



February, 2025

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CITRUS COUNTY,
FLORIDA

Vicky Iozzia is the Editor of this newsletter. Our mailing address is LWVCC, P. O. Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460 Our website is lwvcitrus.org

Our February 12, 2025 meeting will be at 10 am at the Coastal Region Library in Crystal River. It will feature our own Dr. BJ Ezell, who will speak to us about Black history. See page 5

Our March 12, 2025 meeting is our luncheon at Glory Days Restaurant in Lecanto. Our guest speaker is Sheriff David Vincent. Please arrive at 10am, program begins at 10:30.

See pages 6 and 7



SEE PAGE 8 FOR AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR A ZOOM MEETING ON FEBRUARY 5 AT 7:00 PM: The what, the how, and the who of the Florida Legislature, with special guest speaker Deborah Daniels!

Please visit our Facebook page and "like" us!

<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvotersofcitruscounty>

HEAR YE, HEAR YE! FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO READ THE NEWSLETTER AND ATTEND OUR MEETINGS, THERE WILL BE TWO QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE NEWSLETTER. IF YOU KNOW THE ANSWER AND ARE CALLED ON, YOU WILL WIN A PRIZE! STUDY FOR THE NEWSLETTER QUIZ!

Events in February 2025

<div> <div> <div> Grid</div> <div> List</div> <div>Month</div> <div>Week</div> <div>Day</div> </div> <div> <div>February</div> <div>2025</div> <div>Go</div> <div>< Previous</div> <div>Today</div> <div>Next ></div> </div> </div>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	<div> <div>9:00 am: LWV Citrus Board Meeting- Zoom</div> <div>7:00 pm: The What, How, and Who of the Florida Legislature</div> </div>	6	7	8
9	10	<div> <div>8:00 am: Library Advisory Board</div> <div>1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting</div> <div>4:00 pm: Citrus County School Board meeting</div> </div>	<div>10:00 am: LWV General Meeting</div>	13	14	<div>10:30 am: Nature Coast Volunteer Center Volunteer Fair</div>
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<div>1:00 pm: Department of Health Health Fair at Inverness Senior Games</div> <div>2:30 pm: African American Read-In</div>	24	<div> <div>9:00 am: Library Advisory Board</div> <div>2:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting</div> </div>	26	27	28	

(From our website, lwvcitrus.org)

Holidays

- Valentine's Day: Celebrated on February 14
- President's Day: A federal holiday on Monday, February 17
- Super Bowl: On Sunday, February 9

Other observances

- National Freedom Day: Celebrated on February 1
- National Singing Day: Celebrated on February 1
- International Crêpe Day: Celebrated on February 2
- Groundhog Day: Celebrated on February 2
- Vasant Panchami: Celebrated on February 2
- Rosa Parks Day: Celebrated on February 4
- World Cancer Day: Celebrated on February 4
- National Wear Red Day: Celebrated on February 7
- World Pulses Day: Celebrated on Monday, February 10
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science: Celebrated on Tuesday, February 11

Happy Valentine's Day to all of our League members and friends!



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Celebrate Black History Month with the League of Women Voters

The Black Vote in Citrus County FL Then, Now, & Beyond



Dr. BJ Ezell

Dr. BJ Ezell, DrPH, MSHI, BSHA, ASRN, RN board member of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County, will be the speaker for their February 12 meeting. Her presentation, *"The Black Vote in Citrus County FL; Then, Now, & Beyond"* offers an educational, entertaining, and, at times, interactive slide show presentation.

Dr. BJ, as she prefers to be called, is a well-known and highly respected addition to the Citrus County community. Prior to retiring this year, she was Director of Clinical Informatics at HCA FL Citrus Hospital and Health Educator Consultant with the Florida Department of Health Citrus County. She is the Citrus County Chronicle 2022 Healthcare Hero - Community Outreach. She is past secretary for the Nature Coast EMS Board.

She has been an active member of many of our local organizations, including the Afro-American Club of Citrus County and the Democratic Black Caucus of Citrus County. She is often found participating in events at the George Washington Carver Community Center and in other venues.

WHEN: Wednesday, February 12. 10:00 AM

**WHERE: Coastal Region Library
8619 W Crystal St, Crystal River, FL 34428**

The Public is Invited: For more information please call 352-613-5056 or email lwvcc2013@gmail.com. Visit lwvcitrus.org and Facebook page "League of Women Voters of Citrus County".

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization, never endorsing or opposing political parties or candidates. LWVFL develops positions on issues only after careful study and consensus

The League of Women Voters of Citrus County

March 12, 2025 Luncheon, 10:00 am

With Guest Speaker

Sheriff David Vincent

Held at



Please choose from:

All American Burger

Served with lettuce, tomatoes, onions and topped with Cheddar cheese. Served with a side of crispy seasoned fries or steamed broccoli.

GDG's Big Fabulous Fish Fry

Wild, line-caught Haddock, beer battered with Stella Artois, served with crispy seasoned fries and tartar sauce.

Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad

Fire-grilled chicken, romaine lettuce, shaved Parmesan mixed with classic Caesar dressing and topped with homemade croutons.

GDG's Crave A' Bowl

Basmati rice, broccoli, tomato and cucumber, hummus, Feta, garlic aioli and lemon wedge. Topped with Fire-grilled chicken.

Grilled Chicken Sandwich

Bacon, Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, onion and honey mustard on a toasted brioche bun. Served with crispy seasoned fries or steamed broccoli.

Vegetarian GDG Crave A' Bowl

Basmati rice, broccoli, tomato and cucumber, hummus, Feta, garlic aioli and lemon wedge.

\$20 per person includes Soft drink, taxes, and tips

~To register, go online to: lwvcitrus.org and click on Upcoming Events. Directions are below the calendar.

Meet Sheriff Vincent

Guest Speaker

For the LWVCC Spring Luncheon

Wednesday, MARCH 12, at Glory Days Grill 10:00 AM
3248 W. Norvell Bryant Highway, Lecanto



Here is a wonderful opportunity to meet our newly elected Sheriff of Citrus County, David Vincent, and hear what he has planned for our community.

