



May 2026

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CITRUS COUNTY

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](http://lwvcitrus.org) Our email address is [lwvcc2013@gmail.com](mailto:lwvcc2013@gmail.com)

Our May 13, 2026 meeting features Debra Stanley, Director of Career and Technical Education for Citrus County Schools and Meet and Greet for School Board candidates. It will be at the **Coastal Region Library** and begins at 10am. See Page 5

Our June 10, 2026 meeting features Barbara Ventito from the Homeless Coalition, and the Board of Commissioners candidates. It will be at the Coastal Region Library and begins at 10 am. See Page 6

SEE PAGES 7 AND 8 FOR THE LINEUP OF MEETINGS FOR THE REST OF THIS YEAR!

Please visit our Facebook page and "like" us!

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

We want to thank the following businesses for their cooperation: FGE Printing, Citrus County Chronicle, Pinnacle Printing

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE BOARD MEMBERS WHO DO SUCH A GREAT JOB EVERY MONTH CONTRIBUTING

TO THIS NEWSLETTER! THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO READ THIS. YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME!

## **Table of Contents May 2026**

May Holidays	Page 3
May Events	Page 4
May meeting, Debra Stanley	Page 5
June meeting, Barbara Venditto	Page 6
Tentative meeting schedule	Page 7
Offices up for election	Page 8
Linda Abels	Page 9
Vicky Iozzia, elected officers	Pages 10 to 11
Outreach activities	Page 12
Peg's award!	Page 13
Peg, July 4, Mary Cassatt	Pages 14 to 17
Rosemary Nilles	Pages 18 to 19
County meetings	Page 20
Information for legislators	Page 21
From Mo Baird, Supervisor of Elections	Page 22
Speaker's Bureau	Page 23
Monthly Social	Page 24
From the LWV Impact on Issues, voter rep.	Pages 25 to 26
African American Read-In	Page 27
In the news	Pages 28 to 34
Jan Hall – Memories	Pages 35 to 37
Maxine Connor	Pages 38 to 47

# HAPPY MAY EVERYONE!



## MAY HOLIDAYS

- 1-May Day
- 2-Brother & Sisters Day
- 4- Kentucky Derby Day (first Saturday)
- 4-Star Wars Day
- 5-Cinco De Mayo
- 5- Ramadan (varies)
- 6-National Nurses Day
- 8- No Socks Day
- 10- Clean Up Your Room Day
- 11- Eat What You Want Day
- 12- Mother's Day (2nd Sunday)
- 15- National Chocolate Chip Day
- 17- National Bike to Work Day (3rd Friday)
- 18- Armed Forces Day (3rd Saturday)
- 18-No Dirty Dishes Day
- 19- World Plant a Veggie Garden Day
- 21- Victoria Day (Canada)
- 22-National Buy A Musical instrument Day
- 23- Lucky Penny Day
- 25- National Brown Bag It Day
- 26-Sally Ride Day
- 27-Memorial Day (last Monday)
- 28-National Hamburger Day
- 30-Water a Flower Day

SOSESSTIVE.COM

Pin THIS AWESOME IDEA!

### Events in May 2026

Grid List Month Week Day
May 2026 Go
< Previous Today Next >

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting  4:00 pm: Citrus County School Board meeting	13	14	15	16 10:00 am: Annual Florida Emancipation Farmers Market
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting	27	28	29	30
31						

May 27 – Social at Cattle Dog Restaurant

This calendar is from our website:  
[Lwvcitrus.org](http://Lwvcitrus.org)

*League of Women Voters of Citrus County invites the public to a special meeting on education, focusing on:*

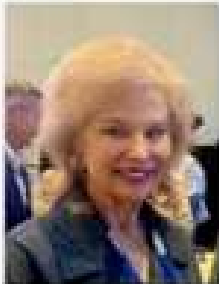
**Career & Technical Education in  
Citrus County Schools**

followed by

**Meet & Greet for Candidates for School Board**

**Wednesday, May 13 at 10:00 AM**

Coastal Region Library  
8619 W Crystal St., Crystal River, FL 34428



- *Featured guest speaker is Debra H. Stanley, Director of Career & Technical Education (CTE) for Citrus County Schools.* She will discuss local vocational opportunities, including programs in Health Sciences, IT, and Agriculture offered through Withlacoochee Technical College.



- *Meet and Greet for Candidates for Citrus County School Board.* Candidates for Districts 1, 3, and 5 will briefly introduce themselves and share their ideas and plans. Following introductions, each candidate may answer individual questions at their own tables and informational material.

This meeting is part of a series of outreach events to educate the public on important community topics and to prepare for upcoming elections. The Public is invited. For more information, please email [lwvcc2013@gmail.com](mailto:lwvcc2013@gmail.com). Visit [lwvcitrus.org](http://lwvcitrus.org) and Facebook page "League of Women Voters of Citrus County."

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

*Get ready for 2026 elections with LWV Citrus!*

**Meet & Greet for Candidates for Citrus County Board of Commissioners, Districts 2, 4**

**Speaker:**

**Barbara Venditto, Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition**

**Wednesday June 10**

**10:00-11:30 AM**

**Coastal Region Library**

**8619 W Crystal St. Crystal River**



**Barbara Venditto is Executive Director of Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition.** She will speak about the issue of homelessness in Citrus County.



**Meet & Greet for Candidates for Citrus County Board of Commissioners, Districts 2, 4**

**Diana Finegan & Stacey Worthington (2)  
Rebecca Bays & Hollie Herndon (4)**

Each candidate will have 3 minutes to introduce themselves. Candidates may interact with participants following this part of the meeting.



*A nonpartisan, grassroots organization,  
empowering voters and defending  
democracy.*



We are planning some exciting meetings for the rest of 2025. So that you can put the events in your calendar, here are the flyers.



**Get ready for 2026 elections with LWV Citrus!**

**LWV Citrus will offer Candidate Meet & Greet Meetings,  
May through September 2026**

**All Meetings: Second Wednesdays of the Month**

**10:00-11:30 AM**

**Coastal Region Library  
8619 W Crystal St. Crystal River**

Each meeting will begin with a featured speaker. After the speaker, each candidate will have three minutes to introduce themselves and share their ideas and plans. No audience questions will be taken at that time. Following all introductions, participants will be free to interact with candidates at their respective tables.

<b>May 13</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Speaker: Debra Stanley, Citrus County School District</b> <b>Candidates for Citrus County School Board Districts 1, 3, 5</b> Thomas Kennedy, Mike Mullen, Joe Faherty, and any other candidates for Districts 1, 3, & 5
<b>June 10</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Speaker: Barbara Venditto, Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition</b> <b>Candidates for Citrus County Board of Commissioners, Districts 2, 4</b> Diana Finegan & Stacey Worthington (2); Rebecca Bays & Holli Herndon (4)
<b>July 8</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Speaker: Dr. Don Wright, Author, The Invading Sea</b> <b>Candidates for FL House of Representatives District 23</b> JJ Grow, Tod Cloud
<b>Aug. 12</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Speaker: TBD</b> <b>Candidates for 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit District Court of Appeal and</b> <b>Candidates for 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Judge</b> (names will be provided)
<b>Sept. 9</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Speaker: TBD</b> <b>Candidates for US House of Representatives</b> Gus Bilirakis or Samantha June, Chris Irizarry, Branden Scrivener
<b>Oct. 14</b> <b>10:00</b>	<b>Special Session: Get Ready to Vote!</b> <b>LWVCC speakers</b> will explain the Amendments to the Florida Constitution that will appear on our ballots. <b>Maureen "Mo" Baird</b> , Citrus County Supervisor of Elections will speak about election security and other details.



