



March, 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 **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 YOU MUST PRE-ORDER AND PAY. DIRECTIONS ON PAGES 5 AND 6.**



SEE PAGE 7 FOR AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR A ZOOM MEETING ON MARCH 26 AT 7:00 PM: County Commissioner Rebecca Bays will speak to us about the proposed 1c tax and fixing our roads.

Our April 9 meeting features **Rachel Newman**, Behavioral Health Technician for SMA Care, to explain about **Title IX**. How can we help protect school survivors of gender-based violence and discrimination? See page 8.

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 March 2025						
 Grid	 List	Month	Week	Day	March ▾	2025 ▾ Go < Previous Today Next >
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 9:00 am: LWV Board meeting on zoom	6	7	8
9	10	11 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting 4:00 pm: Citrus County School Board meeting	12 11:30 am: LWV General Meeting, Luncheon and election	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting	26 7:00 pm: LWV Citrus Zoom special event: Rebecca Bays, Paving our Roads in Citrus County	27	28	29
30	31					

(From our website, lwvcitrus.org)

HAPPY MARCH EVERYONE!

MARCH 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Ramadan Starts
2	3	4	5 Ash Wednesday	6	7	8
9 Daylight Savings Time	10	11	12	13 Holi Purnim	14	15
16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 March Equinox	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Eid al-Fitr					

MARCH HOLIDAYS

1

Ramadan Starts

5

Ash Wednesday

9

Daylight Savings Time

13

Holi Purnim

13

St. Patrick's Day

20

March Equinox

31

Eid al-Fitr

T

Contents:

March meeting, Sheriff David Vincent	Pages 5 and 6
Rebecca Bays, Zoom meeting March 26	Page 7
April meeting, Rachel Newman	Page 8
Linda Abels, Membership Chair	Pages 9 and 10
Vicky Iozzia, community events	Pages 11 to 15
February meeting, Dr. BJ Ezell	Page 16
“DOGE Community Conversation	Page 17
Request for Donations,	Page 18
Vote-by-mail requests, SOE Mo Baird	Page 19
From the LWV Impact on Issues-Social Policy	Page 20
In the News	Pages 21 to 23
Peg Primeau, Medicaid expansion	Pages 24 to 26
Rosemary Nilles	Page 27 to 29
From the Department of Health	Pages 30 to 32
Maxine Conner, Natural Resources Chair	Pages 33 to 40
Photos from African American Read-In	Page 41

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.

REMINDER! YOU MUST PRE-ORDER AND PAY IN ORDER TO JOIN US FOR THE LUNCHEON

To provide information for our members and for the community, we will be providing a
Special Zoom meeting



On Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

Rebecca Bays,

member of the Board of

County Commissioners of Citrus County,

will provide information and answer questions about the **paving of roads** in Citrus County, and the proposed **1 cent per gallon tax**.

All are welcome to attend. You must register.

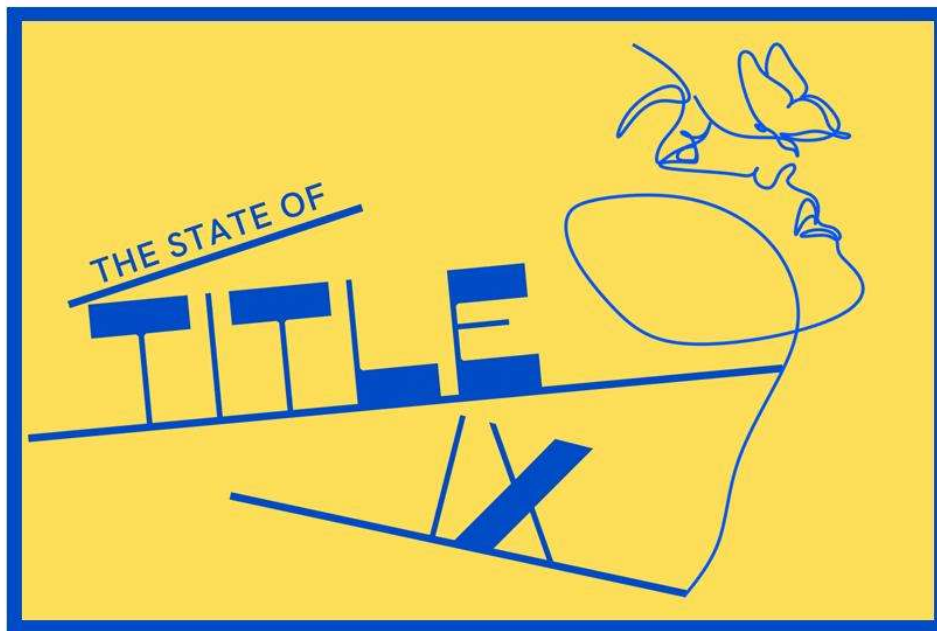
To register, follow this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/gAKW5C0SQ6KemCHhgy4rlg>

League of Women Voters of Citrus County

When: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 10:00 AM

**Where: Coastal Region Library
8619 W Crystal St. Crystal River, Fl. 34428**



How much have you heard about the protection from Sex-Based Discrimination called Title IX? Would you like to know more? On April 9 the League of Women Voters of Citrus County will have Rachel Newman as their guest speaker. Rachel is a Behavioral Health Technician for SMA Healthcare and a National Policy and Grassroots Organizer for Title IX. Her timely presentation will outline the current state of Title IX policy, explain how our vote is connected to Title IX's makeup and implementation, and provide ways in which we can take action to support school survivors of gender-based violence and discrimination when Title IX policy becomes non-survivor oriented.