Also, enjoy a great meal at Glory Days. To register, and pay, please go to lwvcitrus.org. Click on Upcoming Events. Below the calendar, you will find the form to choose your meal. Fill in your information and click on Submit.

Below the Submit button, click on Events and fill in your credit card information to pay \$20. Click on the bottom where it says Pay \$20.

For more information call 352 613 5056

Or email lwvcc2013@gmail.com.

MENU OPTIONS

All American Burger

GDG's Big Fabulous Fish Fry

Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad

GDG's Crave A' Bowl

Grilled Chicken Sandwich

Vegetarian GDG Crave A' Bowl

All options are \$20, including drinks, tax, and tips. .

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization, never endorsing or opposing political parties or candidates. LWVFL develops positions on issues only after careful study and consensus.

*League of Women Voters of Citrus County (LWVCC)
invites the public to an informational meeting
about the legislative process in Florida.*

The What, the How, and the Who of the Florida Legislature

Wednesday, February 5, at 7:00 PM via Zoom

***How does an idea become law in Florida?
What happens when a bill is filed?
Why do citizens' voices matter?
Whom should citizens contact to make
their voices heard?***



The public is invited to join us for a nonpartisan, online meeting to learn the answers to these and other questions about the process of making laws in Florida. This timely session will help participants to understand the legislative process before the 2025 legislative session begins on March 4th.

Our speaker will be Deborah Daniels, a retired educator from Citrus County SD. Through her work as legislative liaison for her professional organization, and other civic and community organizations, Deb has accrued extensive experience with the legislative process. She has taught many interested citizens how the Florida Legislature is organized, how they pass laws, and the many steps that occur between a bill's proposal and its final outcome. Equally important is her emphasis on how citizens can get involved and interact with their local and state legislators. There will be time for Q & A.

Advance registration is required. Go to www.lwvcitrus.org and click on Upcoming Events. Click on Feb. 5. This contains a registration link. Copy and paste the link into your browser. You will receive a confirmation email once you register.

LWV Citrus is a nonpartisan political organization, never endorsing candidates or parties. This meeting is part of our mission, to educate the public about how to participate in the democratic process.



Linda Abels, Membership Chair

Welcome to February, the month of change. First of all, I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season.

I have mentioned over the last several months that changes are coming to the way current members renew their memberships as well as how prospective members can join. The change is here. Effective February 1, 2025, to renew current membership or

to join, you have to do it through our league's website. <https://lwvcitrus.org>

This change is due to the LWVUS switching every local league across the US to a standard method of renewing/joining the league.

The first thing that will happen is that every member will be receiving an email from the LWVUS or ChapterSpot the week of February 3rd. This email will ask you to log into ChapterSpot and set up your profile. Your name, email address, etc. should already be there, but there may be changes that you want to make and you can do that at this time. There will also be standard questions that you will be asked to answer. Answers are required but you do have the option of checking the prefer not to answer box.

Once you have set up your profile, when you get within two months of renewal date, you will receive a reminder email from LWVUS/ChapterSpot saying that your dues are due in two months. You will receive another email one month prior to your dues due date. These reminders will direct you to go online to your local leagues website and renew.

You can renew by credit card directly to the LWVUS or you can give a check to our treasurer, Devora Stager, who will then mail the check to LWVUS. If you charge your dues, you will see on your credit card statement three different charges, all total the dues amount plus credit card fees. The dues are separated because some of your dues go to the LWVUS, some to LWVFL and some to our local league.

The suggested dues is \$75 per member but if you are unable to pay that amount, you can pay as little as \$20. Reminder: 33% of the dues goes to LWVUS, 47% to LWVFL and 20% to the LWV Citrus County. Please be aware that if you have a household or joint membership each person will be charged the same amount unless you adjust the primary person on the account so that they total whatever you can afford to pay.

This is new to all of us and I am sure the first few months will have some kinks to work out. If you have problems or need help, please reach out to me or one of the officers.

Have a great month.



Vicky Iozzia, 1st President, Speakers Bureau Chair,
Newsletter Editor, Webmaster

When we look at this world, look at our community these days, there is so much to do. The League of Women Voters of Citrus County wants to be a part of making positive change happen.

It has been my honor and pleasure to be President of the League. For our next year, I want to share my vision of what we can do.

Our Board works hard to make League events happen, but we could do so much more with more of our members being actively involved.

I am working with the Board to finalize a “mind map” of what we want to do in 2025. It will be in the March newsletter. It will list the activities that are presently being done by Board members, with an invitation for our members to join us with what specifically we need.

In my opinion, and the consensus of the League, the electoral college is not democratic. Our board is working on learning as much as we can about this and learning how to act on it. More to follow in the next newsletter.

I remember in the 1960's, when I protested the war in Vietnam. Sometimes it seemed futile, but the tragic and unpopular war ended. Our patience and tolerance will surely be tested in 2025, but to give up is impossible. We all need to do what we can do to protect our community, state, and country.

Below is correspondence to me from Dr. Liz Orsay. She attended the BOCC meeting on January 14.

A few thoughts:

- the pin you provided was ideal, as it is quite legible and allows me to dress more professionally than I could in the more casual LWV shirts. (Editor's note: we have a 3 ½ inch pin that is very visible, and Board members seeing this will know that we are there. Also, we will make the polo shirts available again if we have enough interest in buying it). Projecting a more professional appearance should improve our perception and respect.
- Today's meeting lasted a little over 3 hours, making a once or twice/month commitment doable.
- I would be most interested in talking to whoever attends next week's meeting to get their insight. Today was the first meeting of 2025, so I must be the inaugural watchdog.
- In particular, the topic of the Local Option Sales Tax is something I think our League should get behind and support. (Not run, just provide real, tangible support). This is unanimously supported by all commissioners and is desperately needed in our county. It was clear throughout today's meeting that budgets and lack of adequate revenues is a constant struggle and stress for all the commissioners and staff. This referendum will require a lot of education to pass, something that we are good at. Merely supplying our support will enhance our standing with this board so when other, more controversial topics arise that we would like their support on we are more likely to get it. Please let me know if there is any more information you would like. I would be happy to attend a board meeting to discuss in further detail if that would be helpful."

