



The Okaloosa Voter

A force for progress on the Emerald Coast since 1962

Nov / Dec 2016

"... the promise of American democracy has always aroused expectations that take more than laws to fulfill."

*Life Magazine Editorial
27 August 1965*

"Where do we go from here: chaos or community?"

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Important Dates:

- 2 Nov: **Last day** to request vote-by-mail ballot
- 8 Nov: **General Election**
- 8 Nov: Vote-by-mail ballots due in the SoE's office **NLT 7:00 pm**



Time is running out on the "\$16 in 2016" membership special!

Become part of the solution! Now through 30 Nov, pay just \$16 for a 1-year membership good through 31 Dec 17. Join: <http://lwvokaloosa.org/JoinUs.html>.



League's Mission:

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.

Message from the President

This Voter is devoted to facts about controversial issues. On top of the usual election year drama over the last few months, multiple police shootings have resulted in high-profile protests both violent (Charlotte NC) and peaceful (Colin Kaepernick). It's up us to find peaceful and just solutions to these problems.

"In human matters, changes of policy must be accompanied by changes in attitudes and within individual hearts. Equality for minority groups necessitates understanding and depth of empathy rather than empty posturing."

(<https://tinyurl.com/hgozak2>).

Reject "empty posturing." Take action to improve our community, our state and our nation: **Vote**. Early Voting ends on Saturday, 5 Nov. Please check out the E-Voter at <https://tinyurl.com/E-Voter2016> to find Early Voting locations and times, as well as information on the candidates and the proposed Constitutional Amendments.

Be part of the solution. **Be prepared. Be informed. Be a voter.**

Mary Blackwell

Spotlight on the Constitutional Revision Commission

Florida has more ways to amend its Constitution than any other state, including the Constitutional Revision Commission, which meets every 20 years to discuss and recommend changes to our State's Constitution. The CRC will convene in 2017 for the first time since '97, so it's a pretty big deal.

Please join League from **6-7:30 pm on Thursday, 17 Nov, at Crosspoint Church Fellowship Center, Room 300** (214 S Partin Dr, Niceville), to learn about the CRC's history, operations, and how to get a seat at the table. This free meeting is open to the public. RSVP to info@lwvokaloosa.org.

Help us build Okaloosa County's Community Alliance

In 2000 Florida's Department of Children & Families (DCF) was empowered to establish a community alliance in each county to "provide a focal point for community participation and governance of community-based services." Accordingly 3 of the 4 counties comprising

Circuit 1 formed an alliance of community leaders and stakeholders to collaborate on DCF activities within the circuit. Okaloosa County is the missing link. Will you help us get an Alliance going? Call 850-621-4088 or email (info@lwvokaloosa.org) to volunteer.

Why are we afraid?

Terrorism

The chances of anyone in the United States dying in a terrorist attack are 1 in 20 million. (<https://tinyurl.com/z9b5xyf>)

Reverse Racism

"Reverse racism" is **not** a thing: White people control every branch of the federal government; 46 of 50 state governorships; 99% of the banks; 495 of the Fortune 500 companies; every television network, movie company, 6 of the 7 major music companies and every single lawmaking body in the country.

Voting Irregularities

In-person voter fraud is almost nonexistent (<https://tinyurl.com/zm3utot>), but there are completely legal ways to rig an election: Gerrymandering, or changing the composition of the electorate by enacting restrictions on who can vote (e.g., disenfranchising felons: <https://tinyurl.com/p3nrrun>), or at what times (e.g., restricting early/absentee voting: <https://tinyurl.com/gmasnqu>), or the required <https://tinyurl.com/k6faxfw>) ID to vote, or by "arbitrarily" reducing polling sites [cont'd on next page ...]

America's illegal immigrants by the numbers

The Week published an article recently that sheds some light on the topic.

- ~11 million: Estimated number of illegals in the US.
- \$14,387/year: Estimated taxpayer cost for an average illegal immigrant household. (Heritage Foundation)
- ~⅓: Estimated number who have lived here for over 10 years.
- 60%: Number concentrated in six states: CA, TX, IL, NY, NJ, and **Florida**.
- ~8.1 million: Do—or want to—work.
- ~50%: Number who are Mexican; the rest are mostly from Latin America.
- ~7.5%: How many illegals qualify as “removable criminal aliens.” (DHS)
- ~50%: How many pay income taxes.
- \$10.6 billion: How much they contributed in state/local taxes in 2010.
- \$13 billion: How much they paid into

Social Security in 2010.