For more information call 352-613-5056

Public is Invited

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



Linda Abels, Membership Chair

I've talked about changes in membership over the last few months, and I wanted to give you some updates. The change to the new way to handle new memberships and membership renewals didn't go exactly as planned. There have been some implementation issues with the LWWUS (League of Women Voters US). Our local website, which we are supposed to use to renew memberships or join the league, still isn't working. Vicky is working with the LWWUS implementation team to try and fix the issue. Until it is fixed you can go on the lww.org and all the way at the bottom of the page is a button that says member log in. Click on the button and put in your email address. It will email you a security code, put the code in and you will be able to see your account. At that time you can renew your membership. I sincerely hope that by the time you read this that our lwwcitrus.org will be working and connect you to the place to renew your membership.

Remember, membership dues have changed. The basic dues have gone to \$75 per year. There is no longer a household membership, however you can add an additional person to your account, but the cost is \$75 unless you indicate otherwise. LWWUS has implemented a new payment structure, with the standard annual membership \$75, but it can be as low as \$25. You will see the various options when you sign in.

To renew, you should be getting an email from the LWWUS or from LWWUS Transformation team. This email requests that you sign in and check the information in your account. These letters are expected to be emailed end of February or beginning of March. It would be good for you to sign in just to get the feel of the new website. As we progress into the year, you should receive the first reminder notice from the LWWUS that your dues are coming due about three months prior to your anniversary date, then again at one month.

If you are having any problems renewing your membership please feel free to either email me at labels58@aol.com or speak with another Board Member at the next meeting.



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

When I was asked to take over the Presidential duties of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County, Nancy Tomaselli was ill and asked me to do it “for a couple of weeks.” Her illness prevented her from returning.

Here I am almost a year and a half later and I must tell you what my voyage has been like.

I am so proud of what we have done. Our candidate meet and greets last year were well attended and well received. Our board members have worked to establish good relationships with community members. We have earned the respect of the community and intend to keep earning it by keeping our word and working hard for the community.

We have worked hard, but maybe more importantly, we have endeavored to create bonds with people in the community. I have had the opportunity to apply many of the skills I have learned as a Toastmaster to organize, get input, and implement activities.

If you have ever been part of a volunteer organization you know what there is a core of people who do a lot of the work. In our League, we have a “Quad Squad”, consisting of 2nd President Peg Primeau, 1st Vice President Rosemary Nilles, 2nd Vice President Jan Hall, and myself, 1st President. Our meetings with the entire board are around two hours, once a month, and the Quad Squad meets as needed to plan. Each individual has a great set of skills and we work with each other. I always feel that they have my back and I have theirs.

As we transition into the new way of member renewal, Linda Abels is on the track. (Chapterspot has run into some delays, by the way, so we are not sure when it will be working as planned).

We are all busy people, and you know what they say, when you want something done give it to a busy person.

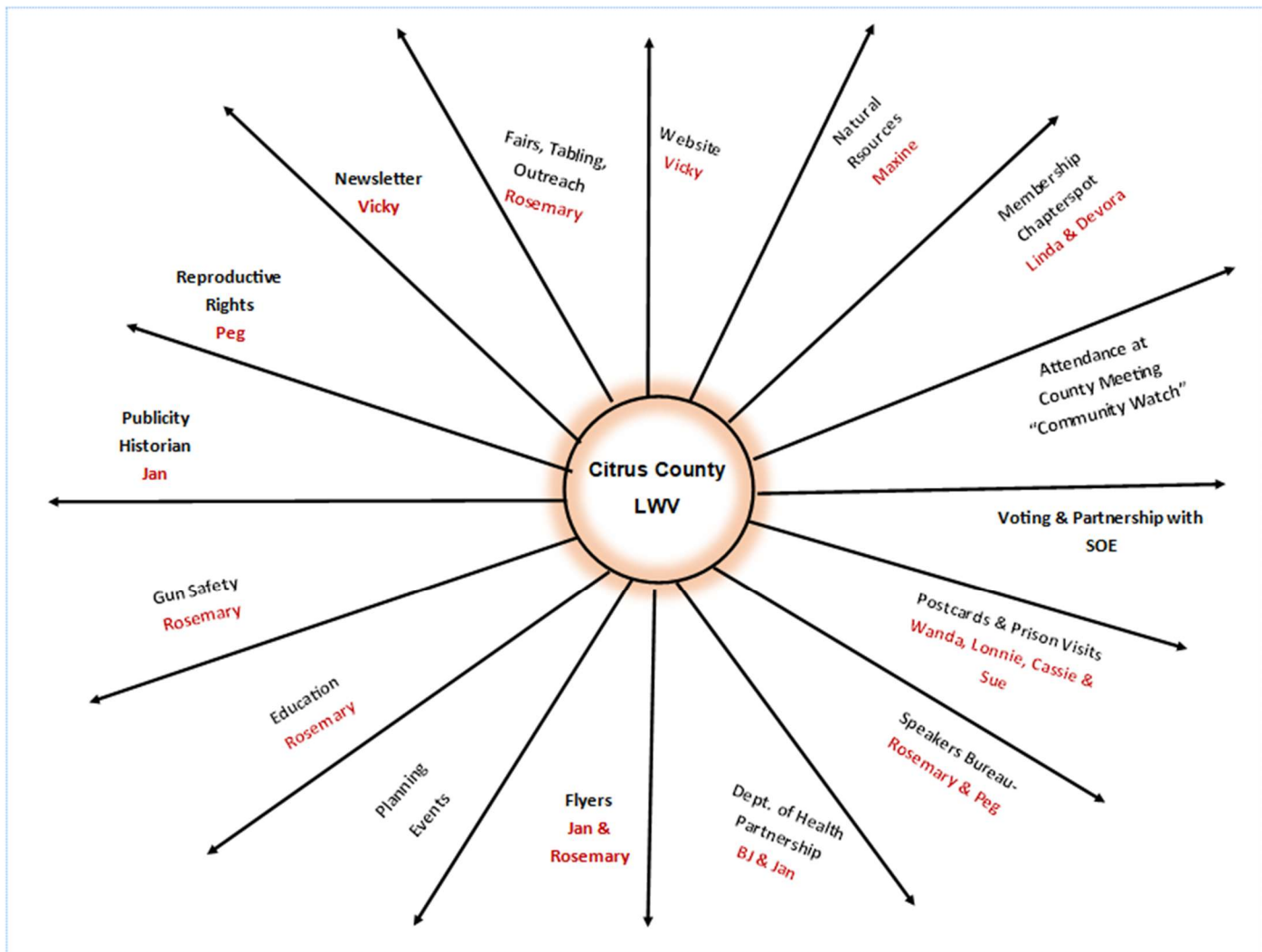
That said, we are not greedy. We do not want to hog the load all to ourselves. We are looking forward to other members' involvement in our activities.

