



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® O F S A N I B E L

## *The Voter*

League of Women Voters of Sanibel

Volume 3 Issue 2 February 2012

### Letter from the President

The Florida Legislature has only a few weeks left for the 2012 Regular Legislative Session. Ben Wilcox, our legislature lobbyist, has been faithfully emailing us his weekly report. I hope all of you have been reading these.

Our February luncheon featured a talk on legislative reapportionment by Robert McKnight, former state senator and representative, and political consultant for ABC news in Tallahassee. He provided some good historical and political perspective on the current legislative reapportionment occurring in Florida.

We are now taking reservations for our March 16 Oxbow and Riverlore cruise. See details below.

The State League's Legislative Summit 2012 is scheduled for February 21-23 in Tallahassee. Time is very short to make reservations. Participants will have exclusive use of the historic Governors Inn Hotel at a favorable rate. Additionally, there will be a cocktail reception at the Governors Club, as well as a star-studded Old Capitol Gala featuring young elected official from throughout the state. Registration is only \$99 for League members and \$159 for non-members.

With this voter, we will start a new section called IMPACT ON ISSUES. It will deal with Public Policy Positions of the LWV of the US.

Linda Kramer

### Upcoming Programs

Monday, February 13, 2012, 1:30 pm at the Sanibel Library

**"Gerrymandering: A New Documentary Film"**

Darden Rice, President of the LWV of the St. Petersburg Area will discuss the redistricting issue as well as moderate questions and answers.

Friday, March 16, 2012 11 am

**"Caloosahatchee Oxbow & Riverlore Cruise"**

Make your reservations early, space is limited.

Tuesday, April 10, 2002 7pm  
Sanibel Library  
"Annual Meeting"  
Speaker, Judie Zimomra, Sanibel City Manager

## League Board Meetings 2011-2012

Members are invited to attend all board meetings which will be held at the Bank of the Islands, 3:30 on Wednesdays, March 14, and April 4.



## CALOOSAHATCHEE OXBOW & RIVERLORE CRUISE

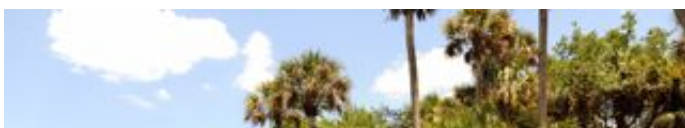
Please join the LWV of Sanibel on March 16, 2012, in exploring and meandering the historic upriver Caloosahatchee. We follow the river back to a time when a waterfall served as the headwaters of the Caloosahatchee and settlers braved living amongst the wilderness.

The tour is guided by Rae Ann Wessel, a river researcher, long-time river advocate, historian and SCCF (Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation) Natural Resource Policy Director. Our vessel is a stable and spacious 42-passenger Manatee Rover pontoon boat that features daily Manatee tours. All seats have a great view for photographs and bird watching

Cruises depart 1 at p.m. from the W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam off SR 80. The 2.5 hour adventure begins by locking through the W.P. Franklin Lock in Olga. Heading east toward Alva, we enter the historic bends of the river and revisit the activities of the pioneers who traveled the same river to find paradise. Stories of the early settlers and their adventures are blended with an understanding of the river's oxbows, the wild creatures that call it home and the challenges the river faces.

So that you do not have to drive, we have arranged for a very nice bus to pick us up at 11:00 am at the far side of the parking lot at Publix on Summerlin Road across from the Tanger Outlet mall. Since we leave at 11 and return around 5 pm, you will need to bring a lunch. The League will provide water.

The cost is \$55 per person for both the 2 ½ hour boat ride, our guide and the bus, which is a great saving over the individual price.





## Cruise Reservations

**Our Price per person: \$55**

To reserve a spot, please send your checks by March 3, with "River Cruise" on the notation line, to: LWV Sanibel, P.O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957

Space is limited to 42 people, we will accept reservations on a first-come basis based upon receipt of your check & names of guests.



The Coast Guard requires that we have a list of passengers, so please include that information along with your check. We will send an email confirmation once we receive your check.

The bus will depart at 11 am from the parking lot off Summerlin where Publix is located across from the Tanger Outlet Mall. Look for the Dolphin bus.