***A nonpartisan, grassroots organization, empowering voters and defending democracy.***

**State Representative (Citrus County)**

District	Candidate	Status	Primary	General
23	<a href="#">Cloud, Tod Gordon</a> (REP)	Active		
	<a href="#">Grow, J.J.</a> (REP) *Incumbent	Active		

**District Court of Appeal (Citrus County)**

District	Candidate	Status	Primary	General
5	<a href="#">Wallis, F. Rand</a> (NOP)	Active		

**Circuit Judge (Citrus County)**

Circuit / Group	Candidate	Status	Primary	General
5 / 2	<a href="#">Welke, Brian J.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 3	<a href="#">Hatcher, Mary P.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 10	<a href="#">Jerald, R. Gregg</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 12	<a href="#">Mosley, Danny Ray</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 14	<a href="#">King, Brad</a> (NOP)	Active		
5 / 17	<a href="#">McCourt, Timothy T.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 18	<a href="#">Herndon, Lisa Diane</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 24	<a href="#">Youmans, Stacy M.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 26	<a href="#">Helm, Charles L.W.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		
5 / 27	<a href="#">Yeager, Lisa</a> (NOP)	Active		
5 / 28	<a href="#">Baxley, James R.</a> (NOP) *Incumbent	Active		

**United States Representative (Citrus County)**

District	Candidate	Status	Primary	General
12	<a href="#">Bilirakis, Gus M.</a> (REP) *Incumbent	Active		
	<a href="#">Irizarry, Christopher</a> (DEM)	Active		
	<a href="#">June, Samantha Elizabeth</a> (REP)	Active		
	<a href="#">Scrivener, Branden</a> (NPA)	Active		



## Linda Abels, Membership Chair, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

As we look toward the 2026 elections, the League's mission to **"Defend Democracy"** has never been more vital. Membership is more than just a title—it is a commitment to ensuring every voice in our community is heard. Whether you are passionate about voter turnout, redistricting, or nonpartisan education, there is a place for you in this mission.

We have a busy season ahead. While summer is often a time to relax, our work is ramping up this spring and summer. We are hosting Candidate Meet-and-Greets and representing the LWVCC at various local events. We would love to see you there—whether you're helping us table or simply showing up to represent the League.

Looking toward the fall, we are already preparing for our monthly meetings, speaker luncheons, and Zoom coordination. Even if you only have an hour or two a month to spare, your contribution makes a difference.

Think back to why you first joined the LWVCC. We invite you to reconnect with that passion and help us defend democracy. Let us know how you'd like to get involved!

We want to welcome two new members, **Rachel Cornett** and **Susan Straley**.

Have a great month,

Linda



**Vicky Iozzia, 1<sup>st</sup> President, Newsletter Editor,  
Webmaster, Speakers Bureau Chair**

Hello, fellow League of Women Voters members! League members know right from wrong, truth from lies, and spin from honest reporting. We inform ourselves and we care about our country. Whether we are in the minority or the majority, we keep our moral focus steady. We act. We do not overreact.

These are difficult times for many. Not only is our country participating in a needless war, but many are also suffering the economic effects of that war. First amendment rights are being ignored by governments. Yet many elected officials are paralyzed with fear: that they will be “primaried” and lose their jobs, that the wrath of those in charge will ruin their reputation, or they are afraid to be leaders.

What can we do? History shows us that we should not cower in fear. We need to act decisively and wisely. We can’t acquiesce when people in power go against everything we have been fighting for: First Amendment rights, women’s rights, civil rights. We can’t accept that all of a sudden DEI is a dirty word to some, that people are being excluded from the process because of their gender, or color of their skin, or their sexual orientation, or because they disagree. There is a theory of the “3-5% rule” happens, if 3.5 percent of the population becomes involved in a movement, political change will come.

There were around eight million people protesting throughout the country at the last “No Kings” March 28, 2026. There was no violence. People made their own signs to express their grievances.

I remember protesting the war in Vietnam, and sometimes feeling like it would never end. We did help the war end, as ugly as it was.

Please continue to fight in whatever way you can: call or elected officials, email or write to them, and don't do it just once. Do it repeatedly. Keep yourself educated so that when others are ready to listen you will be ready to communicate.

The time has passed where we can sit on the sidelines. With what has happened, it wouldn't surprise me if an attempt was made to cancel the midterm elections.

The only way to deal with a bully is to stand up , not by ourselves, but all together, and tell them "No, we won't put up with it any more!"

.....

**At our March meeting our slate of officers was elected. We are:**

**1<sup>st</sup> President Vicky Iozzia**

**2<sup>nd</sup> President Peg Primeau**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Rosemary Nilles**

**2<sup>nd</sup> vice President Linda Abels**

**Secretary Jeanne Messersmith**

**Co-Treasurers Devora Stager and Peg Primeau (Devora is moving so Peg will also be our treasurer effective May 1)**

**I urge you to reach out to the Board so that we can get to know you, get your feedback, and have more people to work together.**



## Saturday, April 18, Earth Day in Citrus County

Peg Primeau, Jeanne Messersmith, Maxine Conner, and Vicky Iozzia represented the League at this event.

These events are important, because we meet new people, get to talk to members, and get our name out there. The more people we have working with us, the more we can do.



## Saturday, April 25, 2026, Healthy Kids outreach.

Peg Primeau are all smiles, and volunteers Debbie Manning and Delinda Beem helped wo-man the table at this event.

**We are so proud to announce the award that was won by our very own Peg Primeau, who is on the editorial board for the Chronicle. Be sure to congratulate her at our next meeting.**



2026 FSNE Journalism Contest  
List of Winners

**11. Editorials**

**Division A**

**1st Place**

**Krys Fluker**

Orlando Sentinel

State Paints Over Pulse Crosswalk

**2nd Place**

**Staff**

South Florida Sun Sentinel

South Florida Sun Sentinel Editorials

**3rd Place**

**Krys Fluker**

Orlando Sentinel

Cory Mills' Problems

**Division C**

**1st Place**

**Staff**

Citrus County Chronicle

Editorials. Peggy Primeau

**2nd Place**

**John Hackworth**

The Daily Sun

Editorials 2025

**3rd Place**

**Laurence Reisman, Blake Fontenay, Adam**

**Neal**

TCPalm - Treasure Coast Newspapers

Collection

**g!**



## **Peg Primeau, 2<sup>nd</sup> President, Reproductive Health & Justice Chair**

### **The other thing that is significant about July 4, 2026**

Last summer, when Congress passed the OBBBA, the Trump administration was able to “defund” Planned Parenthood for one year.

The law blocked the use of federally-funded Medicaid coverage for patients for all services at Planned Parenthood health centers. That included essential health care services such as primary care, birth control, cancer screenings, and wellness exams.

The OBBBA law is set to expire after one year—on July 4, 2026. Sixty-nine percent of Americans oppose continuing to “defund” Planned Parenthood, but Republican politicians are trying to make it permanent.

That will leave patients with nowhere else to turn. As one patient said, “these nonprofit clinics are my only source of health care.” Nearly half of all counties in the United States do not have a practicing OB-GYN, and 58% of women in rural counties do not have an OB-GYN in the county where they live.

For many American women, there are no alternative providers to be found, and when a Planned Parenthood center closes, their primary care or prenatal care simply ends.

“Defunding Planned Parenthood is stripping millions of Americans of essential health care services, while simultaneously raising costs, worsening health outcomes, and further stressing a health care system

already under considerable strain. The damage has been significant.”

-

--from “The Defund Disaster” by Sen. Elizabeth Warren and colleagues, March 2026. For the full report, search the title of the report, or go to Sen. Warren’s website.

Published in the Citrus County Chronicle, written by Peg Primeau:

Report card for Tally on managing education dollars

April 17, 2026

Well below standards. Needs improvement. Close supervision recommended.

Fiscal accountability in Florida’s school-choice system has been abysmal. As explained in the April 4 column from the League of Women Voters, the Auditor General’s report on the voucher program revealed a shortfall of \$398 million last year. The Department of Education (DOE) lost track of \$270 million and made overpayments for about 30,000 voucher students.

