



The Voter

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IN THIS ISSUE

October Meeting	1
President's Message	2
Calendar	2
Eglin - Hazardous Waste Permit	3
New Members	3
Children's Trust Referendum	3
Membership Form	4

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October

General

League Virtual Zoom Meeting October 17, 10:30

Register [here](#) for a link to all events

League members will present the pros/cons for the Amendments on the ballot at the regular League meeting October 17, at 10:30 am.

Register for the Zoom meetings or view them on *Facebook Live* at LWV Pensacola Bay Area. A recording will be available on our Facebook page and Youtube channel.

- The *Florida Representatives District 1, 2 and 3 Zoom Candidate forum* is October 8 at 7 PM. Co-sponsor is *the Links*.
- The *Florida Senate Zoom candidate forum* will be rescheduled.
- The forum for *Tax Collector* is October 14, 7 PM, Co-sponsor: *Delta Iota Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.*
- *US Congress* forum is October 15 at 7 PM.

The Sheriff forum, Dr. Cedric Alexander, Election Security and Children's Trust presentations were recorded and available.

Dear League members,

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan volunteer organization made up of dedicated volunteers committed to protecting and defending our democracy. League members empower others to define and accomplish goals-for themselves, for the organization, for their communities and for the nation. The League has been a dynamic, changing organization, adapting procedures to meet current and future needs. Throughout our history, we have remained constant to the commitment our organization's founders made in 1920 to neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate for public office.

Since this is an election year like no other, I'd like to take this opportunity to remind all of you that it is crucial our League work remain nonpartisan. Our work must continue to ensure that the League's voice is heard above the tumult of party politics. The League's strength is in its work to educate and inform voters.

Rest assured our nonpartisanship does not mean we won't fight to ensure that all eligible voters - particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities and low-income Americans - have the opportunity and the information they need to exercise their right to vote, no matter who tries to throw obstacles in their way.

We should remember that above all, our fight is to empower voters and defend our democracy.

Keep moving forward,

Patricia Brigham, President
 Published October 4, 2020, The Florida
 Voter



Jane Spruill, President

President's Message

When One Vote Counts

We often hear voters say, "Why should I vote; one vote doesn't make that much difference." Ahhh, but a few years ago one vote did make a difference! In 1967, the League of Women Voters led the campaign to change how the Escambia School Superintendent is chosen. There was much resistance from the community to change the process. However, the League did the required research and study and came to consensus favoring an appointed superintendent of schools. The League's position was supported by the following:

- Voters already had a say in the school district leadership by electing the school board members.
- Across the country, 97% of school districts appoint the superintendent position.
- The process of screening applicants, interviewing the top candidates and appointing the best of the pool ensures a better relationship with the board and school population.

The League campaigned for the change. But the 1967 ballot for an appointed superintendent was defeated by a single vote - one vote! Perhaps it was a neighbor who didn't vote, a co-worker who didn't take the time to get registered, or a college student who simply forgot to cast a ballot that day.

Not two votes, not 400 votes. One vote!

In spite of this disappointment, the League continued to support the appointed Superintendent position. It would have been easy to concede as the issue was defeated five times. - in 1967, 1970, 1976, 1988, and 1994. Finally, in 2018 Escambia County voters approved the appointment of superintendent of schools.

The impact of that ONE VOTE 53 years ago to continue with an elected superintendent has had a huge impact on the quality of education in Escambia County. This year, for the first time, the elected school board members, along with input from community committees and others, screened the credentials of highly qualified applicants for this important position. Timothy Smith was selected and will be our first appointed superintendent!

For many years Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties

were two of only a handful of school districts in the entire country to elect a superintendent. In many states it was illegal to elect and 87% of Florida districts appoint. The Superintendent of Santa Rosa schools is still an elected position.

Change comes slowly, but largely occurs when one person gathers a small group, or when one more vote is cast. America is a democracy, which is intended to work best when citizens get involved. Individual votes do count; your voice does make a difference.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization, with the primary tasks of promoting voter registration for all eligible citizens and making information available to voters regarding the candidates, amendments and other ballot issues. This year we sponsored candidate rallies and forums. We distributed a written guide to the election throughout both Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. In short, we are promoting informed voting!