Liz Orsay

Below is Rosemary Nilles' notes from the same meeting.

- **FEMA:** The meeting included a presentation from a FEMA official to clarify their role in providing federal assistance following damaging weather emergencies.
- **Local Option Sales Tax (LOST):** A second presentation focused on a potential Local Option Sales Tax. The advantage of a sales tax is that everyone who makes a purchase in Citrus pays it. At least 64 of the 67 counties have a 1-2% LOST, that cannot by law exceed 2%. There are four kinds of LOST and Citrus would most likely select the type that supports Local Government Infrastructure. This must be approved by a local referendum - but county commissioners are not permitted to push for it or campaign for the LOST. Instead, other community organizations would educate the public about the benefits, or an agency could be contracted to do this. All five commissioners seem interested in Local Government Infrastructure Tax. If passed, it could be used to free up millage funds. Commissioners agreed that this needs careful planning and time limits and a detailed explanation to the

public of what exactly these funds would be used for, so that residents can express their wishes. Pursing a LOST will be further discussed and probably brought to a BOCC vote in February.

- **County Animal Shelter:** Adam Head presented some drawings of the design for the new animal shelter and explained that the current design is ‘bare bones’ although extras can be added with further funds. Ms. Finnegan thought that the exterior design was unattractive and that it did not offer enough storage. Ms. Barek wanted to scrap all the plans and purchase the Chronicle building in Meadowcrest, and redesign it, with a separate barn for farm animals. Other commissioners disagreed. Eventually, they voted 3-2 to continue with the plans for the shelter. A group of citizens attended the meeting to support getting the shelter built.

If you can find it in your heart and your purse, please give a donation to the League of Women Voters of Citrus County. You can write a check to L WVCC and mail to: L WVCC, PO Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460-1903 OR go to lwvcitrus.org Then go to the membership section and press “donation” and fill in your info for payment by card.

You need to request a new vote by mail for the new year, because your old request will no longer be in effect. You can call the Supervisor of Elections Office, 352 564-7120, go on the website, or go to the office in person. I will publish the exact information in the next newsletter after it is posted on the SOE website.

Our January 8, 2025 General Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County featured **Mary Darling and Teri DeStefano** from the **Seniors vs Crime** Unit of the Attorney General's Office and the Citrus County Sheriff Department.

It can be a very dangerous world for many people, where scammers know how to take advantage of and rob them. Senior citizens can be particularly vulnerable, but Seniors vs Crime is there to help people.

Has someone called you, threatened you, and told you to go to get gift cards to pay for something? Have you paid for work to be done on your property in advance and the work has not been done?

Have you received a phone call that said that one of your relatives is in jail and you have to send money to bail them out? Be suspicious. Be smart. If it sounds wrong, it is wrong.

In Citrus County, be particularly suspicious if you need to have your roof replaced. The Seniors vs Crime office has many complaints, particularly from one company, AAA Roofing.

Keep receipts. Keep paperwork. You cannot tell if you will need it, but you will be happy that you have it.

I am grateful that this government office is there to protect people.

At this meeting our own Maxine Connor, our natural resources chair, spoke about the proposed land swap.

You can watch the video of this important presentation on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWXluMBjpJA&t=138s>



The crowd at the Coastal Region Library was riveted to the presentation.



Guest speakers Teri DeStefano and Mary Darling from Seniors vs Crime, here with 1st President Vicky Iozzia, and our own Maxine Connor, Natural Resources Chair, spoke to the group.



The winners who answered the questions about last month's newsletter were Jean McCauley, here pictured with Lonnie Zingg, and Sue Motley.

From the League of Women Voters Impact on Issues

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Resource Management

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Promote resource conservation, stewardship, and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government. Preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the ecosystem with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

The League supports the preservation of the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the ecosystem and maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation, and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater, and drinking water, and set up a process to evaluate inter-basin water transfers.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation of solid and hazardous wastes and promote their reuse and recycling.

Nuclear. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Transfer of Federal Public Lands

Promote policies that keep federal public lands under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

Climate Change

Support climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Federal Agriculture Policies

Support environmentally sound farm practices, and increased reliance on the free market while promoting adequate supplies of food at reasonable prices and regulations to all animal and aquaculture production. Enforce federal antitrust laws to ensure competitive agricultural markets, provide financial support to subsidize agriculture

in specific instances. Support the federal government's funding of basic agricultural research to ensure adequate safety of our food supply.

IN THE NEWS

Things Joe Biden Did as President you might have missed, from Politico

- Expanded overtime guarantees for millions
- First over-the-counter birth control pill to hit U.S. stores in 2024
- Gun violence prevention and gun safety get a boost
- Renewable power is the No. 3 source of electricity in the US and climbing
- Preventing discriminatory mortgage lending
- A sweeping crackdown on "junk fees" and overdraft charges
- Forcing Chinese companies to open their books
- Preventing another Jan. 6
- The nation's farms get big bucks to go "climate-smart"
- Building armies of drones to counter China
- Biden scraps Trump's paint scheme for Air Force One
- The Biden administration helps broker a deal to save the Colorado River
- Giving smaller food producers a boost
- Biden recommends loosening federal restrictions on marijuana
- A penalty for college programs that trap students in debt
- Biden moves to bring microchip production home
- Tech firms face new international restrictions on data and privacy
- Preventing a cobalt crisis in Congo
- Cracking down on cyberattacks
- Countering China with a new alliance between Japan and South Korea
- Reinvigorating cancer research to lower death rates
- Making medication more accessible through telemedicine
- Union-busting gets riskier
- Biden inks blueprint to fix 5G chaos
- Biden empowers federal agencies to monitor AI
- Fixing bridges, building tunnels and expanding broadband
- The U.S. is producing more oil than anytime in history
- Strengthening military ties to Asian allies
- A new agency to investigate cyberattacks
- Making airlines pay up when flights are delayed or canceled

From the Citrus County Chronicle

Is blue the new green in Florida?

- Jan 8, 2025 Last spring, Florida legislators passed a bill to create the Office of Ocean Economy. As it sounds, its objectives involve the development of enterprises that both spearhead "water-

driven” innovation and spur growth in local economies related to coastal living. It aims to make Florida a contender in the international “blue economy race.” As Rep. Chip LaMarca, one of the bill’s sponsors, said, “We need the next Gatorade to come out of the ocean.”