You might ask, "What are those activities?" Good question. You don't want to volunteer for something you don't know about.

See the next page with the list of outreaches we have been doing.

Below you will see a mind map I made of the activities that we do. Thank you, Secretary Jeanne Messersmith, for putting this in a Publisher file for us.

Take a look at it and see where you might fit in. Then contact us. You can do that at



Our website, <https://www.lwvcitrus.org/contact-us/> We will contact you, get to know you, and find the best way to use your desires and skills. We work hard, but we have a lot of fun! We also enjoy doing what benefits our community.

Rosemary Nilles and I have been doing many community fairs to let the community know about the League. We have been collecting petitions for Medicaid and clean water. We have been giving out information on voting, the League website, gun safety, and recently Rosemary connected with the Veterans Administration, so we have information on helping veterans who are at risk for suicide.



Susan Bonard-Bygrave and Dec

These are the activities we have done:

- o Sat. Feb. 15, 10:30-12:30. **Nature Coast Volunteer Fair**, Central Ridge Community Center 77 Civic Circle Beverly Hills
- o Sat. Feb. 22, 9:00-1:00. **Chronicle Spring Healthy Living Event**, Crystal River Armory, Venable St., Crystal River,
- o Sun. Feb. 23, 1:00-3:30. **Citrus Health Department Health Fair**, Inverness Senior Games, Depot, Apopka Ave., Inverness,
- o Sun Feb. 23, 2:30-4:30. **African-American Read-In**, Lecanto HS, Lecanto

Still ahead, we have Sat. April 5, TBD: **Minority Health Fair**, Possible **YMCA Healthy Kids Day** More details to follow.

I want to share an interesting conversation I had with a community member. She started talking to me about how old she is (a couple of years older than I am), and how she says what she wants to say, how she was a women's libber years ago. She said she voted for someone and when I told her, "You know that person is a convicted sexual predator," her answer was, "They all do that." Then she told me about how she was abused in her job. It was a cordial conversation, but afterward I thought to myself, why are some people's standards so low? What in the women's movement would make her think that those inappropriate behaviors should not only be tolerated, but ignored when putting people in positions of such power?

I was dismayed by her answer, but glad that we were at least able to discuss the issue without the defensiveness and sometimes rude behavior of people who do not tolerate opposing views.

We had a very successful zoom with **Deb Daniels on Wednesday, February 5**, who explained to us how the Florida government works. Building on that zoom, we want to be able to provide information for those of our members and community who cannot attend our daytime meetings.

Her presentation was very well received. Here are some of the comments:

"Last week I had the pleasure of attending Citrus County LWV's voter education webinar "FL Legislature Structure & Process" by Deb Daniels. Thank you for hosting such a fantastic presentation!"

"My LWVFL Clean Energy Team Co-chair, Maxine Connor, invited me, and I'm so glad she did! I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a perfect way to get ready for this year's legislative session; very educational & empowering."

"Today I found the webinar recording's YouTube link on your LWV Citrus FaceBook page as you promised, thank you."

"I would like to share the recording with my LWV Polk County Voter Services committee."

"Please let me know if I can share the link with our voter services committee chair, and/or if we can include the link in our monthly LWV-Polk"

This presentation is available at: <https://youtu.be/BygOHWDAd0>

Paving our roads in Citrus County

One of my priorities as Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is to set our county on a course where we are catching up on needed infrastructure maintenance and getting to a place where we are properly maintaining our assets.

Rebecca Bays



We were recently given a presentation showing that maintaining our infrastructure regularly costs \$1, whereas neglecting it costs \$12. It's like having a leaky roof: if you don't maintain and repair it, significant damage occurs, and the cost becomes substantially higher. Whether it's roads, buildings, or parks, we need to ensure we are maintain-

ing them regularly. One of the areas we hear the most about is residential road resurfacing. I am pleased that our BOCC has invested \$17 million in residential road resurfacing this year. This is a historic amount; however, it still leaves us playing catch up.

In addition to the residential resurfacing program, we are investing in matching funds to get some collector roads rebuilt and resurfaced. Many have been neglected for so long that some sections require a complete rebuild, costing taxpayers millions more. We are using a state program called Small County Outreach Program (SCOP), which enables us to cost-share with the state. The program is limited, and a cash match is required from the county.

