



## *The Voter*

League of Women Voters of Sanibel

Volume 2 Issue 3 October 2011

Letter From the President,

I hope you have all had good summering and are ready to come back to an active league season.

As many of you know I am a new to the position of President of Sanibel League. We were very fortunate to have been led through our transition from a MAL unit to a full-fledged local league by our first president, Carla Benninga. She will continue as 2nd vice president and has already planned the programs for next year. Thank you Carla!

I am also fortunate to have a very hard-working board. However, as you can see on our board list, several of them are doubling up on some very important positions. So the first way you can help this newbie president would be to let me know if you are willing to volunteer in the areas we list below.

I look forward to a very productive and interesting year and hope to see you at our first program meeting on Tuesday, November 8th.



Ben Wilcox, LWVF Government Consultant will speak at the first LWV program of the season on November 7 at 7pm at the Sanibel Library

After years of League membership, Ben was hired as the League's Governmental Consultant in 2009. One of the most respected citizens' advocates in the state of Florida, and a well-recognized expert on subjects in the area of public campaign financing and ethics, Ben has a long history of educating citizens and advocating for improvements to Florida's government.

After graduating from Florida State University in 1976, Ben Wilcox worked as a reporter for the Florida Public Radio Network, providing reports on state government and the Florida legislature to public radio stations throughout the state. In 1978, he became the news director for the network, and in 1994 he also became the news director for WFSU-FM, the public radio station in Tallahassee. As a journalist, he covered 23 sessions of the Florida legislature and won awards from the Associated Press and the Society of Professional Journalists. He also hosted a statewide call-in program called Florida on the Line featuring the state's political leaders, including the governor, legislative leadership, and members of the state cabinet.

From 1999 to 2009, Wilcox was executive director of Common Cause Florida. He represented the League of Women Voters of Florida before the Florida legislature during the 2010 and 2011 legislative sessions.

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## **2011-2012 PROGRAM**

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 at 7 pm  
Sanibel Library

Speaker: Ben Wilcox, Governmental Consultant, LWV Florida  
"A Window to the 2012 Legislative Session: TABOR, Election Laws, Privatization and Proposed Amendments"

Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at pm  
Place and Time TBD

"Holiday Party with a Cuban Flavor"

Special Guest: Deirdre Macnab, President of the LWV of Florida

Monday, January 16, 2012 Luncheon at 12:30 pm

Place TBD

Speaker: Robert McKnight, former State Senator, former State Representative and Consultant for ABC News Tallahassee.

Topic:

Monday, February 13, 2012 1:30 pm

Sanibel Library

"Gerrymandering"

The League of Women Voters of Florida has secured the screening rights to "Gerrymandering", a fantastic new documentary that we will show as part of our educational efforts surrounding redistricting.

Moderator: Darden Rice, President of the LWV of the St. Petersburg Area

Friday, March 16, 2012 11 am

(BUS PICKUP ON SANIBEL TBA)

"Caloosahatchee Oxbow @ Riverlore Cruise"

Explore the historic meanders of the upriver on a 2½ hour, professionally guided river tour with Ray Ann Wessel, Director for SCCF.

Tuesday, April 10, 2012 7pm

Sanibel Library

"Annual Meeting"

Speaker, TBA

## **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, October 26, November 16, December 14, January 11, February 8, March 14, and April 4.

## **From The National League of Women Voters**

The LWV of the US is Concerned about the Delay of Pollution Regulation.

The League and coalition groups recently sent a letter to the White House expressing deep concern that the Environmental Protection Agency will not meet its commitment to propose long overdue Clean Air Act standards limiting dangerous carbon pollution from new and existing power plants. They also asked the President to reaffirm the administration's commitment to issue strong standards that significantly reduce carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants as the Clean Air Act requires.

## **From The State League of Women Voters**

Update on Redistricting - The Power and Diversity of One Person, One Vote

August, 2011 Legislators' summer-long, 26-city, all-expenses-paid-by-taxpayers "listening tour" was carefully designed to unnecessarily delay the redistricting process.

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with the current schedule, it is highly likely that candidates will not know their districts until after the filing deadline, which will not give voters enough time to get to know the candidates before Election Day. In the words of the Legislature's own attorney, Miguel de Grandy, the present time line will create "chaos and confusion in the 2012 elections.

On September 9, 2011 Federal Judge Ursula Ungaro threw out a suit that attempted to hold Fair Districts Amendment 6 unconstitutional. The Florida House of Representatives and two members of Congress, Corinne Brown and Mario Diaz Balart brought the case in a blatant attempt to avoid having to follow the fairness standards for redistricting passed by 63% of Florida voters last November.

At the September 22, 2011 meeting of the Florida Senate Reapportionment Committee, the League of Women Voters of Florida commended Chairman Don Gaetz's leadership on some important decisions. Gaetz announced an accelerated redistricting timeline, which targets December, 5 as the Committee's deadline for finalizing new district maps. The new deadline will grant citizens the month of December as a public comment period, including virtual meetings throughout the state. As a result, the Committee's final recommendations should be ready to go before the full Senate during the first week of session.

"This is an important and encouraging sign, which we believe will allow citizens the opportunity for substantive input," League President Deirdre Macnab said. "We encourage the House Committee to coordinate its timeline with the Senate for a more collaborative and efficient process."

Our speaker for our first meeting, Ben Wilcox (see under program) will have much more on this issue.

#### IMPORTANT

Bring Your Polling Site To You!

And you will be able to vote in the next two election cycles (through 2014). Please note that all former Absentee Ballot requests have expired. New requests must be made. Call the Supervisor of Elections office 239-533-8683 or go online [www.leeelections.com](http://www.leeelections.com)

"Be Ready To Vote"

On October 19, the League of Women Voters of Florida launched "Be Ready to Vote," our voter service campaign for the 2012 election season, which will make voting as accessible and convenient as possible for Florida citizens!

Through the use of cutting-edge smartphone technology provided by a partnership with Microsoft Tag, Florida voters will be able to directly connect to their Supervisor of Elections to ensure that their voter registration information is current and complete. For more information about "Be Ready to Vote," visit [BeReadyToVote.org](http://BeReadyToVote.org).

#### Can you help?

We need a webmaster, the site has been "under construction" since June!

We would also 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

Dick and Marcv Calkins

## 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  
Voter Service - vacant

[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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