To accomplish these objectives, the initiative is meant to connect academic research, innovation, technology, funding, branding and, well, the ocean. In the process, Florida’s brand will evolve to include the blue label. Sort of like the Green New Deal but with surf.

The state will fund the Office of Ocean Economy at Florida Atlantic University. It will be led by Colin Polsky, the director of the School of Environmental, Coastal, and Ocean Sustainability there. He named several examples of ocean economy, such as aquaculture, commercial fishing, and recreation in ocean waters. Future domains where Florida has a stake include adaptations to sea-level rise and exploration of sustainable energy sources, such as tides. Protecting shorelines may involve redesigning coastal structures as well as developing hybrid coral reefs. Polsky intends to “incorporate ideas from all around the state about different opportunities, avenues, levers, mechanisms for improving the ocean economy.”

How can the Nature Coast hop onto the bandwagon? We know the attractions of the Nature Coast’s waterways truly matter for tourism. Taking advantage of the imminent Legislative Delegation meetings, leaders could be prepared to speak up about local resource/tourism synergy such as seagrass restoration to benefit the popular manatees, or potential projects to sustain and promote regional shellfish production. Perhaps educators could assist students at the Academy for Environmental Science or the College of Central Florida to develop grant applications for projects that they might eventually “bring to market.” Time for some brainstorming!

The alert reader may be feeling a little dizzy reading about the state’s decision to invest in natural resources, sustainability, mitigating sea-level rise, and such. Is this the same administration that has permitted private businesses to extract and sell water from Florida springs? It was poised to turn coastal state parks into private golf courses until the plan was leaked? It will be important to keep the government’s left hand in conversation with its right as the new office’s activities go forward.

Perhaps in the next session, the legislators will propose an Office of Prevention. It is less sexy than “innovation,” “leverage” and “monetization,” but stopping our ecological mistakes, as well as taking climate change seriously, will reduce the scale of the problems that we always assume science and technology can fix after the fact.

Upcoming Dates for the League of Women Voters of Florida Offerings

- January 17: Lunch & Learn Series to return (*Online*)
- January 25: League of Women Voters Gulf Coast Convening - Climate, Affordability, Resilience: "Coming Back Home" (*Fairhope, Alabama*) – [Click here to learn more, please share!](#)
- February 6: Our Voices, Our History, Our Future North Florida Black History Essay & Art Contest Event #1 (*Tallahassee, FL*) – [Click here to learn more, please share!](#)
- February 7: Our Voices, Our History, Our Future North Florida Black History Essay & Art Contest Event #2 (*Panama City, FL*) – [Click here to learn more, please share!](#)
- February 14: League of Women Voters 105th Anniversary
- March 4: Start of Florida's 60-Day Legislative Session (*Tallahassee, FL*)
- March 5: Suggestions for LWWFL Board Nominees and 2025-2027 State Program recommendations due for initial consideration (*Online*)
- March 11-12: League Lobby Days (*Tallahassee, FL*) – *Registration to open soon!*
- April 4: Local League deadline to propose adoption or amendment of State Program position by concurrence (*Online*)
- May 5: LWWFL to release proposed 2025-2027 State Program for delegate consideration (*Online*)
- June 6-8: 40th Biennial Convention (*Orlando, FL*) – *Registration to open in early Spring!*
- June 25-29: LWWUS Council (*Leesburg, VA*)



DWCCC ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

MARCH 8, 2025

CITRUS HILLS GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB
DOORS OPEN AT 11:30 \$50 PER PERSON

SALAD BAR

- MIXED GREENS
- GRILLED CHICKEN
- TOMATOES, CUCUMBER
- BACON, EGGS, FETA CHEESE
- EDAMAME
- CHICK PEAS
- CRANBERRIES, CROUTONS
- ROLLS & BUTTER
- KEY LIME PIE, COFFEE AND TEA

PROGRAM

- GUEST SPEAKERS
- MUSIC
- DOOR PRIZES
- BASKETS

SUBMIT YOUR REGISTRATION TO:

[CITRUSWOMENDEMS.ORG](https://citruswomendems.org)
CLICK ON RSVP
OR Mail check made out to DWCCC and indicate name(s)
of attendees
To: Democratic Women's Club of Citrus County
P.O. Box 1902 Inverness, Florida 34451

ONLINE REGISTRATION CLOSSES FEBRUARY 27
Checks must be received by February 27

From the ACLU – this is what they are doing to defend democracy:

- Immigrants' rights advocates sue Trump administration over birthright citizenship executive order
- The ACLU is supporting Tik Tok under free speech
- An executive order has threatened transgender people and the ACLU promises to fight back.
- ACLU is suing the administration's executive order to strip US born babies born in the US of citizenship
- The ACLU is suing the administration over its plan to fast-track deportations without offering them legal rights.
- .



Peg Primeau, 2nd President, Reproductive Rights Chair

We, the people (57% of us), apparently scared the shorts off the governor in November when Amendment 4 almost passed.

Now, part of the agenda for the special legislative session he called for Jan. 27 is to push for laws that essentially prevent the people from bringing amendments to the ballot ever again. He is suggesting rules around the petition process that not only create bigger obstacles than the existing 60% threshold, such as no third-party petition collectors, but that codify the administration's methods for undercutting validation. See flgov.com/eog.

Just so you don't think the governor was concerned about marijuana rather than reproductive rights, note that his plans direct the Court to "evaluate petitions for compliance with the inalienable rights clause" of the state constitution, aka implied fetal personhood.

These issues will no doubt come up in the regular session. We need to let our elected representatives all over the state know that we object to the abridgment of voter rights by an administration that is itself not law-abiding.



Rosemary Nilles, 1st Vice President, Gun Safety Chair, Education Chair

What's Going On in Tallahassee, and What Can We Do?