In 2025 the SCOP program will be used to pave Dunkinfield. Next

on the list to start soon is Turner Camp from Matthew Meadow to end, Deltona from 491 to Home-way, and Mustang from Mesa Verde to 491. Fiscal year 2026 projects include South Apopka to Anna Jo and all of Gospel Island Road in 2027. We are making major repairs on Dunklin, and a complete repair and resurface is scheduled for 2028.

I'm sure many of you reading this are thinking, "What about this road or that road?" I share your frustration, but with limited resources and so many needs, we are trying to stretch your tax dollars as far as we can. You can be sure we will be advocating for additional monies to be added in next year's budget. We are finally having a conversation about budget and tax reform and multi-year budgeting so we can rely on

a dedicated funding source for catching up and getting ahead to avoid spending ten times more on road projects that have been neglected for so long.

One thing we are discussing as a board is putting a referendum on the ballot in 2026 for an additional 1 cent on local sales tax. We are one of two counties that doesn't exercise this option. Can you imagine us investing this money into our county, properly maintaining our infrastructure, and getting to a point where we are spending ten times LESS to get our assets on a regular maintenance schedule? Twenty-six percent of this additional penny will be paid for by visitors and people just passing through. Once we are caught up and on a regular maintenance schedule, I envision us being less reliant on

the millage, and the savings could be applied to a reduction in our property taxes.

As a board, we are talking about big things and rethinking the same old ways that got us here. To paraphrase a former commissioner, "If you think the county coming around to resurface your road every 50 or 60 years is okay, then you don't think we have a problem."

Please be a part of the discussion. Let us know your ideas for our county. We are all in this together.

I am happy to meet with any local groups or residents to discuss these projects and answer questions. Please email me to schedule a time at rebecca.bays@citrusbocc.com.

Rebecca Bays is the Chair of the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners.

Our next zoom meeting is **on Wednesday, March 26, at 7:00 PM. Rebecca Bays** will explain the County's plan for paving roads, and answer questions. To attend the meeting, you must register at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/gAKW5C0SQ6KemCHh4r1g>

Our February 12, 2025 meeting at the Coastal Region Library

Dr. BJ Ezell, in ethnic-heritage attire, taught a lively yet serious lesson for Black History Month at the meeting of League of Women Voters of Citrus County on Feb. 12. She presented recent voting statistics for Blacks in Citrus County and reviewed the history of voting rights since 1868. She tested the audience on analogs of notorious Jim Crow-era exams used to disenfranchise voters. Attendees appreciated Thurman Ezell's fine rendition of "Wade in the Water" to close the talk.



The audience was given a "test" similar to what was given to black people in the South to prevent them from voting. How many jelly beans are in the jar?



Dr. BJ Ezell, Thurman Ezell, and 1st Vice President Rosemary Nilles

This presentation, sadly, is not available as a video.



“Community Conversation” with Congressman By Mary Hedges

Several League members participated in Congressman Bilirakis’s “Community Conversation” on February 20th at the George Washington Carver Center in Crystal River. It is customary for congressional representatives to hold town hall forums in their districts during the Congressional recess and many of us wanted to share our concerns with him.

The room was packed with 168 people in attendance (not counting the peaceful protesters outside). I, for one, wanted to express my dismay at our president allowing an unelected individual (who was not even confirmed by the Senate) to take a sledgehammer approach to dismantling our government, as well as the many other alarming actions of this new administration. But instead of a town hall type forum, the Congressman held a workshop where attendees acted as a mock Congress, working in groups to tackle the budget deficit.

Our randomly assigned group was evenly split between conservatives and liberals and surprisingly was able to discuss issues and arrive at compromise decisions. It was an uplifting experience in these times of extreme polarization to know that we could focus on issues and agree despite our differences.

I am not sure I changed Bilirakis’s mind on anything, but my faith in humanity was restored. For this I am grateful. Because we had little opportunity to provide feedback on current day concerns, beyond the budget deficit exercise, I will continue calling my senators and congressmen and sharing my concerns.

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 LWVCC and mail to:
LWVCC, 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.

**County
Supervisor of Elections
Maureen Baird**

Website: www.votecitrus.gov

Physical address: 1500 N. Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429

Mailing address: PO Box 1870 Lecanto, FL 34460-1870

Main office: (352) 564-7120

Vote-by-Mail Requests Have Expired

Citrus County Voter,

Per F.S. 101.62(1)a All Vote-by-Mail ballot requests expire on December 31st after each election cycle.

To receive a Vote-by-Mail ballot for the 2025-2026 election cycle, you must renew your request.

You can request your Vote-by-Mail ballot today by scanning the QR code below.



You may also visit our website at www.votecitrus.gov and select the Request a Vote by Mail Ballot on top tab.

Website: www.votecitrus.gov

Email: vote@votecitrus.gov

Phone: (352) 564-7120.

From the League of Women Voters Impact on Issues

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Criminal Justice

Support a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, sentencing, incarceration, and re-entry.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA. Support equal rights for all under state and federal law regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

Education, Employment, and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment, and housing.

Federal Role in Public Education. Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children from pre-K through grade 12.

Fiscal Policy

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance.

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides affordable access to a basic level of quality care for all US residents, including behavioral health that is integrated with and achieves parity with the physical health care system.

Immigration

Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business, and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for individuals already living in the country without legal permission to earn legal status.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.



