.

Six of us will be going north but only as far as Tallahassee this March 18-20th. We will be attending the League of Women Voters of Florida's Legislative Seminar in Tallahassee. In addition to lobbying our State Senators and State Representatives, we will hear from our professional lobbyist on legislation of interest to the League, sit in on committee meetings and have the opportunity to hear from House and Senate leadership. Of course, there is the chance to get to know each other better on the 7 hour drive as well as talk with League members from throughout the state of Florida.

There is such a feeling of energy as elected officials, staff members, lobbyists and citizens rush around the capitol "doing the people's business." I will never forget the time that I asked then State Representative Burt Saunders if "I could walk with him." He was on the way to a committee meeting and the only time that I had to

make my pitch was as we walked through the halls. Talk about sound bites. I got an appreciation for the professional lobbyist who had to do this many times on many days with many people.

As the session moves closer to its end date, the pace picks up exponentially. Keeping track of the status of bills becomes a nightmare and sometimes it seems as if invisible ink is being used. Everyone becomes harried and the nights become longer.

Finally, the day arrives when the business of the legislators is complete and the session ends. They have 60 days to do the "people's business." Despite the thousands of bills filed, few will pass. Their only duty as spelled out in the Florida constitution is to pass a budget.

Interested in getting involved? Join the Government Committee for Coffee & the Capitol Report. The Capitol Report is published by the League's professional lobbyist. It is our chance to stay on top of League issues. This is where the League takes action at the State level.

I guarantee that you will be fascinated and on your way to becoming a government junkie.

NEW! **COFFEE & THE CAPITOL REPORT** **NEW!**
 A weekly get-together to discuss what's happening in Tallahassee during the Legislative Session
 Thursdays from 9:30—10:30a.m. at Panera's Bread
 Naples Blvd and Airport-Pulling Road
 Beginning March 8th
 Contact Sandy Parker at Government@lwvcolliercounty.org for details



GOVERNMENT – “Lunch with Leaders” with the Constitutional Officers Continues with Sheriff Don Hunter

By Sandy Parker - Government@lwvcolliercounty.org

“Lunch with Leaders” is a hit! That’s the feedback we’ve been getting from those who participate.

This year, we’re dining with each of the five constitutional officers. It’s an opportunity to sit around a table for an informal discussion — not scripted, no presentations, just us.

We lunched with Clerk of Courts Dwight Brock in January and pondered the Clerk’s authority to audit county records at will. In February, with Supervisor of Elections Jennifer Edwards, we debated the need for voter-verifiable paper audit trails for electronic voting machines. Each of the 17 LWVCC participants had the opportunity to share their opinions and have Jennifer respond.

On March 29, Lunch with Leaders continues with Sheriff Don Hunter, who has served as sheriff of Collier County since 1992. As with all these sessions, we’ll dine at our host’s

home territory — in this case, the Muster Room at the county jail.

How does the Sheriff feel about the automatic restoration of civil and voting rights to former felons once they’ve served their court-mandated sentence? (See page 1 story.) What are some of the challenges facing law



The 2006/2007 Program Goals for the Government Committee include:
Increase member knowledge of the five Collier County constitutional officers and understanding of their roles, responsibilities and current issues.

enforcement in Collier County? What types of criminals are housed in our county jails? What is done with juvenile offenders?

Join us for what promises to be an interesting meeting on

Thursday, March 29, from 12 – 1:30 p.m. at the County Jail in the Collier County Government Center. Cost is \$10 for lunch at the jail. RSVP to Sandy Parker at Government@lwvcolliercounty.org by 3/25.

Our last two sessions of the season will be with the Property Appraiser on April 18th and with the Tax Collector in May (date TBD) Watch for details in next month’s Voter.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

JOIN THE LWVUS GRASSROOTS LOBBY CORPS TODAY

The LWVUS Grassroots Lobby Corps provides a quick and easy way to keep in contact with your members of Congress. This online network of activists gets the League message to Congress in a highly effective way. Members of the network receive e-mail action alerts from the LWVUS and then respond by sending quick, targeted, and sometimes last-minute messages to members of Congress on priority issues before key votes.

Take a few minutes at critical times to lobby Congress on LWVUS positions by joining the Grassroots Lobby Corps. Just go to the League's website at www.lwv.org.

