



# Okaloosa-Walton Voter

*A force for progress on the Emerald Coast since 1962!*

## Jan / Feb 2019

"When a society ... ceases to believe that change involves progress—it becomes stagnant and inward looking.

*Michael Gerson  
American Op-ed Columnist*

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

*Nelson Mandela  
Former President of South Africa*

"Truth is powerful and it prevails."

*Sojourner Truth  
American Abolitionist  
and Women's Rights Activist*



## Join the Okaloosa-Walton Solar Co-op

Joining the Co-op is cost and commitment free, so sign up by 1 March to take advantage of economies of scale plus Solar United Neighbors of Florida expertise. Go solar in 2019! Join on-line here: <https://tinyurl.com/join-OWC-solar>

## League's Mission:

*The League 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 EDITOR

What to say about 2018? The Florida election just kept going and going like the Energizer Bunny, but we had record voter turnout and results were eventually certified, so democracy worked.

Now 2019 is upon us. It's a truism that change is inevitable, but progress is not; so, this issue highlights progress made in 2018 and plans for 2019.

Our Solar Co-op has solicited installation bids. You can still join through

## JOIN LEAGUE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

Time is running out to renew your membership and join League for 2019.

The \$60 annual dues—among the lowest in Florida—include membership in the State and National Leagues and enable us to publish the bimonthly VOTER newsletter, organize general meetings each month from September through May and maintain our website to keep you informed about critical

## JOIN THE OKALOOSA-WALTON SOLAR CO-OP

Solar electricity is abundant, accessible, and increasingly affordable, but it can still be daunting to install it in your own home or business. LWVOWC wants to help you achieve peace of mind when you invest in this major upgrade to your home. So, we partnered with Solar United Neighbors of Florida to form the Okaloosa-Walton Solar Co-op.

The Co-op delivers economies of scale plus everything you need to join the ranks of solar owners, including expert advice on requirements, costs and financing options.

## MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR 12 MARCH 2019

Many Okaloosa County residents will be heading to the polls on 12 March for the county's 2019 Municipal Elections. A number of positions will be up for election in the following municipalities:

- Cinco Bayou: 2 Town Council seats
- Crestview: Mayor and 2 City Council seats
- Destin: 1 City Council seat for an unexpired term

March 1<sup>st</sup>, so don't delay. Joining is cost and commitment free (details below).

Please join or renew your League membership by 25 Jan (details below).

Municipal elections are coming in 2019, so keep an eye out for the E-Voter.

Finally, take a look at this issue's featured quotes (left sidebar) and resolve to make 2019 the year you invest in your community. Get involved!

issues inside Okaloosa and Walton County and around the state of Florida.

Catch up on our 2018 year in review at <http://lwvowc.org/members.html>. Renew on-line at <http://lwvowc.org/JoinUs.html> no later than 25 Jan 19, or mail your check payable to LWVOWC to LWVOC Treasurer, 114 Meadow Woods Ln, Niceville FL 32578. League is counting on your continued support!

The Co-op will be there to support you every step of the way. There are now over 1 million solar homes in the USA. Will you be next? Joining is cost and commitment free, so visit the Co-op's website at <https://tinyurl.com/OWC-solar>, watch the video and click on the "Join Our Co-op" link to join today.

The Request for Proposals has already been released, and a committee of volunteers will be selecting an installer in January. The deadline to join has been extended to March 1<sup>st</sup>, so join today to go solar in 2019!

- Fort Walton Beach: 4 City Council seats
- Laurel Hill: 3 City Council Seats
- Shalimar: Mayor and 2 Town Commission Seats

Look for the Municipal E-Voter on 1 Feb.

DeFuniak Springs residents: Your local election will be in July, so look for your Municipal E-Voter on 1 June.

## ROSIER OUTLOOK FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE?

The numbers have been crunched, and multiple studies are confirming that the US *can* afford universal healthcare.

Per the Political Economy Research Institute's (PERI) Economic Analysis of Medicare for All, the proposed program's 2 main goals—to significantly improve healthcare outcomes for all US residents while also establishing effective cost controls throughout the healthcare system—are achievable. Medicare for All could reduce total US healthcare spending by nearly 10%, to \$2.93 trillion, while creating stable access to good care for all Americans (<https://tinyurl.com/yar3nsdj>).