IN THE NEWS

Upcoming Dates for the League of Women Voters of Florida Offerings

- **March 4:** Start of Florida's 60-Day Legislative Session (*Tallahassee, FL*)
- **March 5:** Suggestions for LWVFL 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:** LWVFL 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:** LWVUS Council (*Leesburg, VA*)

I Was Kamala Harris' Videographer. The Experience Completely Changed Me.

BY [AZZA COHEN](#)

Jan 20, 2025 (Excerpt)

Over the past few years, as the official videographer and director of video to Vice President Kamala Harris, I traveled the world with her, watching her navigate the White House and the world stage. I observed and documented nearly everything she did every day through my trusty White House-issued Sony FX3. I filmed her in 11 countries and in 91 cities across 27 U.S. states. I observed her with prime ministers and presidents and chancellors and kings—almost all of them men—and with hostile Republicans and their [spouses](#) who wouldn't shake her hand. I saw her with the wives of world leaders, bullied teenagers, doctors, doulas, CEOs, proud grandmothers, and excited grandchildren. I saw as she charmed skeptics and commanded rooms, as she considered reporters' questions, as she walked across a stage with 70,000 eyes watching her every move. I was there when the Somdet Phra Sangkharat Sakonmahasangkhaparinayok, Thailand's highest-ranking Buddhist monk, didn't shake her hand.

The best thing about working for Kamala Harris was watching a phenomenally competent and successful woman own her power in the most challenging of circumstances. Unfortunately, despite my best efforts, you didn't get to see that often enough.

Vice President Harris never called a little girl cute or commented on her outfit; instead, she'd say, "You look like the smartest person in your class." The vice president would say, "Let me hear you say, 'I am a leader,' " and even the youngest [girls would say it back](#). I filmed

hundreds of clips of Kamala Harris telling young people to believe in themselves because they can achieve anything. And I noticed myself changing my conversations with my nieces, stopping myself from commenting on their outfits and asking instead about the thoughts in their heads.

As I walked out of the doors of the west wing for the last time, it felt like the door was closing on the possibility of a woman ever leading from the Oval Office. Today, I am full of rage and devastation. But tomorrow, I will wake up with gratitude for all that I learned from Kamala Harris and will greet the future with defiance and hope—ready to take her lessons forward. Indeed, she may have been the first, but her leadership style reached so many others, guaranteeing that she will not be the last.

ACLU Feb 13, 2025

Thanks to the support of Guardians of Liberty members like you, the ACLU is leading the fight:

- Immediately upon taking office, the Trump administration took action to end birthright citizenship and tear families apart. **Within *two hours*, our legal team sued to stop these attacks on our immigrant community.**
- Just two days later, **we sued to stop the Trump administration's plan to expand fast-track deportations** without a fair legal process – an attack on our very Constitution.
- This week, **the ACLU sued to stop Trump's efforts to end asylum at the border**, a move that would put *thousands* of lives at risk.
- To protect our LGBTQ community, **this week, we sued to defend gender-affirming medical care for transgender people nationwide – then again to block the government from denying accurate passports to trans people.**
- **And we're not just filing lawsuits.** At the same time, ACLU organizers are on the ground in communities, sharing **Know Your Rights information regarding interactions with ICE and law enforcement** and organizing volunteers nationwide.
- Our advocacy teams have **mobilized thousands of ACLU supporters** to write to their members of Congress and demand that they take action to stop these attacks on our civil rights.

The Trump administration's attacks on our freedoms and civil liberties is a clear and present threat – but we are not backing down. Our ability to continue these fights however hinges on the generous support of people like you.

Did you know that February 14, yes, Valentine's Day, was the 105th anniversary of the formation of the League of Women Voters?

What has your local League been doing lately? We have been going to local events to spread the word about the League.

Members are attending the local County meetings:

Scott Baldwin attends the School Board meetings,

Board of County Commissioners are attended by Rosemary, Liz Orsay, Vicky, and Peg Primeau

Rosemary, Vicky, and Liz Gragert are attending Library Board meetings.

Wanda Brown has also volunteered to be with us.

Thanks to all who have volunteered. It is a great opportunity for new members to learn about what we are doing, and our conversations with community members are enlightening.

We will continue to reach out to the community, to those who agree with us and those who don't. We are proud to represent the League and all it stands for.



Peg Primeau, 2nd President, Reproductive Rights Chair

Talking Points for Medicaid Expansion

The League of Women Voters of Florida supports the citizen initiative for the “Amendment to Provide Medicaid Coverage to Eligible Low-Income Adults.” Over one million low-income adults between 18 and 64 in our state currently fall into the coverage gap—not poor enough to qualify, not rich enough to buy private insurance. Almost one in five women of child-bearing age is uninsured.

What can you do? Sign the petition, help gather more, and talk it up to your friends, neighbors, and social network! Talking points are:

--Assure coverage for working people

Medicaid expansion would help hundreds of thousands of hard-working Floridians who have jobs that don’t come with healthcare. Individuals and families who earn less than 138% of the federal poverty level would qualify. That income ceiling is \$20,782 a year for an individual—not much left after paying for rent, food, and transportation to work.

--Access to preventive care will lower other costs

Currently, we pick up the bill for people who have no ability to pay but whose medical condition has become life threatening and more difficult to treat. The cost of this uncompensated care in our emergency rooms is passed along to taxpayers through state and local government programs and to consumers through higher insurance premiums.

Access to preventive care is also very important for reducing maternal mortality. To make motherhood safer, women need care for chronic conditions well before pregnancy.

--Stop leaving federal money on the table.

By expanding Medicaid, we will be bringing our tax money from Washington back to Florida and then using it to offer needed healthcare to around 1.4 million people in our state. The money for this comes from taxes we've already paid.