LWVCC'S NEW TWO-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

By Chris Straton — LWVCC President
President@lwvcolliercounty.org

Your Board of Directors and Committee Chairs recently completed a strategic plan for the next two years.

Some of you participated in our planning process through your committee work, or provided input in response to phone calls. Others will have heard about it at the February 19th Lively League. For the rest of our members, following is an overview of the plan.

Since the League truly is a grassroots organization, each of you will have the opportunity to vote on the outcome of our planning process — our 2007/2008 Program — at the April 16 Annual Meeting. This must be our plan—the plan of the members, supported by the members, and accomplished by the members' talents and dollars.

The mission of the League of Women Voters of Collier County is to encourage the informed and active participation in government, increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

We have a long tradition of educating ourselves and the public. We have done a good job of that. We have a well deserved reputation for conducting fair and thoughtful candidate forums and for presenting both sides of issues.

However, it was the consensus of the participants in the strategic planning process that we need to do more with respect to action and advocacy. It was also deter-

mined that our educational activities should generally be linked to our action and advocacy efforts — sort of like asking ourselves, “So now that we know that, what do we do about it?”

To me, that is the exciting part of League and where we can make the greatest impact by better informing ourselves and our community.

Additionally, it was determined that, rather than simply focus on signing up new members, we needed to channel our Membership efforts into getting new

members engaged immediately upon joining.

We developed a new membership application which gives new members a chance to tell us about themselves, their skills and interests. With this information, we will proactively engage new members in a variety of ways.

It was also determined that we need to do a better job of helping new members become active, effective League members more quickly. On March 7, we will launch a new League 101 Orientation program called “Everything You Wanted to Know About League ... But Were Afraid to Ask.” This program provides new or even not-so-new members with an opportunity to find out how League works and what projects our League will be focusing on for the next two years. Committee chairs will also be there to recruit and activate members for their committees.

It was the consensus of the participants ... that we needed to do more with respect to action and advocacy... and that our educational activities should generally be directly linked to our action and advocacy efforts

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Recognizing that many of our members are new to Collier County, we will develop a curriculum, sort of a League University, which will be offered throughout the season. Curriculum will include Government 101, Justice 101, Natural Resources 101, etc. Each course will provide basic knowledge so that members can join a committee with sufficient background about Collier County to become actively engaged immediately.

Through our strategic planning process, our program planning became more focused than it was in the recent past. Our program for 2007-2008 will identify each committee's goals and priorities, and its planned action/advocacy, as well as planned educational activities.

Resources needed to accomplish the program will be identified. Of course, we are always looking for the person that says, "I will chair, organize, etc., etc., etc." However, recognizing that our members are all busy, we will present "bite-size" tasks to help us achieve our goals and ask you to participate.

Currently there are three committees which are not active, and we do not plan to activate them at this time. Those committees are Education (we are moving civics education to other committees), Housing (workforce housing will continue as an ad hoc study committee), and International Relations. However, should events surface which merit League involvement, the Board is prepared to reactivate the necessary committee(s) to achieve a Board-specified goal.

For the next few years, our efforts will be focused in the following five committees:

- Natural Resources, with a growth management focus,
- Justice, with a focus on juvenile justice,
- Social Policy, with a focus on the privatization of the Department of Children and Families as it affects children in Collier County,
- Government, with a focus on charter government and creating an active Observer Corps, and
- Voter Service, with a focus on increasing voter participation and engaging the disenfranchised.

*Each of you will have the opportunity
to vote on the outcome of our
planning process
— our 2007/2008 Program —
at the April 16th Annual Meeting*

Finally, it was determined that we need to develop a leadership succession plan. For so many years, our League has benefited from the dedication and commitment of just a

few people. We welcome them and hope that they will continue as they wish. However, it is our responsibility as a Board to put people in place who will be the next set of dedicated leaders for our League.

I would like to thank Donna Gillroy, a new LWVCC member and President of Gillroy & Associates, Inc., a strategic planning, marketing, public relations & event management firm, who generously donated her services and her enthusiasm to lead us in our strategic planning process. We couldn't have done it without her.

I'm very excited about our new plan. But as I said earlier, this must be your plan — not just your Board's plan. Every member will have the opportunity to vote on the outcome of our planning process—our 2007-2008 Program — at our Annual Meeting on April 16th.