Such loose ledger-keeping of public funds is a scandal in itself. However, the wayward money also signifies per-pupil underfunding for public schools. For example, because recipient tracking was poor, “scholarship” money did not follow voucher students when they chose to return to public school.

While the Florida DOE relies on (private) Scholarship Funding Organizations to administer vouchers, it is still responsible for oversight. Perhaps the DOE was overwhelmed when voucher eligibility became universal. Perhaps too many private schools popped up all of a sudden. Then again, whose idea was it to grow the school-choice program so fast?

Here’s what makes this saga of lost taxpayer dollars especially galling. The DeSantis administration, represented by CFO Blaise Ingoglia, has been targeting communities and agencies around Florida. The CFO arbitrarily accuses them of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Mind you, this is the same administration that got into legal hot water over the Hope Florida charity. The charge was diversion of \$10 million in Medicaid funds to partisan ads and lobbying during the 2024 election.

“Hypocrisy” doesn’t quite capture how offensive it is to voters to see mismanagement on this scale by the state and, in the next moment, watch their local government

skewered just for headlines.

Back to the DOE: Clearly, the voucher system needs to be fixed. When the Auditor General released its scathing report last fall, some of our elected representatives took notice and took action. They drew up Senate Bill 318, an overhaul of the voucher system. The Senate unanimously passed it on Jan. 14, the second day of the 2026 legislative session.

Way to go, senators. This bill addressed fiscal accountability in school choice via more accurate student tracking, regular verification of enrollment, more frequent audits and better documentation for vouchers. It separated funding for public schools from school-choice scholarships.

Then the ball was totally dropped. The House never took up SB 318 or any alternative. With no explanation, the GOP leadership turned its back on fixing school-choice accounting.

Report card for the House: Incomplete. The record will show a Failing grade if the assignment remains unfinished.

Representatives will convene again on April 20 for the special session called by the governor. Their agenda includes debating congressional redistricting, a property tax amendment and (for sure) submitting a state budget. It's possible for the House to redeem itself here. The DOE's fiscal-accountability problem is integral to the final budget. If the political will is there, if constituents convey their outrage, House members ought to revive the provisions in SB 318.

When they do, they'll get a passing grade. Then it's up to the governor to do the right thing.

Also from Peg: "I was chatting with my substitute hair stylist who asked what keeps me busy (LWV). Then the conversation became very confusing. How her husband would be "so excited," and her grandmother was "the first female captain" on the Nature Coast, etc.

Finally, I realized she thought I had said the [League of Women Boaters](#). A different but appealing brand, I guess. And we are not through yet! Here's another golden nugget from Peg!

**Mary Cassatt's "Woman With a Sunflower"** Washington Post, April 17, 2026

Painted circa 1905, this work shows a naked girl sitting on a woman's lap, a hand mirror held up to reflect the child's face, and a large sunflower pinned to the woman's gown, the sleeves of which echo the vibrant gold of the flower.

Just another tender mother and daughter scene? Perhaps not.... Maybe the picture does not center a maternal relationship after all, [art historian Nicole] Georgopoulos argues, but rather an intergenerational metaphor: Tomorrow sitting on the lap of the Today....

Could that sunflower, rather than being a mere ornament — several of Cassatt's women wear blooms — be sending a message? Georgopoulos thinks so. When Cassatt made the painting, the sunflower was the official symbol of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and gold was one of the colors associated with the movement. Their inclusion by Cassatt, a fierce advocate for the women's suffrage movement — which was, by 1905, in full flower — is probably no accident.

As for the mirror, held at such an angle that the girl is gazing at us, the viewers, Georgopoulos sees it not as a symbol of vanity, but of “female creative potential.”

In 1914, on the eve of World War I, Cassatt wrote to a friend, the feminist art collector and philanthropist Louisine Havemeyer: “If the world is to be saved, it will be the women who save it.” American women — or at least White American women — would not get the vote until 1920. But looking at Cassatt's powerful painting, you can see, in the face of that girl, a reflection of Cassatt's fervent hope, if not conviction, that the future would be female.





## **Rosemary Nilles, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres,**

### **Say No to Mid-Decade Redistricting (By the time you read this, will it be approved?)**

What's going on in Tallahassee?

Back in January, Governor DeSantis called for a special legislative session on Congressional Redistricting to take place April 20-24. Last week, he unexpectedly postponed it until next week, April 28 – May 1. He also added new items to the agenda, including AI and vaccine policies.

All this instead of passing the required budget.

How did this happen?

Redistricting typically happens after the decennial census. The push for mid-decade redistricting began last summer, following the President's public request for Texas to draw new Congressional maps. His stated purpose was to obtain five more seats in the US House for his party, prior to the 2026 mid-term elections. Several other states followed.

Governor DeSantis began his call for redistricting in Florida last July, following the Florida Supreme Court's decision to uphold the maps he drew in 2022.

Recent comments made to the media by multiple elected officials at federal and state levels appear to indicate that the motivation to push mid-decade redistricting comes from a partisan intent to favor one party over another.

The problem is, that's illegal in Florida. Back in 2010, 63% of Florida voters voted to pass the Fair Districts Amendments to the Florida Constitution. These amendments strictly forbid district lines to be drawn to favor one political party over another.

That's only one reason that League of Women Voters of Citrus County (LWVCC) opposes mid-decade redistricting in Florida.

- There is no active court order requiring Florida's Legislature to redraw the current congressional district maps.

- Changing electoral boundaries ahead of an election lets politicians choose their voters, instead of voters choosing their representatives.
- Further, it confuses voters.
- With primary elections fast approaching, this creates needless burdens for SOEs, candidates, and citizens.
  
- Mid-decade redistricting will be incredibly expensive! Florida taxpayers foot the bill for special sessions. Travel, hotels, meals, and per diem for legislators and their staffs add up to about \$50,000 per day!
- Floridians expect their elected leaders to focus on the kitchen table issues affecting voters' daily lives, not diverting millions in precious taxpayer dollars to a rushed and unconstitutional redistricting process.
- Recent polls show that Florida voters, regardless of party, oppose this move to redistrict.

There's still time to contact our state legislators and tell them to uphold their oaths to the US and Florida Constitutions. Tell them to *Say No to Mid-Decade Redistricting*. Visit [flhouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative](http://flhouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative) to get started.

**League of Women Voters of Citrus County**  
**April 21, 2026**

## County Meetings

### **YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

■ District 1 (Crystal River, Ozello, Citronelle, Red Level): Jeff Kinnard, [jeff.kinnard@citrusbocc.com](mailto:jeff.kinnard@citrusbocc.com)

■ District 2 (Homosassa, Sugarmill Woods): Diana Finegan, [diana.finegan@citrusbocc.com](mailto:diana.finegan@citrusbocc.com)

■ District 3 (Beverly Hills, Pine Ridge, Citrus Springs): Janet Berek, [janet.berek@citrusbocc.com](mailto:janet.berek@citrusbocc.com)

■ District 4 (Floral City, part of Inverness): Rebecca Bays, [rebecca.bays@citrusbocc.com](mailto:rebecca.bays@citrusbocc.com)

■ District 5 (part of Inverness, Hernando, Arrowhead): Holly L. Davis, [holly.davis@citrusbocc.com](mailto:holly.davis@citrusbocc.com)

NOTE: Correspondences, including email, are public records once received by commissioners or county staff.

### **Community Meetings March – June 2026**

#### **Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)**

**1:00 PM 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays (note exceptions!):**

**May 12 & 26, June 11 (Thurs), June 22 (Mon), July 14 & 28**

Citrus County Courthouse, 110 Apopka Ave. Inverness

#### **Agenda & watch meetings online:**

Citrus County BOCC/Departments/Commissioners

Meetings are livestreamed on the Citrus County Government  
You Tube Channel.