There's high drama in Tallahassee! At the time of this writing on Jan. 29, the Florida Legislature is in the midst of a special session focused on immigration. A special one-week session was originally mandated by Gov. Ron DeSantis, to address a swath of heavy-duty issues - including stepping out in front of President Trump's immigration crackdown, reforming condo issues, AND dismantling the current procedures for voters to create a ballot initiative. But the legislators defied the governor, quickly adjourning his session and reopening their own. They are focused only on supporting Trump's immigration plan, stating accurately that the other issues can wait for the official session on March 4th. While the Senate today passed the T.R.U.M.P. bill to deal with illegal immigration enforcement, the governor and some supporters are angry that this bill does not go far enough and takes power from the governor.

Why bother telling this story? Anyone who's been watching will know that the FL legislature generally rolls over and accepts the governor's demands. This is a dramatic departure. But it's a good time to remind you to get involved!

How? First, attend our **LWV Citrus Zoom meeting on Wed. Feb. 5 at 7:00**. Deb Daniels, with extensive legislative experience, will address "The What, the How, and the Who of the Florida Legislature." Don't miss this informative session where she'll explain what every voter needs to know, tell us HOW to be involved, and answer our questions. Register here: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/n-opCkICQwGeD_4NeNGtYQ. OR, go to www.lwvcitrus.org > Upcoming Events > Click Feb. 5 on the calendar to get the link.

Second, put these legislators in your Contacts and call or email with your input.

- Sen. Blaise Ingoglia, Dist. 11. Local: 352.666.5707. Tallahassee: 850.487.5011 Or, [Email Sen. Ingoglia](#).
- Rep. JJ Grow, Dist 23. Local: 352.560.6075. Tallahassee: 850.717.5023 OR, [Email Rep JJ Grow](#).

Finally, if you're able, attend the Legislative Delegation Meeting on Friday Feb. 7 at the Citrus County Courthouse in Inverness from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. I will be speaking directly to the above legislators on

behalf of LWV Citrus about our four LWVFL priorities: Voting & Elections, Education, Gun Violence Prevention, & Reproductive Freedom. Local government entities, community organizations and private citizens will be making their legislative requests, publicly.

Let's get involved and make our voices heard!

From the Department of Health



We can help YOU take CONTROL of your diabetes!

Program Goals Include:

- Enhance and maintain your quality of life.
- Prevent complications.
- Learn mindful choices for proper nutrition.
- Enhance physical activity.
- Strengthen personal support systems.
- Foster relationships with healthcare providers.

Central Ridge

Library

425 W. Roosevelt Blvd., Beverly Hills, FL 34465

Dates: 1/27/25 - 3/17/25

Day: Mondays

Time: 4PM-6PM

This is a FREE 8 week workshop.

Registration is Required

Contact:

Scan QR code:

Kathryn DeFranco

Kathryn.DeFranco@flhealth.gov

OR

Mark Pagan

Mark.Pagan@flhealth.gov





Tai Chi for Arthritis

Elder Options & The Citrus County Health Department
is offering a **FREE**
Tai Chi for Arthritis workshop.

East Citrus Community Center

9907 E Gulf to Lake Hwy

Inverness, FL, 34450

2/11/25 - 4/4/25

Tuesdays and Fridays

9am-10am

This is an 8 week workshop

Registration paperwork will be completed during the first class.

Please wear comfortable clothing and non slip closed toe shoes.



To reserve your place please contact:

Mark Pagan





Maxine Connor, Natural Resources Chair

FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL SPRINGS SUMMIT – RESCHEDULED TO FEBRUARY 8, 2025 AT STETSON LAW SCHOOL, GULFPORT, FLORIDA

A one-day event, has been rescheduled because of the recent hurricanes. Come and learn about Florida's iconic springs and what we can do to protect them through advocacy, policy, and law. Free to attend but you must register (don't delay as we expect a full house): <https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/summit>

FROM THE FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL

Become an informed member – sign up for their email list to get action alerts to your Inbox. Add a book to your 2024 reading list: *Florida Springs* by Dr. Chris Meindl. <https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/>

BMAPS (BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS) MEETINGS FOR WEEKI WACHEE, CHASSAHOWITZKA, HOMOSASSA, AND CRYSTAL RIVER/KINGS BAY WERE HELD BY FDEP ON NOVEMBER 7TH IN HERNANDO COUNTY

UPDATE:

The Springs and Aquifer Protection Act, which was passed in 2016, requires the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to develop Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPS), which are recovery plans for Florida's nitrate-impaired springs. The Florida Springs Council sued the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in 2019 because it noticed gaps in the BMAPs. After four years, in 2023, the 1st District Court of Appeals ruled that FDEP must rewrite the BMAPs by July 2025. As part of a state-wide effort, on November 7th in Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida, the FDEP hosted a public meeting, gave a presentation on the draft BMAPS for our local springs, Weeki Wachee, Chassahowitzka, Homosassa, and Crystal River/Kings Bay Basins. They put up posters with statistics and information, and invited participants to ask questions and make comments on cards which they supplied. Those comments were to be included in FDEP's final report of the meeting. **The final BMAPS are due by July 1, 2025.**

THE NONPROFIT FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL TOOK LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (FDEP) RE: THE HARM RULE

There are 30 Outstanding Florida Springs (OFS). The Florida Springs Council (FSC) filed a lawsuit alleging that these springs have been harmed because the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has delayed in adopting a "harm rule." This rule was mandated by the State Legislature via a 2016 law (SB 552) ordering FDEP to adopt rules to better protect Outstanding Florida Springs against water withdrawals that reduce water flows and thereby harm springs. (Pollution makes it worse.) Such a rule should define the meaning of "harmful" to prevent harmful groundwater withdrawals from OFS and spring runs. Meanwhile, the Water Management Districts have continued to issue water use permits, harming OFS. Read this great article covering the story to that point by WUFT, PBS, NPR:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/120QwOJKmLxx4zxXWMBwhGID4EUAhNz2N/view>

UPDATE:

FDEP has finally released another draft of proposed “harm” rules: 62-41.400 - 62-41.403, on August 29, 2024, which will not adequately protect springs.

<https://naturecoaster.com/under-court-pressure-fdep-finally-proposes-springs-harm-rule/#:~:text=On%20Dec.,Springs%20from%20harmful%20water%20withdrawals.>

A rule hearing was held for the above-referenced proposed rules, and was held on **Jan. 6, 2025** starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building, Room 137, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL, 32399-3000.

