



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

The Voter

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Editor's Note: If you do not see a photo of Robyn Cook below, click on "display images" in your email program.

Message from Robyn Cook, LWV Sanibel President

Happy New Year, fellow
Leaguers and friends!
"That Was the Year that Was"

As the iconic television show once announced, 2016 was truly the year that was! Without a doubt, few of us could have predicted where the year ended up, whence it began. It was an electoral year of head shaking, head scratching and finally head spinning. As we begin the new year of 2017, we are ever grateful to have the League of Women Voters as a safe space for dialogue, citizen education and issues advocacy on the national, state and local levels.



The League of Women Voters of Florida annually surveys all the state leagues, all 30 of us, for their list of issues priorities. These issues will drive the League's advocacy effort at the 2017 Legislative session in Tallahassee in March. At the top of Sanibel's list are the environment, water quality, overall health, civic education and voters' rights. These priorities are what drive our luncheon programs every year. Please scroll down to review the upcoming programs in January, February, March and April. These important topics will be discussed by top-flight professionals in their fields. There is always time for a lively Q&A session after every presentation. We are privileged and excited to offer the

in-depth knowledge that you have come to expect from the LWV of Sanibel.

You will want to save the date for a LWV of Sanibel hosted election forum on Wednesday, February 1, at the brand new Sanibel Community House. Read on for the topics and details.

As always, we welcome your ideas for future programs, forums and policies to study that are of interest to you. Drop us a note to P.O Box 1194 or email lwvsanibel@gmail.com. We would love to hear from you!

Here's to a Happy, Healthy 2017!

Robyn Cook, President

**Coming Up!
The Health of Our
Mental Health System**

**LWV of Sanibel
Program and Luncheon**

Thursday, January 19, 2017



Vacharee Howard

Speakers:

Vacharee Howard, Executive VP for NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness for Lee, Charlotte and Hendry Counties and Dottie Pacharis, Advocate for improved mental health service



Dottie Pacharis

The shooting of a Sanibel police officer last November was a wake-up call that mental illness exists even in paradise. On Thursday, January 19, the League of Women Voters of Sanibel will host a meeting titled, "The Health of our Mental Health System" with speakers Vacharee Howard, executive vice-president for NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, for Lee, Charlotte and Hendry counties, and Dottie Pacharis, a retired Washington attorney and Ft. Myers Beach resident, whose personal experience has shaped her advocacy for improved mental health services.

The League of Women Voters believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents, and the Florida League strongly, but unsuccessfully, supported the expansion of Medicaid during the last session of the Legislature. Our speakers will review the status of mental health services in Florida and Lee County and discuss the expected impact of the 21st Century Cures Act recently passed by Congress.

When: Thursday, January 19, 11:30 a.m. registration; noon - 2 p.m. luncheon and program

Where: The Sundial Beach Resort, 1451 Middle Gulf Drive, Sanibel

RSVP: [Click here](#) to reserve your place by email or call Ellen Strobel at 239-395-2969. The deadline to RSVP is Monday, January 16.

Cost: \$25 per person. Mail your check with names of all attendees to: LWV Sanibel, P.O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957. Or you can pay at the door. Because the LWV Sanibel is required to pay for each reserved meal, persons with unpaid or absent reservations will be billed.

If you wish to only attend the program and not join us for lunch, please feel free to come at 12:30 p.m. to hear the speakers.

Save the Date: *Wednesday, February 1*
Sanibel Local Election Candidate & Ballot Referenda
Forums hosted by the League of Women Voters of
Sanibel at the Sanibel Community House



Mark your calendars for the Sanibel election coming up on March 7, 2017! Currently, there are three City Council seats up for election. As of this writing, we do not know whether this will be a contested election, but we should know more in early January.

To date, the City Council has given the go ahead to include referenda on the March ballot having to do with the Civic Core development project. The ballot will ask voters to say yes or no to two questions (the following are excerpts):

1. Do you approve the removal of 13.5 acres of city owned land from the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Conservation District for location and construction of the city's Civic and Cultural Core Project?

2. Shall City of Sanibel issue general obligation bonds pledging its full faith, credit and

unlimited ad valorem taxing power not exceeding \$8 million....to finance a portion of the Civic and Cultural Core Master Plan?

The League of Women Voters of Sanibel will host a candidate forum and a Civic Core forum the evening of February 1 at the Sanibel Community House. The candidate forum will be from 6:30 to 7:30 and the Civic Core forum will be from 7:45 to 8:45.