Broadcast live: Comcast - Channel 71, Spectrum - Channel  
643

#### **Find all county meeting dates:**

<https://citrusclerk.org/calendar.aspx>

#### **\*\*Governing Body of the Special Library District\*\***

**Wed. July 22, 8:30 AM;** Citrus County Courthouse, Inverness

#### **Citrus County Library Advisory Board (Regular Meetings)**

**9:00 AM, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays: June 23**

Lecanto Gov't Bldg., 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto 34461

#### **For more information:**

Citrus County/BOCC/Special Library Board

<https://citrusclerk.org/calendar.aspx>

#### **Citrus County Schools District (CCSD) School Board**

**Regular Meetings: 4:00 PM, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues: May 12, June 9, July 14**

**Workshops: 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 9:00 AM** check calendar

1007 Main St. Inverness 34450

#### **Agenda & watch meetings online:**

Citrus County School District/School Board tab/ Board

Agenda and Minutes:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/citrus/Board.nsf/Public>

View School Board Meetings:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CitrusSchools>

**State Legislators Representing Citrus  
Contact Information:**

**Sen. Ralph Massullo, FL Senate Dist. 11:**

Inverness 352-666-5707 Tallahassee 850-487-5011

Email: [massullo.ralph.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:massullo.ralph.web@flsenate.gov)

**Rep. JJ Grow, FL Dist. 23:**

Inverness 352-560-6075. Tallahassee 850-717-5023

Email: [jj.grow@flhouse.gov](mailto:jj.grow@flhouse.gov)

**US Senators and Representative Representing Citrus  
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

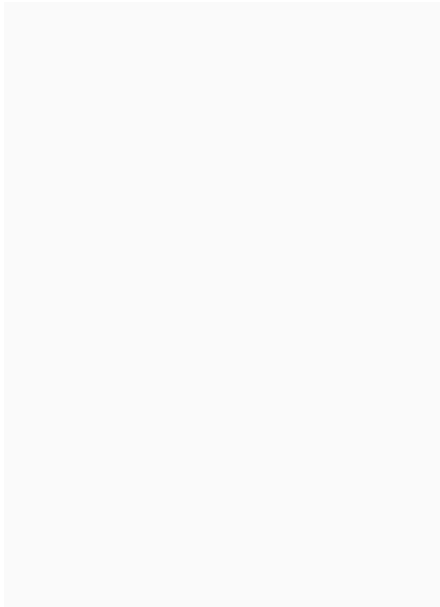
Contact via Senate Website: <https://www.moody.senate.gov/>

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

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

**US Capital Switchboard:** 202-224-3121 to contact any federal legislator.

# From our Supervisor of Elections, Maureen “Mo” Baird



**ELECTION DATES**

**2025 ELECTIONS**  
Special Primary Election - September 30th, 2025  
**Last Day to Register or Change your Party - Sept. 2nd, 2025**  
Special General Election - December 9th, 2025  
**Last Day to Register - November 10th, 2025**

**2026 ELECTIONS**  
Primary Election - August 18, 2026  
**Last Day to Register or Change your Party - July 20, 2026**  
General Election - November 3, 2026  
**Last Day to Register - October 5, 2026**

**VOTE BY MAIL**  
When returning your ballot by U.S. Mail, please allow at least 7 days for delivery. The return postage is prepaid.

**POLLS OPEN**  
7am - 7pm Election Day



## VOTE-BY-MAIL REQUESTS HAVE EXPIRED

FLORIDA STATUTE §101.62(1)a

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:** Supervisor of Elections, Maureen “Mo” Baird, reminds voters that Vote-by-Mail requests expire on December 31st after each election cycle.

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

 If you have not already requested a Vote-by-Mail ballot after January 1, 2025, you may do so today by scanning the QR code below.



Or visit the Supervisor of Elections website at [www.votecitrus.gov](http://www.votecitrus.gov) and select “Request a Vote by Mail Ballot” under the “Vote by Mail” tab.

**SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS:** Maureen “Mo” Baird

**ELECTIONS OFFICE:** The Supervisor of Elections Office is located at 1500 N. Meadowcrest Blvd, Crystal River, in the West Citrus Government Center.

**QUESTIONS:** Call 352-564-7120.

56107267

## Speaker's Bureau

**Rosemary Nilles is co-chair of the Florida Speakers Bureau  
Vicky Iozzia is the chair of the LWV Citrus Speakers Bureau**

If your organization is interested in having a speaker, contact Vicky Iozzia at  
vickyiozzia@gmail.com



### Speakers Bureau

Our well-prepared speakers are available to speak at your events and meetings. We offer up-to-date, nonpartisan educational presentations on a variety of current topics including:

#### Voting and Elections Presentations

- Your Local Power: State & Local Government (Citrus)
- Protecting Your Voting Rights
- Say No to Mid-Decade Redistricting
- Election Security vs Access: A Delicate Balance
- Your Voice. Your Vote. Your Power.
- Write-In Loophole
- Voting Rights for Returning Citizens
- Florida's Constitutional Amendments (summer 2026)
- Preparing for the 2026 Elections (summer 2026)

#### Civics Presentations

- The US Constitution
- Separation of Powers/Checks and Balances
- From Idea to Law: Understanding Florida's Legislative Process
- Interacting with Elected Officials and their Staffs
- Immigration
- Identifying and Combating False Information
- Disinformation: Spot it! Stop it!
- What Is the League of Women Voters?
- Why Public Schools Matter
- Understanding School Choice

Presentations can be customized to your time and audience. Contact Vicky Iozzia, [vickyiozzia@gmail.com](mailto:vickyiozzia@gmail.com) or go to our website, [www.lwvcitrus.org](http://www.lwvcitrus.org) to receive a Speaker Request form.



*League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, never endorsing opposing political parties or candidates, and encouraging informed, active participation in government.*



This is from our April 22 Social.  
**Come join us for our Monthly Social!** Have a  
cup of something or a snack.  
Join the conversation or listen.  
Our next meeting is at the Cattle Dog Restaurant  
in Inverness, 4:00,  
**Wednesday, May 27, 2026**

## From the new League of Women Voters Impact on Issue

### Voter Representation/Electoral Systems

#### The League's Position

---

*Statement of Position on Voter Representation/Electoral Systems as adopted by concurrence by the 54th Convention in June 2020:*

LWVUS promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. We encourage electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible and are expressive of voter choices.

Whether for single- or multiple-winner contests, the League supports electoral methods that:

- Encourage voter participation and voter engagement.
- Encourage those with minority opinions to participate, including under-represented communities.
- Are verifiable and auditable.
- Promote access to voting.
- Maximize effective votes/minimize wasted votes.
- Promote sincere voting over strategic voting.
- Implement alternatives to plurality voting.
- Are compatible with acceptable ballot-casting methods, including vote-by-mail.



The LWVUS believes in representative government. The League supports electoral systems that elect policy-making bodies – legislatures, councils, commissions, and boards – that proportionally reflect the people they represent. We support systems that inhibit political manipulation (e.g., gerrymandering).

The LWVUS supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative electoral methods, as well as supporting state election laws allowing for more options at both the state and local levels. With the adoption of any electoral system, the League believes that education of the voting public is important and funding for startup and voter education should be available. We encourage a concerted voter education process.

## League History

The League has positions on a multitude of public policy issues decided by our elected representatives. However, until the adoption of this position, it did not have a position on how we elect the representatives that make those public policy decisions. Over time, 14 Leagues have conducted studies and developed positions supporting alternatives to the plurality system. This position is a compilation of positions adopted by state and local Leagues in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Maine, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, and Washington, as well as Santa Monica, CA, and established LWVUS principles on representation.