A study from the Mercatus Center, while deeply flawed, still demonstrated that single payer would actually *save* Americans more than \$2 trillion over a decade (<https://tinyurl.com/ya5583xk>).

## LWVFL LEAGUE RISING LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Florida League invites members to join them for the *League Rising: The Power of Women Leadership Conference* on **18–19 Jan at the Doubletree By Hilton Orlando Downtown** (60 S Ivanhoe Blvd, Orlando).

The conference will provide an in-depth look at the upcoming 2019 legislative session and a chance to hear from local lawmakers and keynote speakers. Learn

The PERI analysis was rigorously reviewed (<https://tinyurl.com/ybomqghd>) for accuracy, so there's little doubt that moving to single-payer could potentially achieve hundreds of billions in savings by substantially reducing administrative overhead and sky-high drug prices. How? Because a single-payer system allows cost growth to be directly controlled over time in a way that's not possible with a privatized system.

So, what's the hold-up? Reducing overall health spending by trillions is not the whole story. New taxes **will** be required to replace most of the private spending (premiums, copays, and deductibles) that will evaporate if single-payer is implemented. Americans must now decide if new taxes are an acceptable trade-off to achieve universal healthcare coverage.

more about key issues in Florida such as voting rights, social justice, education, gun safety, and climate change. Learn how you can advocate and gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to defend our democracy.

\$125 includes all meals/materials. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/y9z6kcmu> by 9 Jan. Get the conference agenda at <https://tinyurl.com/ycl6yqzd>.

## IT WASN'T ALL BAD: 4 PROMISING TRENDS OF 2018

"2018 has not been an easy year in many ways." A recent Vox.com article (<https://tinyurl.com/y8g4d3e7>) began with that sentence, before it went on to describe four important areas of progress in 2018.

### • Extreme poverty is falling.

Extraordinary economic growth in India and China as well as other developing countries over the last 25+ years has resulted in a huge decline in the share of the world's population living on less than \$1.90/day. That share has dropped from nearly 36% in 1990 to less than 10% today.

### • Child mortality is falling

Global public health has also improved overall. The global under-five mortality rate fell from 93 per 1,000 in 1990 to less than 39 per 1,000 today—a decrease of over 58%!

### • We're getting better at preventing preventable diseases.

The Vox article lists a variety of reasons for the decline in preventable deaths among children, including declining poverty, extensive and more universal health care programs and low-cost preventative measures like bed nets to prevent the spread of malaria.

### • Clean energy is getting cheaper.

Climate change is still an existential threat to the human race, but solar and wind power are now cheaper per megawatt hour than gas or oil, which is fueling (see what I did there?) a rapid increase in adoption. We still need better batteries if the two are to become primary sources of energy, but progress is on-going on that front.

So, cheer up: 2018 showed important progress, and 2019 promises more!

## LWVFL 2019 Calendar

**2019 Legislative Priorities Due:** 15 Jan

### Leadership Conference

18–19 Jan, Orlando

### Webinar: "Balance of Powers – The 3 Branches of the US Government"

23 Jan, 5:30 PM CST

### Legislative Summit

9–10 Apr, Tallahassee

### State League Convention

22 June, Naples

## LWVFL Conference Calls

### Water, Land & Wildlife Team

8 Jan, 4:30 PM CST  
Dial-in: (605) 472-5474  
Access code: 627516#

### Membership

10 Jan, 10:30 AM & 3:00 PM  
Dial-in: (712) 451-0921  
Access code: 774267#

### Reproductive Health & Justice

14 Jan, 11:00 AM CST  
Dial-in: (641) 715-0700  
Access code: 815787#

### Local Leader Call

17 Jan, 5:00 PM CST  
Dial-in: (605) 475-4875  
Access code: 643895#

### Speakers Bureau

21 Jan, 5:30 PM CST



## New LWVFL lobbyist

Katia Saint Fleur will be fighting on behalf of League for all Floridians this year at the state Capitol. She is a proud graduate of Clark Atlanta University and embodies the school motto: "Find a way or make a way."



## New LWVFL Board member

Attorney, native Floridian and FSU grad Ben Friedman will be the new statewide gun safety chair. In addition to his work, Ben is very active in local and community affairs across central Florida.