We each have one vote. Your vote, a neighbor's vote, everyone's vote is important. Encourage those you know to register and cast a ballot. It may be your vote that will change history!

Jane Spruill



Calendar

October

- 8 **Thursday, 7:00 pm, Florida Representatives Districts 1,2,&3**, Co-sponsor, *The Links*, moderators Dr. Paula Montgomery & Dr. Cheryl Howard. Register [link here](#).
- 14 **Wednesday, 7:00 pm, Tax Collector** virtual forum, co-sponsor, *Delta Iota Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.* Moderators Gail Honea, Mili
- 15 **Thursday, 7:00 pm, U.S. Congress** virtual forum.

17 **Saturday, 10:30 am, General Meeting**, virtual Zoom meeting, *Ballot Issues Discussed*, [Register here](#).

- 19 **Monday, noon, Natural Resources Committee**, virtual Zoom meeting. Contact Enid Sisskin at esissskin@gmail.com for information. Register [here for link](#).
- 19 **Monday, Early Voting** starts 7 am - 7pm, Polling places are in Escambia County [here](#); Santa Rosa polling places are [here](#).
- 27 **Tuesday, 6:00 pm Women's Issues Committee**, virtual Zoom meeting, Contact Vivian Faircloth, vfaircloth@iname.com, for information. Register [here](#).

November

- 3 **Tuesday, 7 am-7pm - General Election** at your Precinct.



Dr. Enid Sisskin

Eglin Seeks Renewed Hazardous Waste Permit

Eglin Air Force Base is seeking to renew its Hazardous Waste Permit and is once again expecting a pass to continue

contaminating our environment by using primitive, dangerous methods for disposal of waste munitions from Hurlburt Field, Tyndall Air Force Base, Pensacola Naval Air Station, and Navy Support Activity Panama City, as well as Eglin itself.

These munitions and explosives (bombs, artillery shells, propellants, tactical missiles, rockets, pyrotechnics, igniters, cartridges, rounds, incendiaries such as napalm, land mines, flares and smoke canisters) travel the roads we all use across northwest Florida. Then a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permit allows nearly 9 million pounds of these toxic wastes to go up in smoke and come down in air and water pollution every year.

After decades of technological progress, safer alternative technology is available and has been endorsed by the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences.

Why isn't the Department of Defense using it?

Over the years, Florida DEP records show rapidly increasing levels of poisoned groundwater at Eglin. Levels above the state's excess cancer risk have been recorded since 2006 and continue to rise, doubling between in concentration between 2017 and 2018 at one location. But even this data may understate the danger, since DEP acknowledges that Eglin's groundwater monitoring is inadequate to measure the actual threat to onsite workers and residents.

Three important information gaps suggest that Eglin's open burning / open detonation (OB/OD) may have even greater negative effects on nearby military and civilian communities.

First, it is assumed that Eglin groundwater can be sacrificed to munitions disposal. Already there is great pressure on Florida's potable water supplies from rapid development and saltwater intrusion; it is likely that Eglin groundwater and surface water will eventually be needed for drinking water use. Protecting it should be a priority.

Second, there is no monitoring of Eglin's air emissions. Since OB/OD contamination travels through air, as well as soil, to reach groundwater in these high concentrations, the air pathway must be measured in real time.

Third, both poisoned irrigation water and air deposition may also be exposing local populations through contaminants in garden produce and seafood.

Eglin has recently claimed that open burning is no longer used at the base; however, OB has not been deleted from a pending permit application, so its use will continue to be allowed unless explicitly prohibited. Moreover, open detonation will still spew metals, including extremely fine particles of easily breathable lead, arsenic, depleted uranium, and other heavy metals; energetic compounds and perchlorate; dioxins and other organic compounds like PFAS ("forever chemicals"), often spreading far beyond the point of

release, washing into creeks, rivers, and bays and leaching into groundwater.