This position does not support any particular election method but rather supports the League goals for "an open, governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive." It allows for Leagues to use the position to evaluate or propose electoral options. This position provides us with a clear but flexible base of principles to explore election method reforms and take action when appropriate for voters. Moving forward, LWVUS will work with state and local Leagues to interpret and use the position, but some basic guidelines for use include:

- LWVUS could use this position to support or oppose federal legislation.
- State Leagues can use it to support or oppose state legislation.
- Local Leagues can use it to propose or evaluate an electoral system proposed in their community.
- Local Leagues can propose or support a suitable election method as a remedy to voting rights lawsuits filed when a protected group is underrepresented by the current system.

At the start of 2022, LWVUS launched a legislative office hours series to answer state/local Leagues' questions about LWVUS positions. One common theme was ranked choice voting (RCV). LWVUS has not supported legislation at the federal level to institute RCV across the board. However, LWVUS encourages state and local Leagues to use the Voter Representation/Electoral Systems position – specifically, the line that recommends informing their advocacy around state and local legislation and ballot initiatives – with regard to the use of RCV locally. State and local Leagues have used the position to support RCV in communities and jurisdictions along with their own positions.

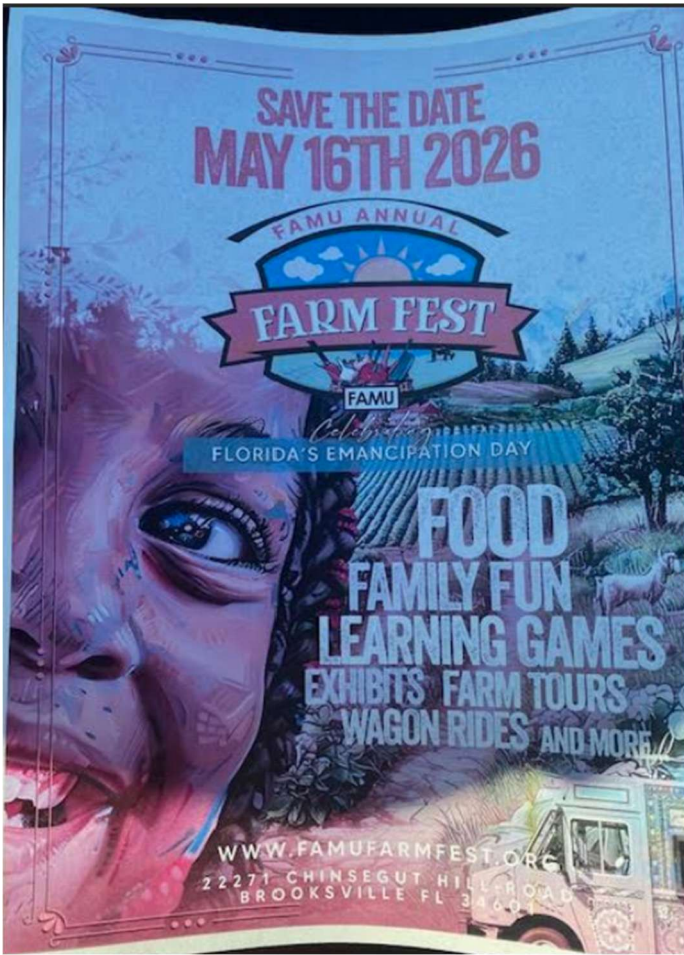
## African American Read-in

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Read-in took place on Sunday, February 22, 2026, at the Curtis Peterson Auditorium. It was a well-executed presentation which was positive and often emotionally moving.

I will be including the literary pieces which were read in future newsletters. Once a year is not enough to enjoy this literature.



# IN THE NEWS



**ANNUAL Florida Emancipation Day & FAMU Farm Fest**  
 Saturday, May 16, 2026 -10 am to 5 pm

Fun for the Whole Family • History • Tours • Demonstrations  
 Agri-Showcase • Health Expo • Entertainment • Food • Music

On May 20, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was announced in Tallahassee, Florida. Join the Tampa Bay History Center and the Florida A&M University Brooksville Agricultural and Environmental Research Station for a day of healthy family fun celebrating history and agriculture!

**Chinsegut Hill Historic Site**  
 22495 Chinsegut Hill Rd., Brooksville, FL

**SEEKING VOLUNTEERS AND SPONSORS**

FOR MORE INFORMATION: CONTACT  
 Fred Hearnis, Curator of Black History at  
 (813)545-3183 or fhearnis@tampabayhistorycenter.org

EXHIBITORS/VENDORS: CONTACT  
 Cheryl Danley, FAMU Extension Agent at  
 (313)492-3496 or cheryl.danley@famu.edu

**CHINSEGUT HILL**  
 HISTORIC SITE  
 TAMPA BAY HISTORY CENTER  
 PARTNERSHIP

**FAMU** FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY  
 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

<h1>Six CHIX</h1> <p>by Isabella Bannerman</p>	<p><b>Invented by</b></p> <p><b>Pratibha Gai:</b> the environmental transmission electron microscope</p>	<p><b>Dr. Patricia Bath</b> Laser Cataract Surgery</p>	<p><b>Sarah E. Goode</b> the folding cabinet bed</p>	<p><b>Marian Croak</b></p> <p>Voice Over Internet Protocol</p>
	<p><b>Marion Donovan</b> the disposable diaper.</p> <p>BANNERMAN 3/21</p>	<p><b>Lillian Gilbreth</b> the pedal bin</p>	<p>celebrate Women's History Month!</p>	

# MYTH

Mail-in voting is riddled with fraud and cannot be trusted.

# FACT

Out of every 10 million mail-in ballots, fewer than 4 are fraudulent.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF TEXAS

# MYTH

The United States is the only country that uses mail-in voting.

# FACT

Over 50 democracies worldwide use mail-in voting, including Germany, the UK, Australia, Canada, and Switzerland.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF TEXAS

# MYTH

Anyone can send in a mail-in ballot. There's no way to verify who it's really from.

# FACT

Mail-in ballots go through multiple layers of verification: signature matching, unique barcodes, ballot tracking, and in many states, witness or notary requirements.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF TEXAS

# MYTH

Mail-in voting is just a convenience for people who don't want to bother showing up.

# FACT

Mail-in voting is a lifeline for the elderly, people with disabilities, active-duty military families, and rural voters depend on it to make their voices heard.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF TEXAS

# MYTH

Mail-in voting is a new, untested idea.

# FACT

Mail-in voting in <sup>+2</sup>America dates back to the Civil War. Union soldiers cast mail ballots in the 1864 presidential election, making it a 160+ year tradition in American democracy.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF TEXAS

## MAJOR GEN. PAUL EATON (RET), ISSUES A WARNING TO ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL:

**"Wiping out an entire civilization is the definition of genocide. Any order given to that effect must be refused by every service member up and down the chain - period. This is exactly what senators were talking about when they issued a video saying illegal orders must be refused. Now it may be time for service members to follow their recommendation."**

## Why Trump's antics don't work on our allies

It is among the most familiar patterns of the Trump era. First, the president says or does something weird, rude or otherwise norm-defying. Some elected Republicans object, and the response from Trump and his minions is to shoot the messenger. The dynamic holds constant whether it's big (January 6 pardons) or small (tweeting "covfefe" just after midnight).

The essence of this low-road-for-me-high-road-for-thee dynamic rests on the belief that Trumpism is a one-way road. Insulting Trump, deservedly or not, is forbidden, while Trump's antics should be celebrated when possible, defended when necessary, or ignored when neither of those responses is possible. But he should never, ever face consequences for his own actions.

This was the week Trump's routine went global.

A number of longtime defenders of the transatlantic alliance are very angry at our allies.

NATO members have refused to allow American jets to launch from, or even over, their territory. They won't help secure the Strait of Hormuz. French President

**Jonah Goldberg**



Emmanuel Macron has even called for a coalition to "stand up" against both the United States and China.

I think these are serious strategic mistakes, especially Macron's posturing to go out like a

modern-day de Gaulle instead of as a lame duck. But politically, they are hardly shocking.