Sincerely,

Chris



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

By Joyce Evans— Membership@lwvcolliercounty.org

A warm welcome to the following new members who joined our League since the last Voter was published!



Dwight Brock

Georgia Hiller

Contact information for these new members can be found in the "For Members" section of our website at www.lwvcolliercounty.org



**IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MAY
BE
INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR
LEAGUE,
PLEASE CONTACT JOYCE EVANS,
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**



NEW!

**EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT LEAGUE...
BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK
League 101 Orientation Session
Wednesday, March 7
10:00–11:30 a.m.**

NEW!

We've developed an orientation session for the many members who have joined since April 2006. **New members are strongly encouraged to attend** and all members are welcome.

In League 101 you'll learn the answers to:

- What does the League of Women Voters stand for?
- What are League's positions at the national, state and local League level?
- How does League arrive at the positions it takes?
- How is League organized, and how do local Leagues relate to one another?
- What exactly is the League's process of study, and what determines "consensus?"
- What is "concurrence" and how is it used?
- What forms of action do League members take?
- Do Leagues endorse parties or candidates for office?
- How are League activities financed?
- What are League committees and what will they be focused on in the coming years?

Please RSVP to membership@lwvcolliercounty.org or 263-4656 by March 5th.



League of Women Voters
of Collier County
P. O. Box 9883
Naples, FL 34101
Tel 239-263-4656 Email: lwvcc@lwvcolliercounty.org

2007 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

The 2007 Roster was distributed to members
at the February general meeting.
If you did not attend, look for your copy
in the mail soon.

Remember — a schedule of League Meetings
through May 2007 is available at
www.lwvcolliercounty.org
under "Events & Activities"

LABEL HERE

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

(MUST HONOR OR CANCEL RESERVATIONS BY RSVP DATE TO AVOID CHARGE)

Event	Date & Time	Place	RSVP & Cost
League 101 Orientation Page 7	Wednesday, 3/7 10:00—11:30 a.m.	TBD in North Naples	By 3/5 to 263-4656 or Membership@lwvcolliercounty.org
Coffee & Capitol Report Page 2	Thursday, 3/8 9:30—10:30 a.m.	Panera's Bread Naples Blvd and Airport	No RSVP required Dutch treat
Justice Committee Page 4	Monday, 3/12 9:00—11:00 a.m.	Naples Branch Library 650 Central Avenue	By 3/9 to Justice@lwvcolliercounty.org No charge
Social Policy Committee Page 6	Wednesday, 3/14 8:00—9:00 a.m.	Crissy's Wild Side Café 5026 Airport Pulling Rd N	By 3/12 to SocialPolicy@lwvcolliercounty.org Breakfast — \$10
Coffee & Capitol Report Page 2	Thursday, 3/15 9:30—10:30 a.m.	Panera's Bread Naples Blvd and Airport	No RSVP required Dutch treat
LWVF Legislative Seminar Page 2	Sunday, 3/18— Tuesday, 3/20	Tallahassee	Contact Government@lwvcolliercounty.org for details
Lively League Page 5	Monday, 3/19 10:30—12:00 noon	The Norris Center 8th Ave S & 8th St S across from City Hall	By 3/15 to 263-4656 or Hospitality@lwvcolliercounty.org
General Meeting Page 1	Monday, 3/19 12:30-1:30 p.m. Lunch at noon	The Norris Center 8th Ave S & 8th St S across from City Hall	By 3/15 to 263-4656 or Hospitality@lwvcolliercounty.org Lunch—\$15 (\$20 non-members)
Coffee & Capitol Report Page 2	Thursday, 3/22 9:30—10:30 a.m.	Panera's Bread Naples Blvd and Airport	No RSVP required Dutch treat
Coffee & Capitol Report Page 2	Thursday, 3/29 9:30—10:30 a.m.	Panera's Bread Naples Blvd & Airport	No RSVP required Dutch treat
Government Committee Lunch with Leaders Page 3	Thursday, 3/29 12:00—1:30 p.m.	Sheriff's Department Muster Room at the County Jail — County Government Center	By 3/25 to Government@lwvcolliercounty.org Lunch — \$10

Visit our website at www.lwvcolliercounty.org or call us at 263-4656