- 76%: Americans who say illegals are “honest and hardworking.” (PEW)
- 51%: Americans who favor a path to legalization for illegals. (CNN)
- 11%: Americans who favor removal.
- ~\$400–600 billion: Estimated cost to remove every illegal immigrant.
- ~\$11 trillion: Estimated hit to the economy from mass removal.
- The illegal immigrant population has declined steadily since 2007.
- Illegal immigrants do **NOT** qualify for public benefits (TANF, SNAP, SS, etc.).
- Children of illegals **DO** receive public schooling and emergency medical care.
- US-born children of illegals **DO** qualify for public benefits.

More details: <https://tinyurl.com/hemcne5> and <https://tinyurl.com/z9aoto9>.

Eight years in America: 2009–2016

Metrics indicate improvement over the last 8 years. Unemployment is below 5%, while the GDP and Dow Jones have steadily

	2009	2016	Delta
Unemployment (%)	7.8	4.9	-2.9
Dow Jones	9,034.69	17,148.94	+8,114.25
GDP (Trillions)	\$14.42	\$18.44	+\$4.02
Troops in Afghanistan	38,350	8,730	-29,620
Troops in Iraq	141,300	3,550	-137,750

increased. So why does it feel like the average citizen has not really experienced any improvement at all?

A recent report details several troubling trends (<https://tinyurl.com/j5nrwsl>):

- Voluntary Workforce Departures. The number of Americans **not** participating in the workforce has increased ~15% since 2009. (<https://tinyurl.com/j46oq4g>)
- Contingent Workforce Growth. Part-time workers now comprise 40% of the total workforce, and that number is

expected to grow to 50% by 2030.

- Low GDP Growth. Economists say the ideal annual rate for US GDP growth is 2–3%, and growth averaged 2% a year in the post-recession recovery period. However, it has stagnated in 2016.
- Anemic wage growth. Median income is about the same today as it was 20 years ago, after adjusting for inflation. (<https://tinyurl.com/go59cn2>)

Go here <https://tinyurl.com/jsoeap3> to learn about major milestones since '09.

Why are we afraid? (con't from page 1)

... (<https://tinyurl.com/z58x9tm>).

War on Christianity

Christian persecution is real—just not in the US (<https://tinyurl.com/kovpv29>).

Attacks on the 2nd Amendment

President Obama has signed only 2 gun laws, and both made it *easier* for gun owners to carry weapons (Quora, <https://tinyurl.com/jf2tury>).

Violent Crime

The homicide rate declined 48% (1992–

2010), and murder is *intra-racial* (84% of white murders are white-on-white; 93% of black murders are black-on-black: <https://tinyurl.com/mb29bfa>). Do you question the rationale of *Black Lives Matter*? Consider: unarmed, non-violent black people were killed at 5 times (<https://tinyurl.com/gm2x7j3>) the rate of whites in 2015; and from 2010–12 young black males were 21 times more likely than their white counterparts to be killed by police (ProPublica, <https://tinyurl.com/mfw73kb>).

Calendar

Constitutional Revision Commission (CRC)

17 Nov: 6–7:30 pm
Crosspoint Methodist Church, 214 S Partin Dr, Niceville
Learn all about CRC operations and membership, and how it will affect Florida. RSVP to info@lwvokaloosa.org by 8 Nov.

Directions: Take John Sims Pkwy/Hwy 20 to Niceville. Turn south onto Partin Drive at the Tax Collector's Office. Go 300 yards to the Fellowship Center on the right. Parking is on the left. Turn right inside the front door. Room 300 is on the right.

Membership Meeting

6 Dec: 6–7:30 pm
Niceville City Hall, 208 N Partin Dr, Niceville
Learn what's on League's calendar for 2017 and find out how you can get involved.



Holiday Party

11 Dec: 2–4:00 pm
4579 Luke Ave, Destin
Bring a friend and a dish to share, and join us for some holiday cheer!

Member Leadership Development Retreat

27–29 Jan 2017
Do you want to help our local League stay strong and grow? Contact Mary (621-4088) if you'd like to attend.

LWVF Legislative Summit

28–29 March 2017
Join Leaguers from across Florida in Tallahassee to network, learn and lobby your legislators. Watch the website for details.

36th LWVF Convention

9–11 June 2017
The 2017 biennial Convention will convene in Ft. Lauderdale to conduct League business. Stay tuned for details.