Let's review how we got here. Trump has routinely mocked our allies. For efficiency's sake, let's forgive all of the petty jabs from the first term ostensibly intended to get them to spend more on defense. In Trump's second term, he claimed our NATO allies would never fight on our behalf, despite the fact that the only time NATO invoked Article 5 – an attack on one is an attack on all – was in the wake of 9/11.

Back in January, in Davos, Switzerland, Trump revised this false claim, admitting that some did fight in Afghanistan, but that "they stayed a little back, a little off

the front lines." This infuriated not just allied leaders, but their voters. Indeed, Trump is even unpopular with the populist right across most of Europe.

On a per-capita basis, Denmark, not America, had the most casualties in Afghanistan.

Speaking of Denmark, Trump threatened to go to war with the Danes to take possession of Greenland. The threats, public and private, were so relentless and serious that Denmark had to actually plan for a war against the U.S.

Trump didn't go as far with Canada, but he poisoned that alliance with his repeated insistence that Canada should become America's 51st state.

Trump also cut off most direct military aid to Ukraine, opting instead to strong-arm Europe into buying American weapons to boost our defense industry. And all while lending rhetorical aid and comfort to Russian President Vladimir Putin as Trump's "peace envoy" talked up business deals with Russia.

Trump abrogated trade agreements with our allies to levy massive tariffs on nearly all of them,

forcing many countries to pursue trade agreements with China. His erratic shifting of policies and rates sent allied economies scrambling. Trump's American defenders may roll their eyes at his openness to emoluments – a plane from Qatar, a gold bar and Rolex from Swiss business leaders, a crown from South Korea – but just imagine how this stuff is viewed by the broader public in allied countries. Trump mocks notions of shared values, but if you bring him a trinket, he'll talk.

Then Trump launched a surprise war on Iran without consulting our allies. When British Prime Minister Keir Starmer suggested sending aircraft carriers to help, Trump mocked him.

"That's OK, Prime Minister Starmer, we don't need them any longer," Trump posted on Truth social. "But we will remember. We don't need people that join Wars after we've already won!"

Trump has since changed his tune. In his national address last week, Trump essentially called our allies cowards who needed to muster some "delayed courage." On

Monday, he explained he was done with NATO because they refused to give him Greenland.

Trump's one-way-street antics work domestically because of his support within the GOP base. But he can't incite a primary challenge to elected allied leaders, not when he's loathed. In January, his approval rating in the U.K. was 16 percent (and in Denmark just 4 percent). One in 5 Europeans see America as a greater threat than China or North Korea.

Again, I think it would be good for Europe – which has seen energy prices skyrocket because of the war and still needs the U.S. for its security – to swallow some of the humiliation and help. But the refusal of Trump and his defenders to acknowledge why it's politically hard at this point is maddening.

Trump would never dream of taking a devastating political hit for an ally. But he and his defenders cannot fathom why allies feel the same way about him.

Jonah Goldberg is editor-in-chief of *The Dispatch* and the host of *The Remnant* podcast. His Twitter handle is @JonahDispatch.

*THE CHRONICLE* invites you to call "Sound Off" with your opinions about local subjects. You do not need to leave your name, and have less than a minute to record. COMMENTS will be edited for length, libel, personal or political attacks and good taste. Editors will cut libelous material. OPINIONS expressed are purely those of the callers.



# As a retired teacher of children with learning disabilities, this article made me sick.

A8 Sunday, April 19, 2026

Citrus County Chronicle

## Trump's dyslexia barbs stir anguish and anger, perpetuating a myth about the learning disability

By COLLIN BINKLEY  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Lauryn Muller was scrolling on social media when she saw a clip of President Donald Trump belittling California Gov. Gavin Newsom for having dyslexia. It stirred a well of emotion for the 18-year-old Muller, bringing back memories of her own struggles learning to read and the times she felt something was wrong with her.

Trump called Newsom "stupid," "low IQ," "mentally disabled" and unfit to become president. Muller knew it was part of a political feud — Trump is a Republican and Newsom is a Democrat who is expected to run for the White House in 2028 — but Trump's words felt personal.

"We've had to overcome so many deficits, and for someone to, on a national stage, say, yeah, they will never be like us — that definitely came as an emotional sting to me," said Muller, an incoming student at Auburn University whose dyslexia was identified as a child.

It was one more entry in Trump's history of denigrating the intelligence of his foes and mocking those with disabilities. Yet this time he was maligning tens of millions of people, calling their abilities into question and undermining years of progress fighting stigma around dyslexia.

Among those with dyslexia, his remarks aroused feelings from anguish and anger to dismay. It cut across politics, drawing a rebuke from supporters and critics alike.

Muller's mother, Marilyn, voted for Trump three times and says she still supports his politics. But she was hurt when Trump linked dyslexia with low intelligence — a dated myth that she has spent years trying to dispel.

"It works against everything I do on a daily basis," said Marilyn

Muller, a literacy advocate in Florida. "It was probably one of the more ignorant comments I have ever heard come from his mouth."

### A learning disability often misunderstood

Trump's comments clash with a large body of research finding that dyslexia and IQ are unrelated. They also conflict with statements he issued during his first term for national awareness months, heaping praise on the "extraordinary contributions" of those with dyslexia and noting that their ranks include top industry executives and inventors.

Often misunderstood, dyslexia affects the link between the brain and printed language, making it difficult for people to read. Dyslexia often emerges in childhood as kids learn to read and write. It is estimated to affect up to 20 percent of the world population.

"All of a sudden, you're not doing so well in school and then people will tell you, oh, you're not trying, you're not smart or whatever, and none of that's accurate. You just have this difference in that bridge from language to print," said John Gabrieli, a neuroscientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Newsom has for years discussed his dyslexia, including in a children's book he wrote in 2021 as well as a new memoir. On his recent book tour, he talked about memorizing speeches because he is unable to read them. He described it as a struggle and a gift, saying it forced him to develop other skills.

Trump latched on to some of Newsom's comments. "He can't read a speech, he can't do almost anything," Trump said during a Cabinet meeting in March. "He's actually a very stupid person."

He added: "I think a president

should not have learning disabilities."

Trump acknowledged his departure from decorum, saying it's "highly controversial to say such a horrible thing." He went on to say it at least four more times.

Newsom's office declined to comment for this story and referred to the governor's social media posts. "Learning differences don't define your limits, they shape your strengths," Newsom wrote in one post. "And no one, not even the President of the United States, gets to decide your worth."

### Little GOP pushback to Trump's comments

In Utah, Lia Beatty said she has become inured to Trump's brash behavior, but she still sees danger in his latest tirades. People listen to the president, and young people with dyslexia might hear those comments and believe they count for less, said Beatty, 27, who has dyslexia and runs a university neurology lab.

"The harm isn't necessarily in the headline. It's what happens quietly," she said. "It's the student in the classroom who stops raising their hand, the college applicant who hides how they learn, the employee who doesn't pursue a promotion that they're more than qualified for."

Until she saw his comments circulating on social media, Beatty had been keeping quiet about her acceptance to a doctoral neurology program at Dartmouth College. She made it public in a social media post aiming to undercut Trump.

"I think it's important to acknowledge that, yeah, the rooms — they weren't made for us, but we're still getting in them," Beatty said.

On Capitol Hill, there is a strong history of bipartisan support for people with dyslexia. A House



Marta Leonard / AP

Lauryn Muller sits with her mother, Marilyn, at their home April 13 in Coral Springs.

caucus is devoted to the issue, with vocal champions from both parties. Yet there has been little Republican pushback to Trump's comments.

Trump's remarks did not come up Wednesday at a congressional roundtable on dyslexia, organized by Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., whose daughter has dyslexia and whose wife runs a school for children with dyslexia. After the event, Cassidy refused to respond directly to Trump's remarks.