Listen to this update from Florida Springs Council on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1098016581630099>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=903168978650451&set=pcb.903169071983775>

Florida Springs Council has gone back to litigate on this matter. See all the details on the Florida Springs Council website:

<https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/springsbmaps>

TUSCANY RANCH SUBMITS REVISED PLANS TO THE COUNTY

The developers of Tuscany Ranch submitted revised plans to the county, outlining an expanded vision for the project. Proposed changes include 3,687 single-family homes, 1,415 multi-family units and 330,524 square feet of nonresidential space. The development agreement has been received, and updated plans and applications are currently under review by county staff, with public hearings to be scheduled at a later date. The site is located on the east side of County Road 491, just north of Forest Ridge Boulevard, and extends to the east and north, bordering the northern edge of the Beverly Hills community and surrounding the Twisted Oaks Golf Course. The developer is considering building a manmade inland lagoon, featuring a sandy beach, shops, children’s water activities, rental facilities and other amenities. This amenity would be accessible to both homeowners and the public. Some residents have pushed back on the proposed project, citing adverse environmental impacts and congestion generated from so many new homeowners.

Attorney Robert Batsel, representing Metro Development Group, recently told the Chronicle editorial board that the goal is to ensure Tuscany Ranch meets the needs of the growing community.

“We’re not going to stop growth, so let’s do it right,” he said.

The development is expected to be completed in phases over the next 25 to 30 years.

See the article in the Citrus County Chronicle by Michael D. Bates, staff writer, written 11/12/24 and updated 12/9/24 at mbates@chronicleonline.com.

https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/tuscany-ranch-submits-revised-plans-to-citrus-county/article_207d06a5-4576-5d1a-af07-2f335f68d5c9.html

FLORIDA RIGHT TO CLEAN WATER CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT FOR THE 2026 ELECTION – HOW TO VOLUNTEER AND GET INVOLVED

Florida Right To Clean Water.org is a grassroots, volunteer, nonpartisan organization formed to place an amendment to the [state constitution](#) on the November 3, 2026 ballot by citizens before the voters of the [U.S. state](#) of [Florida](#), using a [direct initiative](#) petition that will give citizens of the state a right to clean and healthy waters.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Right_to_Clean_Water#:~:text=Florida%20Right%20To%20Clean%20Water.org%20is%20a%20grassroots%2C%20volunteer,to%20clean%20and%20healthy%20waters

Go here to learn about the campaign and sign up for email notifications:

<https://www.floridarighttocleanwater.org/>

HOW TO VOLUNTEER: We are in the West Central Region. See the following link to contact our regional coordinator.

<https://www.floridarighttocleanwater.org/regions>

Regional Coordinators support County Captains and other key ambassadors to ensure everyone has what they need (which includes recruiting, training, resourcing, and organizing support) to accomplish the mission. The League of Women Voters of Florida supports this initiative and encourages local leagues to participate.

CITRUS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. - CPA-2024-00005 ROBERT BATSEL, JR. for 1728 INVESTMENTS, LLC – REVISION TO CHAPTER 13 – MANATEE PROTECTION ELEMENT

This application would amend the objectives and policies associated with residential dock densities in the Manatee Protection Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This application was scheduled to have its final hearing before the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners at 5:05 pm on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, but this Item I. The 12/10 Public hearing to approve CPA-

2024-00005 Comprehensive Plan Manatee Element Changes: was removed from the agenda. Instead, the applicant for the amendment has requested a 180-day extension for approval while trying to work out concerns with FWC and US Fish and Wildlife.

The link to that specific agenda item **E 13** on 12/10/24 is here:

<https://citrusclerk.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8431/files/report/7585>

STATE LEGISLATION FILED TO DEFINE USES OF FLORIDA **STATE PARKS AND WHAT WILL BE PROHIBITED**

On December 4th, Florida State Senator Gayle Harrell filed legislation: Senate Bill 80: State Land Management; Citing this act as the "State Park Preservation Act." <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/80>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xECC7mo-G0>

This bill was filed as a result of Florida Department of Environmental Protection's attempt to allow tennis courts, golf courses, and pickleball courts to be built on nine of the Florida State Parks. There was huge public outcry, demonstrations, and bipartisan opposition to this. Read the Tampa Bay Times 12/20/24 article: The behind-the-scenes story of the Florida state park scandal - Here's how one of the state's biggest controversies of the year came together — and quickly fell apart.

<https://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/2024/12/20/florida-state-park-scandal-desantis-golf-nicklaus-charity-jonathan-dickinson/>

Update: Senator Harrell's bill is intended to define how to preserve and protect the natural habitat and endangered species in our state parks and to open it up to people to enjoy. Some things it would allow are horseback riding, bike paths, swimming and hiking. It would prevent tennis courts, golf courses, pickleball courts and ball fields from being built in Florida state parks for recreational use. The bill would also require a 30-day notice for any proposed changes to allow the public's voices to be heard.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/80>

<https://www.flhouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative>

UPDATE ON LAND SWAP DEAL TO OBTAIN **STATE FOREST LAND IN HERNANDO COUNTY FOR GOLF**

According to the 2025 Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) calendar for 2025, the next meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2025, at the DEP in Tallahassee.

The item of the land swap deal has not been on the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) agenda since the issue came up. It was not on the agenda for the December 12th and 13th meeting.

https://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/DSL/OES/ARC/Calendars/2025_ARC_Calendar.pdf

People and many organizations have been watching the ARC agendas to see if the proposed land swap deal will show up on the agenda.

See the expanded article giving the background on this issue in the January 2025 Newsletter on the website of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County.

<https://www.lwvcitrus.org/lwvcc-monthly-newsletter/>

LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION FOR CITRUS COUNTY

The Citrus County Legislative Delegation, originally scheduled for January 27th has been canceled due to a special session at the state legislature and rescheduled to February 7th from 9:30 am to noon at the Board of County Commissioners Chamber, 110 N. Apopka Ave., Inverness, FL 34450. The purpose of this meeting is the discussion and consideration of local bills scheduled to be filed in the Florida Legislature, to provide a forum for the public to address members of the Legislative Delegation and conduct other delegation business in preparation for the 2025 Legislative Session.