The sponsor's website at floridadecideshealthcare.org has key information as well as petitions. LWVCC member Jean McCauley runs the Hub. To arrange pickup or drop-off of petitions, contact citrus.petitions@gmail.com.

Undoing the Harm of Florida's Extreme Ban - Bills to Watch **Peggy Primeau**

Reproductive autonomy was the main theme of Amendment 4 in last year's election. Passing it would also have been the most feasible way to end the 6-week abortion ban that went into effect last May. There will not be another citizen initiative on abortion at this time.

Rather, in the 2025 legislative session, supporters of women's reproductive health and

justice have filed bills that focus on the health-care consequences of the ban. Of course, the overarching health risk of the ban in the first place is compulsory pregnancy for people who cannot get an abortion in time. More urgent is the ban's impact on health care during pregnancy.

The law gives only vague terms about exceptions for abortion, along with threats of prosecution for doctors whose ethics require them to properly treat complications.

Doctors and hospitals are in a bind. Common complications are infection and hemorrhage after miscarriage. Disallowing treatment because it might resemble abortion does not preserve the pregnancy. Delay in or denial of treatment is truly life-threatening.

Sen. Tina Polsky of Palm Beach has filed SB 288, expanding the exceptions in the existing ban regarding fatal fetal abnormalities. Sen. Tracie Davis of Jacksonville and Rep. Fentrice Driskell of Tampa are co-sponsors of a bill to end the ban (SB 870 and HB 1139). These measures face the supermajority in both chambers, but they force a frank conversation and an opportunity to remind legislators how unpopular the ban is. These leaders and their colleagues are also concerned about transparency in the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration on rates of abortion. They also question transparency in the Maternal Mortality Review Committee which is tasked with analyzing maternal deaths. It has not issued a report in years. This is of concern given the investigations in other states that show increased cases of dangerous sepsis since extreme bans were enacted.

It's also haunting to remember that pregnancy complications aren't the chief explanation for maternal mortality. The leading cause of death during pregnancy is homicide.



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

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES: STATE & FEDERAL

By Rosemary Nilles

STATE LEGISLATION:

The 2025 Florida Legislative Session opens on March 4 and continues to May 2. Here are two bills to be wary of:

ELECTIONS, SJR 802: A Constitutional Amendment to Impose Term Limits on Local Officials: Members of Boards of County Commissioners and District School Boards. Filed by Blaise Ingoglia.

This amendment limits County Commission (BOCC) members to serving eight years and applies to terms beginning after November 3, 2026. It also solidifies eight year term limits for school board members elected since November 8, 2022. Term limits for school board members were already set for 8 years by law in 2023, so if passed, this would strengthen that law as a Constitutional Amendment.

Why? These local term limits preempt the will of the local people. Let the locals decide whether or not to re-elect their school board members and county commissioners. The League supports LOCAL CONTROL and opposes STATE PREEMPTION.

OPEN CARRY, HB 31: LWVFL prioritizes Gun Violence Prevention. Gov. DeSantis continues to push for Open Carry. HB 31 would permit Open Carry in Florida and eliminate our Red Flag Laws.

Again, Why? LWV, along with many Florida sheriffs, oppose this bill because of the grave public safety issues it raises. [open carry article 2-5-2025](#)

If you have opinions about these or other legislative topics, be sure to call or write. You are encouraged to make your voice heard.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

VOTING: THE SAVE ACT

The *Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE)* Act is a threat to the voting rights of millions of Americans.

The SAVE Act would require Americans to provide a birth certificate, passport, or other citizenship document to register or re-register to vote. It specifies that applicants who register by mail must present their documentation *in person*.

Voters in every state are already required to affirm or verify their citizenship status when registering. It is already illegal for noncitizens to register and vote in federal or state elections.

LWV of the US and LWV Florida strongly oppose the SAVE Act. The bill's requirement of a document to prove American citizenship to register to vote in federal elections is a barrier to voting. [LWVUS Statement SAVE Act](#)

Many eligible voters do not have easy access to the necessary documents. Studies show citizens of color are **three times more likely** than white citizens to lack documents such as birth certificates, passports, naturalization certificates, or certificates of citizenship.

People lose their documentation in fires, floods, moves, breakups, domestic abuse situations, housing instability, or other incidences. Downloading forms, paying \$15- \$50 for duplicates, taking time off work, finding transportation to government offices – may be easy for some, but are huge obstacles to many.

Women are greatly impacted! Women who took their husband's name when marrying would be unable to register or re-register to vote without making cumbersome changes to prove their identities. Impossible? Probably not... but a huge, time-consuming, and possibly expensive barrier to our rights to vote!

There's a direct relationship between the ease of registration and the number of voters on the rolls. Some American citizens — even those who can access citizenship documents — will not register, and will not turn out to vote, if they can't register online or by mail. If passed, this bill will effectively suppress voting for many. For more information, go to [Campaign Legal Center SAVE Act](#) or [Brennan Center SAVE Act](#).

Over the last 100+ years, LWV has fought hard to pass laws that would enable every eligible citizen who wants to vote to do so without undue burdens and barriers. We won't go back!

Please, do not be silent on this urgent issue! The bill is being fast-tracked through Congress. Call Senators Rick Scott and Ashley Moody, and Citrus Representative Gus Bilirakis today. Rep. Bilirakis is a proud co-sponsor of the SAVE Act, claiming that it will prevent foreign interference in our elections. It's fine to tell him how you feel anyhow!