The candidate forum will allow citizens to hear from the candidates and ask questions; the same follows for the Civic Core forum.

As we learn more details about the candidates and about the Civic Core, we will keep you updated.

If you have questions, please send an email to lwvsanibel@gmail.com.

Call for Volunteers

We will need volunteers on February 1 to greet residents, get questions from the audience, and help with simple tasks that evening. Please contact Maree Elowson at lwvsanibel@gmail.com if you are available. Your help is much appreciated!

LWV Sanibel 2016-17 Programs

All luncheons and programs take place at the Sundial Beach Resort, 1451 Middle Gulf Drive. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. with the lunch and program following from noon to 2 p.m.



Thursday, January 19, 2017

The Health of Our Mental Health System

Speakers: Vacharee Howard, Executive Vice President for NAMI, The National Association of Mental Illness for Lee, Charlotte and Hendry Counties where she provides vision, leadership, and management to accomplish the mission of NAMI; and Dottie Pacharis, retired DC attorney and author, Dottie is an advocate for improved mental health services. She currently serves on the

Board of Hope Clubhouse of Southwest Florida, dedicated to helping people with mental illness lead lives of dignity, respect and acceptance.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Managing Fresh Water

Update on the Lake Okeechobee and Caloosahatchee River impacts downstream on Sanibel and San Carlos Bay. How are decisions made regarding where the water goes? Speakers: Rae Ann Wessel, director of Natural Resources Policy for the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation; and Mitch Hutchcraft, member of the board for the South Florida Water Management District and Vice President for Real Estate, King Ranch/Consolidated Citrus LP.

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Citizen Participation and the Future of Civic Life in Florida

Speaker: Dr. Stuart Langton, Chairman of the Coordinating Council of the Florida Civic Advance, a network of 40 organizations committed to strengthening civic life in Florida communities.

Thursday, April 20, 2017

LWV Annual Meeting:

Climate Change Challenges and Florida's Future

Speaker: James Murley, Chief Resilience Officer, Miami-Dade County, emphasizing climate-change and environmental functions.

Lunch meals are \$25 per person. To reserve your place, [Click here](#) to email the LWV with the names of those attending. You can pay at the door or mail your check to LWV Sanibel, P.O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957. Deadline to reserve is the Monday of the week of the Thursday luncheon/program. Because LWV Sanibel is required to pay for each meal, unpaid and absent reservations will be billed.



Don't Forget to Renew Your Membership

Not a Member Yet? This Is the Year to Join!

Stay informed, stay involved. With your dues you support and are a member of the League of Women Voters of the United States, the League of Women Voters of Florida and our local League all for only \$65 per person or \$95 per family. If you would like to be extra supportive, we suggest the Susan B. Anthony membership category for \$125.

Print the membership form below and mail it in with your check. Questions? Email us at lwvsanibel@gmail.com.

Please make your check payable to the League of Women Voters of Sanibel (or LWV-Sanibel) and mail it to P. O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957. If you've already renewed, many thanks!



Membership Renewal & Records Update

Please copy this form and mail it along with your check (made out to LWV Sanibel) to LWV Sanibel, P.O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957

Questions: lwvsanibel@gmail.com

Name _____ Phone (Home) _____

Address _____ Phone (mobile) _____

_____ E-mail _____

Please Circle Annual Membership Level

\$125 Susan B. Anthony membership _____

\$95 Household membership _____

\$65 Individual membership _____

\$30 Student membership _____

TOTAL _____

Please Circle Your Interest Topics

Voter Services
Local Government
Fundraising
Health Care
Sustainability/Natural Resources

Publicity
Membership
Hot Topics
Education
Hospitality/Events

2016-2017 LWV Sanibel Officers and Directors

Robyn Cook, President
Barbara Joy Cooley, Vice President, Natural Resources
Ellen O'Neill, Secretary
Ellen Strobel, Treasurer
Janis Cain, Director, Communications
Robin Krivanek, Director, Membership
Martha Siders, Director

Voter Services:
Maree Elowson
Carolyn Gray

2016-17 Nominating Committee

Robin Krivanek (Chair), Dick Calkins, Maree Elowson

LWV Sanibel Board Meetings

Members are invited to attend all board meetings, which are held at noon on the second Thursday of the month at the Sanibel-Captiva Community Bank. Board meeting dates for 2017 are January 12, February 9, March 9, and April 13.

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.