If you would like to be placed on the agenda for discussion relating to the local bill(s) or any issue, please fill out the required Speaker Request Form and submit it to Ivie.Jordyn@flsenate.gov.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION FOR FLORIDA

Regular session convenes Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Last day of regular session is May 2, 2025, 60th day. April 22, 2025 50th day – Last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings. View complete calendar here:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Calendar/2025/Session%20Dates%202024-11-20%20161138.PDF>

Interim Committee Meetings

The [Interim Committee Meeting Schedule](#) (PDF) is available. Weekly schedules and meeting notices will be posted prior to the meetings.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Calendar/2025/Session%20Dates%202024-11-20%20161138.PDF>

Look up bills, sign up for tracking, find out anything to you need to know about session here at Online Sunshine:

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm?CFID=105593493&CFTOKEN=34086e5b94b9fbd6-E019D5ED-BC6C-833C-5D954449DEBE3327>

LEAGUE MEMBER META CALDER FROM THE TALLAHASSEE LEAGUE TO CONDUCT A TRAINING ON ONLINE SUNSHINE AT THE LWVFL CLEAN ENERGY ACTION TEAM ZOOM FEBRUARY 19 AT 4:45 PM

For our February Zoom meeting, we are privileged to have Meta Calder of the Tallahassee League who will walk us through how to use Online Sunshine, the State of Florida's website on which we can find out anything about the Legislative Session - find and contact your legislators, look up bills, and follow them as they keep changing, read them, track them, look up committees and their members and meeting times, watch the meetings live and access the recorded meetings, and much more. You won't want to miss this meeting. LWVCC members will receive an email invitation with a link to register for the meeting. If you are not a member and wish to attend, email maxineconnor@gmail.com for the registration link.

The Online Sunshine website is:

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm?CFID=105593493&CFTOKEN=34086e5b94b9fbd6-E019D5ED-BC6C-833C-5D954449DEBE3327>

HEAT ILLNESS AND LEGISLATION

During the 2024 Florida legislative session, Governor DeSantis signed a bill HB 433 Employment Regulations, that prevented local governments in Florida from requiring heat protection for outdoor workers other than their own employees. National Public Radio pointed out that roughly two million people in Florida, from construction to agriculture, work outside as of Apr 15, 2024. Workers continue to suffer from heat illness and some have died from it.

OSHA (the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration) has written and published a Rule on Heat Illness. The comment period was extended and expired on January 14, 2025. An informal public hearing on the proposed rule will be held virtually and begin on June 16, 2025. Get the facts and all the details here: <https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/rulemaking>

RULES FOR EVSE (ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT) (charging equipment)

The regulation of electric vehicle charging equipment got preempted to the state when Senate Bill 1084 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services was passed in the 2024 legislative session.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2024/1084>

Hearings on the rulemaking were held in Miami, Orlando, and Jacksonville the week of January 14, 2025. The comment period has expired. Here is the link to the proposed new rule of electric vehicle charging stations as it appeared in the Florida

Administrative Register:

[https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?id=5J-](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?id=5J-28.002#:~:text=Rule:%205J%2D28.002%20Prev%20Up%20Next&text=Latest%20version%20of%20the%20final,No%20reference(s).&text=A%20rule%20hearing%20has%20been,FL%2033172%20DATE%20....&text=The%20proposed%20new%20rules%20will,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.&text=The%20purpose%20of%20this%20rulemaking,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.)

[28.002#:~:text=Rule:%205J%2D28.002%20Prev%20Up%20Next&text=Latest%20version%20of%20the%20final,No%20reference\(s\).&text=A%20rule%20hearing%20has%20been,FL%2033172%20DATE%20....&text=The%20proposed%20new%20rules%20will,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.&text=The%20purpose%20of%20this%20rulemaking,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?id=5J-28.002#:~:text=Rule:%205J%2D28.002%20Prev%20Up%20Next&text=Latest%20version%20of%20the%20final,No%20reference(s).&text=A%20rule%20hearing%20has%20been,FL%2033172%20DATE%20....&text=The%20proposed%20new%20rules%20will,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.&text=The%20purpose%20of%20this%20rulemaking,%2D137%2C%20Laws%20of%20Florida.)

ADVENTURE COAST MEETUP WED. FEB. 12TH WITH AMANDA HIPPS ON GOPHER TORTOISES

Amanda is a wildlife and landscape biologist. The meeting will run from 7—8pm at the South Brooksville Community Center, 601 East Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Brooksville, FL. Public welcome! To participate remotely via Zoom, please register in advance at:

<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJlqdOCrrTotHtNoCSF5hp2reaOLaAz-aL4Y>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Look what the League has done in 2024!



From our Florida League Co-Presidents, Cecile Scoon and Debbie Chandler



From Debbie:

Our first challenge is ensuring that all Floridians are ready to vote, regardless of party affiliation. If you plan to vote by mail (VBM), remember that previous requests have expired. To receive your VBM ballot for the January 28th special elections in Congressional Districts 1 and 6, as well as other early elections, you must request your ballot by January 16. Please also encourage your friends and family through personal outreach and social media to do the same.

From Cecile:

2025 promises to be a fabulous year...certainly better than 2024. So, for my first Voter article of this year, I hope to inspire each of you to continue our important work defending democracy and empowering voters across the beautiful state of Florida. We continue to be available to support and encourage local Leagues. If I haven't had the chance to visit your League, yet, please reach out. I don't want to miss any.

From Celina Stewart, CEO of the League of Women Voters

Our next political era has begun.

This week, the League launched our [Women Defend Democracy](#) campaign to face the first 100 days of the new administration and beyond.

Through Women Defend Democracy, the League will work to:

- Provide Democracy Education & Election Administration Support;
- Restore and Defend Voting Rights Protections;
- Abolish the Electoral College;
- Protect Democracy Organizations & Institutions; and
- Fight for Reproductive Freedoms.

In the first week of the new administration, we saw [actions targeting](#) both vulnerable populations and our democracy as a whole.

We're grateful for your partnership as we move into this unprecedented time.

Let's defend democracy together.

