March / April 2019

“The purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will destroy the Government, unless you be allowed to construe and enforce the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.”

Abraham Lincoln
16th President of the US

“Monsters exist, but they are too few in number to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions.”

Primo Levi
Holocaust Survivor

Message from the Editor

The 2019 Okaloosa Municipal E-Voter was published on 1 Feb for the 12 March election, and the 2019 Municipal E-Voter for DeFuniak Springs will publish in March for the 9 Apr election. No excuses: get out and vote!

Friday, 1 March, is the deadline to join the Okaloosa-Walton Solar Co-op, so don’t delay. Get details below.

There are several general and member meetings being planned for March through June. See page 2 and watch the website for details. And don’t miss the 21 March meeting on munitions disposal (details below). Why are our troops being exposed to unnecessary risks when there are safer alternatives?

Members: Your League needs you to step up. A new slate of officers and Board members is needed to serve in 2019–2021. Many hands make light work, so volunteer today!

Time is running out: Join the Solar Co-op by 1 March!

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. Friday, March 1st, is the deadline, so join today to go solar in 2019! Go to https://tinyurl.com/OWC-solar. Then scroll down and click on the “Join Our Co-op” button.

Okaloosa County Municipal elections: 12 March 2019

Residents of Cinco Bayou, Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Laurel Hill and Shalimar: Are you ready to vote? Your cities, towns and fellow residents are counting on you!

Check out the Okaloosa County Municipal E-Voter at https://tinyurl.com/y3tht8ml. Be informed. Be prepared. Be a voter!

DeFuniak Springs Municipal Election: 9 April 2019

DeFuniak Springs residents: Your local election is also coming up, so look for your Municipal E-Voter after 1 March. The E-Voter is your one-stop-shopping place for election-related info.

There are three competitive City Council races as well as a three-way race for City Marshall, so get ready to vote. Be informed. Be prepared. Be a voter!

Munitions disposal: A threat to public health?

Did you know the EPA allows the US military to dispose of munitions via open burning and open detonation—practices the Congress outlawed decades ago in private industry and other government agencies? Did you know that Eglin Air Force Base is authorized to dispose of old munitions from military bases across the Panhandle?

Eglin stopped using open burning for disposal in 2008, and complies with all DoD and FDEP regulations governing the safe disposal of munitions—but is open detonation the safest way to get the job done?

A recent National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine report (https://tinyurl.com/y5yhae5d) says there are better, safer ways to accomplish munitions disposal.

Join League from 6–7:30 on Thursday, 21 March, at Destin Library (150 Sibert Ave) to find out who may be at risk and why. This event is free and open to the public.
**Coming Events**

**Substance-Exposed Newborns.**
League will be partnering with the 1st Circuit Community Alliance (C1CA) on to support babies exposed to substance abuse. Drug abuse is a fact of life in our community that we ignore at our peril, so we’ll be working with C1CA to help the most vulnerable residents of Okaloosa and Walton Counties.

**Property Assessed Clean Energy.**
PACE provides low-cost financing to eligible property owners for energy efficiency, renewable energy and wind mitigation upgrades to their properties. Walton County has a PACE program, but there isn’t one in Okaloosa County. League will be educating citizens about PACE as well as advocating with county officials to start a PACE program here.

**National Popular Vote.**
League has long favored popular election of the President, and the NPV bill would guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Join us to learn more about the NPV initiative.

**Election fraud v. Voter fraud**
In 2013 the Supreme Court struck down Section 4 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, freeing 9 states (mostly in the South) to change their election laws without advance federal approval. Since then many states moved to implement restrictive voting measures, justifying these efforts as designed to prevent impersonal “voter fraud.”

Many organizations—League included—pushed back, insisting that the new measures were intended to suppress the vote, since study after study has proven that voter fraud is practically nonexistent. Additionally, many other studies have indicated voter ID laws are racially motivated. However, there is no data tying lower turnout to voter ID. In fact, a recent study finds voter ID laws don’t reduce voter fraud OR voter turnout (https://tinyurl.com/y6ezgjwo).

Meanwhile, confirmed *election* fraud—in this case, ballot stuffing—resulted in invalidation of North Carolina’s 9th Congressional District 2016 election. The state must now hold a new primary and election for 9th district citizens. And the investigation into Georgia’s 2018 voter roll purges hasn’t even begun. What has become of American democracy?

**LWVFL: Upcoming 2019 events**

**2019 LWVFL League Lobby Days.**
Learn how to lobby from 9–10 April 2019. Network with League members from across the state. Meet with your legislators. Cap off the event at our annual Gala! The event will be held at Four Points by Sheraton (316 W Tennessee St, Tallahassee). This is a wonderful experience for new and old members. If you’d like to attend, please contact us at info@lwvfl.org.

**2019 LWVFL Convention.**
The Florida League’s Biennial Convention will be held 7–8 June in Naples. Attend workshops, hear from dynamic speakers, vote on changes to LWVFL positions and elect a board of directors.

**SOTC Reports**
June (details TBD) Local elected officials will report on activities in Walton and Okaloosa Counties.

**Annual Planning Meeting**
July (details TBD) help plan general meetings for the coming year.

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**Calendar**

**2019 Legislative Session**
5 March–3 May

**Munitions Disposal: A threat to public health?**
21 March, 6–7:30 PM
Destin Library, 150 Sibert Ave
Find out who may be at risk and why.

**PACE for Okaloosa County**
March (details TBD)
Learn about this low-cost financing program for property upgrades.

**LWVFL Lobby Days**
9–10 April, Tallahassee
Network with fellow Leaguers and learn how to lobby.

**National Popular Vote**
April (details TBD)
Find out how we can ensure popular election of the President.

**LWVOWC Annual Meeting**
4 May, 10:00 am–1:00 pm
Location TBD
Elect officers and Board members for the 2019–21 term.

**Substance-Exposed Newborns**
May (details TBD)
Join League & the 1st Circuit Community Alliance in an initiative to support babies exposed to substance abuse.

**Sisters Across the Straits**
21–25 May, Havana, Cuba
Celebrate Havana’s 500th anniversary with League.

**LWVFL Convention**
7–8 June, Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples.
Attend workshops, hear from dynamic speakers, vote on changes to LWVFL positions and elect a board of directors.