"All I can say is that a child with dyslexia will grow to be, often times, a very talented adult," Cassidy, who is up for reelection but did not get Trump's endorsement, told The Associated Press. "There's people who have self-identified as dyslexic who have become CEOs of hospitals and of great businesses."

There has been no comment from Rep. Bruce Westerman, R-Ark., co-chair of the dyslexia caucus.

### Some in Trump's circles have detailed struggles with dyslexia

Advocates have noted that some past presidents probably did have dyslexia.

Woodrow Wilson wrote about his difficulty learning to read and he became an early adopter of the typewriter as one of many workarounds, said John M. Cooper, a presidential historian and Wilson biographer.

Some in Trump's circles have spoken about difficulties with dyslexia.

Gary Cohn, the architect of Trump's signature tax bill from his first term, has talked at length about struggling with dyslexia as a child. He went on to become a business titan and president of Goldman Sachs.

Advocates say Trump's words threaten to reverse years of progress unwinding stereotypes. His comments also raise questions about promises his administration has made to protect students with disabilities even as Trump dismantles the Department of Education, which oversees the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Jacqueline Rodriguez, CEO of the National Center for Learning Disabilities, said it will be hard for families to trust Trump's education appointees "when their boss is making these really stigmatizing and really inaccurate statements."

## EDITORIAL

## Honoring women who strengthen Citrus County

March is Women's History Month. Accordingly, recent columns in the Chronicle have paid tribute to local women of distinction. We appreciate Madelyn Russell of the United Way and Clerk of Circuit Court Traci Perry for "naming names." They highlighted public leaders as well as less visible women who help Citrus County thrive.

Russell commended the tireless service and impact on the community of several dedicated but unsung women on her list. They range from a restaurant chef and donor to a gentle advocate for primary school students to a champion of local businesses. Russell noted that they and many others "quietly make our community a stronger, kinder place to live."

Perry focused on women whose public service, as current and past constitutional officers, spans many years, if not decades. There's the Supervisor of Elections, the Tax Collector, members of the Board of County Commissioners, as well as the Clerk of Circuit Court. Perry noted innovation in services, staff development and transparency among their accomplishments in running government in Citrus.

As the president's proclamation said, strengthening the family is another reason to celebrate women. Women's History Month does not discount mothers as leaders and contributors in their own right. Yet about 75 percent of mothers also work outside the home.

Less sunny readers among us may be asking, "Why do we need these newspaper columns, or a Women's History Month at all? Men are working hard and contribut-

ing to the quality of life in their community, too."

Yes, they are and have been, for just as long. However, men's stories are acknowledged everywhere – in our history books, newspaper headlines and highway names.

Seeing examples of remarkable women and their accomplishments serves to inspire girls to reach their potential. Women's History Month helps keep those models of achievement on view and in honorable regard.

The point is to avoid the cultural blind spots we're familiar with – when women's access to opportunities is obstructed out of prejudice, or when a woman succeeds in discovery or innovation but a man takes credit. Women's History Month is part of a rebalancing.

We're not there yet. For instance, while it's narrowing, the gender wage gap persists. On average, women make 83 percent of what men are paid for the same work.

Less sunny readers may also note the prevalence on social media of backlash against women and their achievements. This adversarial view of social standing is artificial. Life is not a zero-sum game in which if women do better, men do worse. After all, they are often partners.

"The well-being of men and women is so intrinsically entwined ... with the larger cultural and political forces in the moment we're in," said writer Faith Hill. She was emphasizing the chronic challenges these days – with jobs, child care, housing, medical care and mental health – that women and men alike are facing.

## Can you help restock CASA shelves?

The Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association (CASA) needs help with donations of daily items to keep its pantry stocked.

■ Household and cleaning supplies: paper towels, trash bags (high need), laundry detergent.

■ Pantry and food needs: crackers, tea, eggs, butter, sugar, kid-friendly drinks and snacks, milk, cheese, fresh fruits and vegetables, lunch meat, chicken or ground chicken, beef or ground beef, pork or ground pork, ketchup, mayonnaise and mustard, Ranch and other salad dressings/condiments, cooking spices, juice.

■ Other needs: Baby wipes, diapers (size 7), children's medications (cough/cold and acetaminophen), adult cough/cold medications.

■ Clothing needs (boys): sizes 14–16, sizes 12–14 slim, men's size 34 pants, men's large shirts.

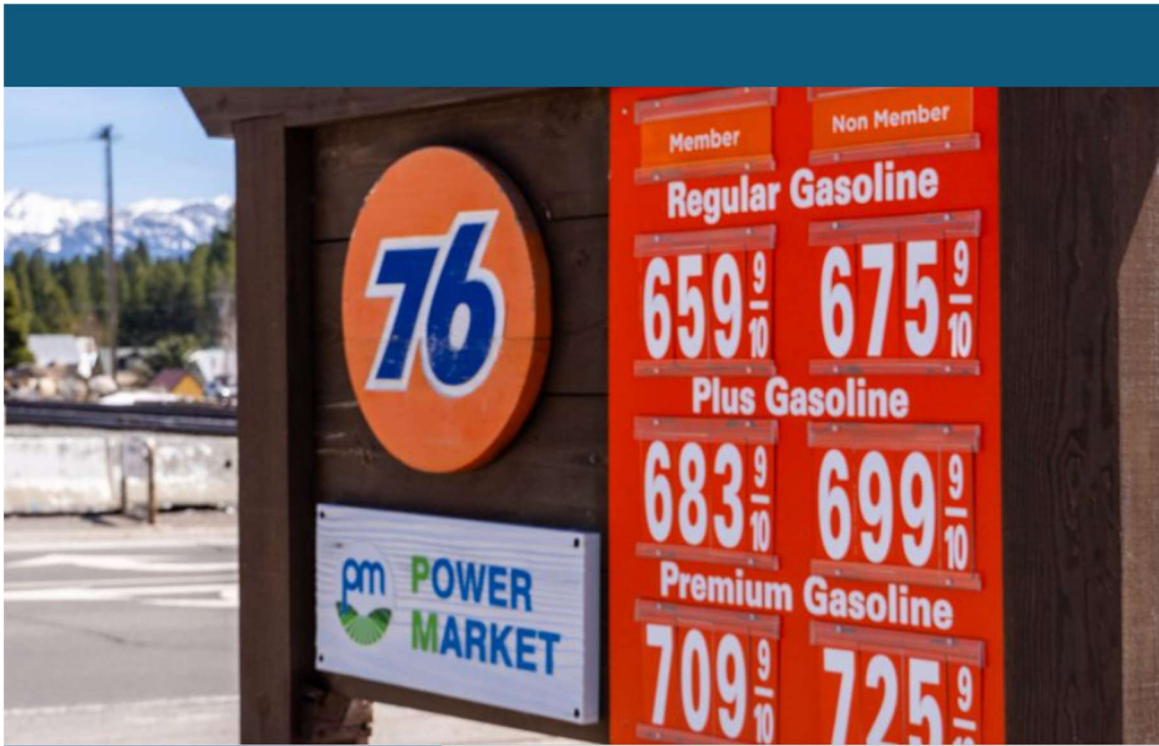
To make it easier to donate, CASA now has an Amazon Wishlist: [a.co/c6Wobgs](https://www.amazon.com/wishlist/ref=wl_cr_text).

Drop items off at the CASA Outreach office between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, at 1100 E. Turner Camp Road, Inverness. Shelter needs can also be dropped off at their alternative drop off location, Carol's Interiors and Floors, 6410 S. Suncoast Blvd. in Homosassa.

For more information, contact Rane Herzek at 352-344-8111 or email [rherzek@casafll.org](mailto:rherzek@casafll.org).

If interested in volunteering, call 352-344-8111 or download the Volunteer Application at [casafll.org](https://casafll.org). Email completed applications to [marilynn@casafll.org](mailto:marilynn@casafll.org).