You have every right to call our elected officials as often as you wish to give your opinions on topics that matter to you. We encourage you to do so!!

US Senators and Representative Contact Information:

Sen. Rick Scott: Tampa 813-225-7040. Washington 202-224-5274

Contact via Senate Website: [Contact Rick Scott](#)

Sen. Ashley Moody: Washington 202-224-3041

Contact via Senate Website: <https://www.moody.senate.gov/>

US Rep. Gus Bilirakis: Inverness 352-654-1004 Washington: 202-225-5755

Contact via House Website: <https://bilirakis.house.gov/>

From the Department of Health

The Citrus Hills Garden Club Presents:

Day Trip to

ANSON NURSERY

Monday, March 10th – Homosassa, FL

The Citrus Hills Garden Club invites you to join them for an inspiring visit to Anson Nursery. Learn more about sustainable gardening techniques and how to incorporate these principles into your own landscape.

Known as Citrus County's sustainable landscaping specialist, Anson is dedicated to environmentally friendly practices that make a real difference. They specialize in protecting and preserving our precious natural resources, focusing on:

- **Resource Conservation:** Using practices that save water, energy, and other limited resources.
- **Waste Reduction:** Minimizing waste to benefit the environment.
- **Pollution Prevention:** Employing methods that prevent air, water, and soil pollution for a cleaner, healthier ecosystem.

Their goal is simple: to reduce environmental impacts while maximizing the value you receive.

Trip Details:

- **Arrival Time:** 9am
- **Transportation:** Carpooling recommended; own vehicle
- Discount coupons available to all attendees



To register, please call the Activity Center at 352-746-7633

For more information or questions, email club leader
Dr. Del Gillispie: del.gillispie1250@gmail.com

THURSDAY, MARCH 13TH

Activity Center Auditorium

12:30–2pm



*Citrus Hills
Garden Club Presents:*

NATURE & WELLNESS EXPO

THIS
EVENT IS
FREE TO
ATTEND!

Hosts:
Debra R. Burden;
Department of Water Resources, Manager
Dr. Del Gillispie;
Citrus Hills Garden Club, Leader

Join us for an afternoon dedicated to promoting environmental awareness and healthy living! Each booth will share resources and strategies on conservation, wellness, wildlife protection, sustainable gardening, landscaping, irrigation and more.

In celebration of our planet, we'll also host a special eco-themed presentation highlighting ways we can all contribute to a greener, healthier world.

Don't miss this chance to connect with local experts, discover eco-friendly practices, and explore how to make a positive impact in our community!

EXHIBITORS INCLUDE:

- Citrus County Dept of Water Resources
- Fish & Wildlife Refuge Complex
- UF/IFAS Extensions: FL Friendly Landscaping & Horticulture

- Ziggy's Haven Bird Sanctuary, Inc.
- Florida Native Plant Society
- JLH Tree Care Services
- Citrus County Mosquito Control

- Florida Dept of Health
- Bella Vita Spa & Fitness Center
- Recycling & Landfill - Waste Management
- Family Consumer Science
- ... and more!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL: Dr. Del Gillispie at del.gillispie1250@gmail.com.

Florida Department of Health in Citrus County 4th Annual Minority Health Fair

The Florida Department of Health in Citrus County is hosting a free community National Minority Health Month event. The event will bring awareness to differences in health outcomes and ways to improve individual and overall community health.

Saturday, April 5, 2025

10 a.m. - Noon

**Central Ridge Community Center
77 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills, FL 34465**

No-Cost Health Screenings and Safety Education

Giveaways and gift card raffles will be held every 15 minutes.

- Blood pressure screening
- Glucose and A1C checks
- Nutrition education and hemoglobin check
- Local health provider information
- Car seat information
- Safe sleep for babies information
- Breastfeeding information



For more information, contact
Kathryn.DeFranco@FLhealth.gov
352-513-6083

Florida
HEALTH
Citrus County



Maxine Connor, Natural Resources Chair

FLORIDA SPRINGS - BOOK SIGNING AND TALK BY DR. CHRIS MEINDL, PHD, AT SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEETUP, MARCH 12TH – PUBLIC IS WELCOME - Attend in Person or Remotely

Add a book to your 2024 reading list: *Florida Springs* by Dr. Chris Meindl, PhD. Dr. Meindl will be the featured speaker at the March 12th 7 pm monthly meetup of the Sierra Adventure Coast Group at the South Brooksville Community Center, 601 East Doctor Martin Luther King Blvd., Brooksville, FL.

He will talk about his new book, *Florida Springs: From Geography to Politics and Restoration*, available for purchase, followed by a book signing. Dr. Meindl is an associate professor of geography and director of the Florida Studies Program at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. You can participate in person or on Zoom. More information and to register if attending remotely:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00000bNtBUIA0&mapLinkHref=https://maps.google.com/maps&daddr=Adventure%20Coast%20Meet%20Up%20with%20Dr.%20Christopher%20Meindl@28.545848,-82.380198>

NEXT LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FLORIDA (LWVFL) CLEAN ENERGY ACTION TEAM MONTHLY ZOOM MEETING – WED., MARCH 19, 5-6 PM GUEST SPEAKER MIA BRADY OF THE NONPROFIT SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS (“SUN”) WILL EXPLAIN THE NEW SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS SOLAR SWITCH PROGRAM – A NEW CONCEPT IN SOLAR CO-OPS

Invitations will be sent to all League of Women Voters of Citrus County members, LWVFL natural resources chairs/advocates and others. You can share your invitation with others. The public is invited. Anyone else wanting to register to join the online meeting, please email maxineconnor@gmail.com for the link to register.