### From The State League of Women Voters

As part of the League's continuing leadership in fair redistricting and appropriate implementation of Amendments 5 and 6, more than 100 members gave professional and substantive public testimony before legislators during this summer's 26 redistricting hearings statewide. Beginning June 20 in Tallahassee and ending Sept. 1 in Clewiston, members provided constructive criticism and proposed improvements to the current redistricting process. Hundreds of members rallied in attending the hearings, writing letters and op-eds for newspapers, speaking to media outlets, participating in community panels and debates, and conducting local League redistricting workshops.

At public hearings in other states, citizens can comment on legislatively proposed maps. During Florida's hearings, not one map drawn by a legislator was presented for citizen comment. The League was criticized for not submitting maps. Although the League drew maps in 2002, they were ignored by the Legislature, which ultimately drew the gerrymandered districts in place now. It is the responsibility of legislators, who are paid with taxpayer money, to draw the new district maps. They have had the census data for more than 5 months. The hearings had the potential to be productive if only legislatively drawn maps had been presented for public discussion and input.

As this process continues, the League will continue its role as watchdog of redistricting and insist that the Legislature get to work to prevent chaos and

confusion in the 2012 election!

**Be Ready to Vote Action Campaign** The new election law makes both voting and voter registration harder in Florida. What can voters do? We urge all voters to check their registration and make sure it is up to date. Voters can update their voter status by contacting the Supervisor of Elections at 239-leevote (533-8683) or visit the county web site [www.leeelections.com](http://www.leeelections.com)

Be Ready to Vote action steps:

1. Update your address;
2. Update your name;
3. Plan to vote by mail? Renew your ballot request?
4. Update your signature.

**Important dates:**

Florida Primary: August 14, 2012  
Voter registration deadline July 16

General Election: November 6, 2012  
Voter registration deadline October 9

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## Impact on Issues

### The League's History

A League study of the presidential electoral process culminated in a 1970 position supporting direct election of the President by popular vote as essential to representative government. The League testified and lobbied for legislation to amend the Constitution to replace the Electoral College with direct election of the President, including provisions for a national runoff election in the event no candidates (President or Vice-President) received 40 percent of the vote. The measure, which passed the House and nearly passed the Senate in 1971, has been revived in each Congress without success. In 1997, the LWVUS again called for abolition of the Electoral College and for direct election of the President and Vice-President in testimony before the House Subcommittee on the Constitution. The League has supported national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections to ensure equity for voters from all states and to facilitate the electoral process.

In February 2001, a memo was sent to the state and local Leagues outlining the League's position on the Electoral College under the LWVUS position on Selection of the President.

The League believes strongly that the Electoral College should be abolished and not merely "reformed." One "reform" which the League specifically rejects is the voting by electors based on proportional representation in lieu of the present "winner-takes-all" method. Such a system would apportion the electoral votes of a state based on the popular vote in that state. Instead of making the Electoral College more representative, such proportional voting would increase the chance that no candidate would receive a majority in the Electoral College, thereby sending the election of the President to the House of Representatives where each state, regardless of population, would receive only one vote. Election of the President by the House further removes the decision from the people and is contrary to the "one person, one vote" principle. The League also does not support reform of the Electoral College on a state-by-state basis because the League believes there should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President

should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President. The 2002 Convention voted to expand and update the position. The League came to concurrence on a new position in June 2004, which takes into account the entire presidential selection process and supports a process that produces the best possible candidates, informed voters and optimum voter participation.

The 2008 Convention voted to conduct a study of the National Popular Vote proposal, which would establish the popular election of the President through a compact among the states governing how they would cast their votes in the Electoral College. The 2010 Convention amended the national position to support the National Popular Vote compact as another method of selecting the President until such time as the Electoral College is abolished.

### **Can you help?**

We would appreciate help with voter service, programming, Voter newsletter, and meeting setups. Please contact Linda Kramer, 395-3419 or [kramer@zebis.com](mailto:kramer@zebis.com).

## **Welcome to New Members**

Chris Boesen, Cornelia Reina, Ellis Robinson, Jane Sagir, & Lorraine Vale

### **Sanibel LWV Board**

Linda Kramer, President  
Carolyn Gray, 1st Vice President, Treasurer  
Carla Benninga, 2nd Vice President, Program  
Robert Winters, Secretary  
Maddy Mayor, Membership  
Linda Robison, Legal advisor  
Dick Calkins, Voter Service

*[www.sanibellwv.org](http://www.sanibellwv.org)*

*The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*



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League of Women Voters of Sanibel | P.O. Box 1194 | Sanibel | FL | 33957