The Pensacola Bay Area and the Okaloosa and Walton chapters of the League of Women Voters have joined in urging that DEP require Eglin to begin phasing out OB/OD immediately. Northwest Florida families, military and civilian, should not be subjected to the unnecessary risk of cancer, birth defects, cardiac and immune system deterioration, and severe brain damage so that Eglin can continue its antiquated ways. It's time to move into the 21st century.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality recently announced its intent to deny a permit renewal application for an OB/OD facility in Colfax based on the applicant's failure to adequately consider alternative treatment methods. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection should do the same.

If you agree that we can and must do better, please consider signing this petition to the U.S. EPA: [cswab.org/cease-fire-campaign/cease-fire-petition](https://www.cswab.org/cease-fire-campaign/cease-fire-petition).

And please contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to urge that OB/OD be immediately replaced with safer and more effective disposal technology: Merlin Russell at 850-245-8796 Merlin.Russell@dep.state.fl.us or Michell Smith at 850-245-8721 Michell.M.Smith@dep.state.fl.us.

This article originally appeared in the Pensacola News Journal on April 27, 2020. It has been updated to reflect ongoing permit negotiations.

Enid Sisskin, PhD, is chair of the Natural Resource Committee of the Pensacola Bay Area League of Women Voters.

Welcome New Members

Mary Ann Crongeyer
Nicole Dixon
Betsy Smith

Put Kids First. Go straight to the end of the 2020 General Election ballot for Escambia County. Vote **YES** for the Escambia Children's Trust then fill out the rest of the ballot. Ballot language is below.
<https://www.escambiachildrenstrust.org/> & our Facebook for recording

Escambia County Referendum

Children's Trust of Escambia county - Authority to Levy One-half Mill Ad Valorem Taxes

In order to provide additional early childhood education, safety, developmental, preventative, health and well-being services, including after school and summer enrichment programs, should an independent special district titled the "Escambia Children's Trust: be created and be authorized to levy an annual ad valorem tax of one-half (½) mill for 1- years.



SECURITY OF MAIL-IN VOTING

Some voters are concerned about the security of sending in their ballots through the United States Postal Service (USPS). This method of voting has proved to be a totally appropriate method over the years, with military personnel overseas using this process exclusively.

The information on the canvassing board schedule for the General Election from David Stafford, the Supervisor of Elections in Escambia County, details how citizens can observe the counting of mail-in ballots. If you want to be reassured that this voting method is secure and completed ballots are counted, observe the actions

of the Canvassing Board. The schedule and instructions for the Canvassing board are [here](#).

All meetings of the Canvassing Board will take place at the Supervisor of Elections Warehouse & Training Center, located at 3201 West Navy Boulevard, Pensacola, Florida 32505 and are open to the public.

(Last month's Voter detailed Holly Picardi's experience as she observed the Santa Rosa County's Canvassing Board as they verified and counted mail-in ballots during the Primary Election.)

The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

Join the League of Women Voters Today!

It's easy! Just send your check to:

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ♦ P.O. Box 2023, Pensacola, FL 32513 or PayPal [here](#).

Name _____ Birth date _____ New Mbr? Yes/No

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone (____) _____ Other (____) _____ E-mail _____

Add Family Member(s): _____

DUES: \$60.00 _____ Additional Mbrs @ \$30 _____ Contribution _____ TOTAL _____

Dues are FREE for a student enrolled in a certificate or degree program.

I'm renewing my membership. Date: _____

I am interested in the following committees (Circle all interests)			
Education	Natural Resources	Juvenile Justice	Voter Service
Communications	Membership	Gun Safety	Women's Issues
I am also interested in the following areas:			
Speaker's Bureau	Website	Observer - Governmental Meetings	Social Media
Legislative Action	Naturalization	Newsletter	Voter Registration
Fund-raising	Poverty	Healthcare	Publicity

Membership dues and gifts to the League of Women Voters are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes. (Tax deductible contributions require a separate check written to the LWV Florida Education Fund and should be sent to our local treasurer.) **The League year runs from June 1 through May 31.**



Pensacola, FL 32513