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>

It has a companion bill: HB 209 State Land Management

<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.

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

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

ACTION ALERT FROM FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL: TAKE ACTION NOW:

<https://floridaspringscouncil.good.do/2025legislativesession/Amend-SB-80-HB-209/>

Use the form letter which you can modify to your liking and when you press “Send my email” it will be sent to your state representative and senator. It asks that they support but strengthen the State Park Preservation Act: SB 80: State Land Management and HB 209: State Land Management. As of this writing (2/26/25), there is vague language and loopholes that would allow the very development of our state parks that we want to prevent.

Latest Status of SB80: Passed its first committee in the Senate. Now in Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government (since 2/13/2025)

Latest Status of HB 209: Now in Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee as of 1/22/25.

FROM THE FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL

Become an informed member – sign up for free for their email list to get action alerts to your Inbox. Good idea as Legislative Session runs from 3/4/25 to 5/2/25.

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

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 Florida website:

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

LEAGUE MEMBER META CALDER OF THE TALLAHASSEE LEAGUE CONDUCTED A TRAINING ON THE ONLINE SUNSHINE FLORIDA WEBSITE AT THE FEBRUARY LWVFL CLEAN ENERGY ACTION TEAM ZOOM

Meta Calder of the Tallahassee League conducted a tutorial on how to 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. Email maxineconnor@gmail.com for a link to the video recording of the meeting/tutorial.

The Online Sunshine website is:

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

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

IMPORTANT NOTE: THE FIRST INITIATIVE PETITION DID NOT MEET THE THRESHOLD CRITERIA TO MAKE THE BALLOT – THIS IS A NEW UPDATED PETITION – DATE APPROVED 03/08/2024, SERIAL NUMER 2403 – DESTROY PRIOR DATED PETITIONS – USE THE PETITIONS THAT SAY “VOLUNTEER” AT THE TOP

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, sign up for email notifications, and print the petitions:

<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.

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

“The Springs Summit is held every other year and brings together springs advocates to discuss the policy, law, and communications strategies that will advance the springs conservation movement.

The sold-out 2025 Summit took place at Stetson Law in Gulfport on February 8.

The next Springs Summit is scheduled for 2027.”

See the League of Women Voters of Citrus County featured on the FSC website as one of the sponsors because LWVCC is a member of this coalition. Our LWVCC logo was also nicely placed on the back of the FSC tee shirts (along with the other member organizations). The tee shirts were sold as a fundraiser before and at the event.

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

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 took legal action against 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) took legal action 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, 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 – APPLICATION IS DEEMED CONTINUED BY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION on 2/20/25

PUD2663 & DA2024-00002 Atty. Batsel for Beverly Hills Development LLC and Tuscany Ranch 491, LLC

The attorney for Tuscany Ranch requested a continuance at February 20th PDC hearing to clean up language in the developer’s agreement. The original development of regional impact (DRI) includes 2,233 acres and 2,400 dwelling units already constructed. It was amended 23 times since it started in 1981, most recently in 2021. Metro is proposing to use 1,070 of the 2,233 acres. Of the 4,933 housing units, 1,250 would be duplex, condo, townhouse or apartment units and the rest would be single-family houses. A town center with commerce and administrative offices would use 120 acres with 20 acres put aside for recreational use. The project includes an optional 400 life care center units.

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.

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

Update: Latest Chronicle article as of this writing:
https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/tuscany-ranch-receives-continuance-from-pdc/article_17eb95f3-2be9-5c22-b869-29a9c44c3dc1.html

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>

UPDATE ON LAND SWAP DEAL TO OBTAIN STATE FOREST LAND IN HERNANDO COUNTY FOR GOLF NO ACTION AS OF 2/26/25

According to the 2025 Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) calendar for 2025, the last meeting was scheduled for February 14, 2025, at the DEP in Tallahassee. The land swap deal was not on the calendar for that meeting, and no further meetings have been scheduled yet as of 2/26/25.

The item of the land swap deal has not been on the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) agenda since the issue came up.

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 took place on February 7th at the Board of County Commissioners Chamber, in Inverness. Our delegation for Citrus County consisted of

Senator Blaise Ingoglia, District 11, and Representative J.J. Grow, District 23. The purpose of this meeting was 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. I spoke for Sierra Club Adventure Coast and Rosemary Nilles spoke for League of Women Voters of Citrus County. I spoke about:

Florida State Parks: Support legislation to prevent the development of resorts, golf courses and other inappropriate use of lands within our award-winning Florida State Parks.

Florida Forever: Support generous funding for the state's exemplary, transparent, and established process for conservation land acquisition to meet the increased need for conservation lands.

Rural and Family Lands Program: Support funding to purchase conservation easements to protect environmentally significant lands from development.

Springs Restoration: Increase funding significantly to slow the degradation of Florida's springs, rivers, and groundwater resources. Springs restoration has been underfunded at \$50 million per year, the minimum allowable.

Strengthen Environmental Laws: Penalizing those who challenge state and local rulings has a chilling effect on citizens who seek justice on decisions that endanger Florida's environment, wildlife, and water resources.

Clean Energy: Promote the transition to clean energy in the Sunshine State with opportunities, not restrictions, on rooftop solar, electric vehicles and charging equipment, and use of clean, renewable energy.

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) wrote 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 will 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-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.)

African American Read-in, February 23, 2025

The African American Read-in was very successful. It included moving excerpts from many African-American authors. League members Dr. BJ Ezell and Vicky Iozzia were proud to be readers.