In League,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Celina Stewart', with a stylized, cursive script.

Celina Stewart

CEO | League of Women Voters

From the League of Women Voters website (National League)

“In the first week of President Trump’s second term, we’ve witnessed an undeniable assault on the foundation of our democracy.

“The League is deeply dismayed by the executive order eliminating federal voter access initiatives (*Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions*). This order removes federal support for voter access and registration initiatives. This is a direct attack on the progress made to ensure that all Americans can freely and fairly participate in our elections. Instead of dismantling efforts that expand voter access, our government must enact policies that eliminate barriers, modernize voter registration, and provide accurate election information to all Americans.



Jan Hall, 2nd Vice President, Publicity chair, Program Planner, Postcard chair, does flyers for publicity

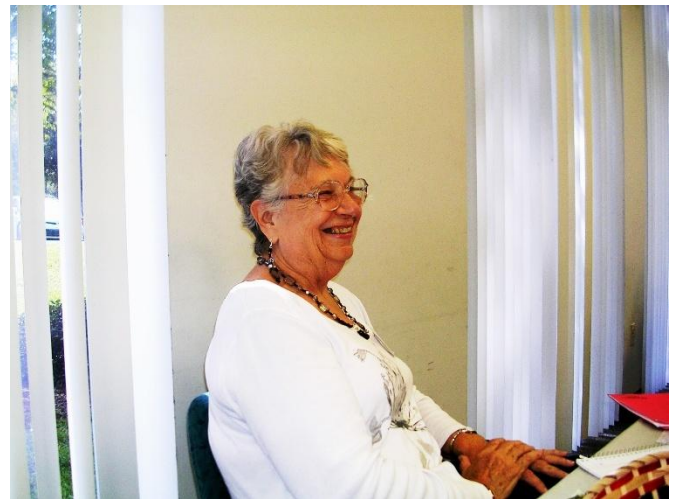
Jan has been an active member of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County since it was formed in 2013, She has in her archives photos of the history of our League.

In August 2013, the newly formed LWVCC had a "Get to Know Us" event at the Central Ridge Library in Beverly Hills. We sat at tables of 4 or 5 people and each person told a little about themselves and why they were at the meeting.

Some of the faces you will recognize. I was the Photo Chairperson at the time. Marie Pettibone was President. Kate Betsko, Vice President. You will also see Dotty Carson, Sheila Jacobs, Mary Perry, Linda Myers, and Joan Reinhardt.

We truly stand on the shoulders of our sisters.





*The Public is Invited to Celebrate **Black History Month***

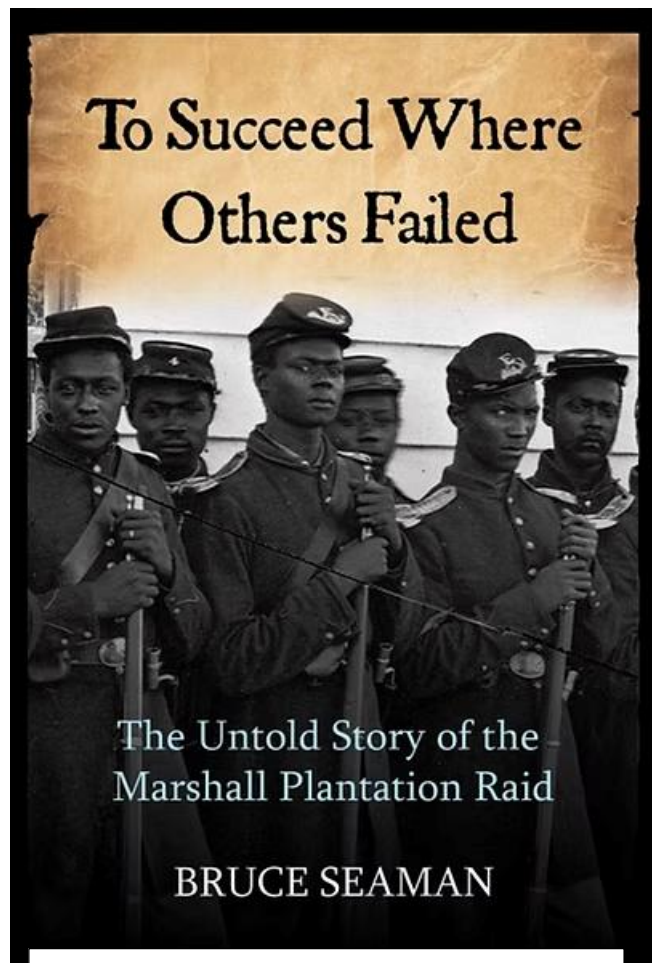
Saturday, February 15, 1:00 PM
George Washington Carver Center
95 Three Sisters Springs Trail
Crystal River, Florida

Bruce Seaman, author of *To Succeed Where Others Failed*, will share the incredible story of the heroic efforts of a contingent of African American soldiers in Marion County during the Civil War.

In March 1865, a 30-man team of mostly Black Union soldiers traveled from Jacksonville, Florida, 100 miles behind enemy lines, to conduct a ridiculously daring raid in remote Marion County. They returned on foot to St. Augustine, 80 miles from the raid site, with an accomplished Confederate cavalry unit hot on their trail.

The Black raiders, led by a Black Sergeant-Major, planned the operation, employed their own strategy, and successfully carried out the mission. Why? Everyone knew the war was almost over, but they sought to do what white commanders never had – to succeed where others failed.

Originally "white-washed" by Confederacy apologists, the account of this historical event has been updated using varied sources to reveal a more accurate story of an amazing raid by courageous, determined men. This unusual raid is a keystone event in the Black soldier's journey to gain acceptance, parity, and respect in the white man's army.



Books will be available for purchase
and signing by the author
BruceSeaman.com

Admission: \$15 (16 and under free)

Sponsored by the Citrus County Democratic Black Caucus
For more info: CitrusCountyDBC@gmail.com

Copeland Park Celebration of Martin Luther King, January 20, 2025

Speakers included Crystal River Mayor Joe Meek, Sheriff David Vincent, Will Lucas, Deacon Jarrod Campbell, and Tomasina Jacobs. League members also attended.