# From California







**Jan did not like to have her picture taken.**

**Jan Hall**

I am very sad to let you all know that Jan Hall passed away on April 22 after a difficult illness.

Jan and I were friends for over 30 years. We were both there when this League was formed in 2013. She was one of the sweetest, most giving friends I have known, and I will miss her.

We used to have “play dates” once a month where we would get together to talk, watch a movie, and go in my pool. She was my confidant, my side-kick, and one of the kindest people I ever knew. Vicky Iozzia

Jan has given generously of her time doing the challenging and constant work of publicizing upcoming events and news of our local League of Women Voters of Citrus County for years. She has been an active board member, attending board and general meetings, planning events, working on strategy, and countless other projects. It was indeed a privilege to know and work with her. Her calming presence will be greatly missed. Maxine Connor

I really liked Jan and am so sorry that she passed away. She was one of the original members when our league started again. Linda Abels

Friends, this is devastating news, but I'm sure that Jan is finally at peace. Jan was a bright light, a faithful friend, and a calm and gentle person. She will be dearly missed by everyone

who knew and loved her. I have a few pieces of the beautiful jewelry that she made. Two flower necklaces and a sunshine pin from the first year I got involved with our league. I'll wear them with love and pride. Rosemary Nilles

Vicky, I am so sorry to hear of Jan's passing. Unfortunately, seeing you at the Earth Day tabling and how sad you seemed in spirit, I knew Jan might not have much time left. She is finally in God's hands and in eternal peace. My Faith informs me that we are a "resurrection people" and that whatever the mysterious next chapter of our existence is, it will be the happiest and beyond our comprehension. I only knew Jan for the couple of years of my position as LWV secretary - she was always dependable and "on top of things" for our events. I especially enjoyed our times together at your parties. Peace be with you, Jan and Vicky. Jeanne Messersmith

I am indeed saddened by the passing of our dear Jan. I am also relieved to know she is resting eternally in a place of no pain, no worries, and no diseases. During her time of decline and passing Jan was ever in our prayers. Jan will be most remembered by me from our first encounter by email as she very professionally coordinated a virtual meeting in the midst of a pandemic with me as guest speaker. Jan was smooth as silk, organized, and had precision in aligning my very first presentation to the League of Women Voters of Citrus County. There was little known about the COVID virus, Jan assured me people needed to hear about moving from vaccine hesitancy to vaccine competency. I'll always member her from that time forward as a mentor who welcomed my many questions about the non-partisan group. From there I was welcomed into the LWVCC membership and soon after onto the Board of Directors. I got to know Jan even better always looking forward to seeing her on our virtual meetings and most recently in the last few years in person. Like others, I too am the recipient of her artful handy work. On one occasion she presented me with a hair ornament - it was lovely, purple, turquoise, and green. The real joy was in seeing her reaction when I actually wore it. I will miss supplying her with little clear containers to hold her smaller art supplies. I am honored to have met Jan, shared spaced with her, and learn from her. Rest in peace Jan, your memory is eternal. BJ Ezell

Jan was a wonderful model of grace, consideration, and faithfulness for us in the League. She understood how to extend our reach in the media. She was generous with her creativity. When she was smiling, I could see the young Jan in her face and imagine her seizing the day, and also the party after. Rest in peace, Jan. Peg Primeau

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FROM LWVCC NATURAL RESOURCES CHAIR

MAY, 2026

Reporting on Florida's Future

With Max Chesnes May 15 th

Flood Risk to Resilience

Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan

Hold the Dates for June 11, 18, & 24 th

Community Listening Sessions

Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan

Take the Flood Risk Survey

Land Use Change Application

For Data Center Returning to

Citrus Planning & Development June 18 - 9 am

Citrus Hearing on Proposed Asphalt Plant

Postponed to November 19th – 9 AM

Florida Legislature Sets Special Budget Session for May

A Lifetime of Earth Days

Hope vs. Loss by Joe Murphy

Politics & Government

Environmentalists Blast Proposal to Remove Protections

For Endangered Species

## Reporting on Florida's Future With Max Chesnes May 15 th

**May 15<sup>th</sup> 2026 @ 6:30PM**

### REPORTING ON FLORIDA'S FUTURE WITH MAX CHESNES

*How can we use conservation storytelling to spur hope – and meaningful change?*

A lifelong Floridian and Tampa Bay Times Environmental Writer, Max Chesnes, will tell us how his investigative reporting on threats facing Florida's public lands has led to policy change and a broader statewide appreciation for Florida's outdoor spaces. In 2024, Max broke a series of stories about how Florida's government wanted to develop state parks with golf courses and hotels, and a separate proposal that would have traded away some of the Withlacoochee State Forest to a luxury golf developer. Max will present on his reporting process and how human-centered environmental stories can be a catalyst for enduring change.

In person at the  
Historic Brooksville  
Woman's Club, 131 S.  
Main Street in  
Brooksville, FL.

Or join via Zoom at  
<https://bit.ly/48c66pX>

SIERRA CLUB Florida Chapter Adventure Coast Group  
HERNANDO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
HERNANDO COUNTY NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Join us Friday, May 15 th at 6:30 p.m. at the Historic Brooksville Woman's Club. 131 South Main Street, Brooksville for a talk on Reporting on Florida's Future with Tampa Bay Times Environmental Writer Max Chesnes. The event is hosted by Hernando Audubon Society, Adventure Coast Sierra Club, and Hernando County Native Plant Society.

### Flood Risk to Resilience

Hold the Dates for June 11, 18, & 24 th

### Community Listening Sessions



The Tampa Bay region is a flood-vulnerable area, facing extreme risk from storm surge, sea-level rise, and heavy rainfall due to its low-lying geography, extensive coastline, shallow continental shelf, and dense development. Both coastal and inland flooding threatens the safety, property, and livelihoods of Tampa Bay's communities.

The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council is developing the Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan (TBCMP)—a comprehensive, four-year, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant-funded initiative in Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Sarasota counties. It spans more than 2,200 square miles of coastal and inland communities, estuaries, rivers, wetlands, and barrier islands. The Coastal Master Plan aims to strengthen regional flood resilience by addressing the impacts of sea-level rise, storm surge, extreme rainfall, and high-tide flooding through a coordinated, data-driven, and community-based process. The 2026 focus includes hosting public listening sessions to identify flood-vulnerable communities, prioritize restoration and flood-reduction projects, and guide long-term adaptation strategies with a strong emphasis on equity, innovation, and collaboration.

As partner/collaborators in this effort, Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group, Hernando Audubon and other community organizations will host three listening sessions as follows:

**Thursday, June 11th** 5pm-6:30 pm at the George Washington Carver Community Center, 95 Three Sisters Springs Trail, Crystal River. The facilitators will be Sierra Club's Robin Orlandi and Maxine Connor in cooperation with other community-based organizations. Refreshments will be available.

**Thursday, June 18th** 5pm-6:30pm at the Weeki Wachee Area Club, 7442 Shoal Line Boulevard, Hernando Beach. The facilitator will be Sierra Club's Taylor Masnjak in cooperation with the Weeki Wachee Area Club and local long term recovery management efforts.

**Wednesday, June 24th** , 5pm-6:30pm at the Ridge Manor Community Center, 34240 Cortez Boulevard, Ridge Manor. The facilitator will be Lynn Gruber-White, President of the Ridge Manor Property Owners Association in cooperation with Joe Murphy of Sierra Club and Hernando Audubon along with other stakeholders. Refreshments will be available.

These efforts ensure that local governments, community organizations, residents, and technical experts all contribute to shaping the plan. In the third year, the Coastal Master Plan will develop a Regional Flood Risk Assessment that will provide a scientific and analytical foundation for all future project recommendations. By 2027, the focus will be to design, screen and evaluate projects in priority areas based on community feedback. In 2028, the plan will be released.

What you can do now: Save the date and plan to attend a workshop in your area. Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group and Hernando Audubon participated in recent Flood Listening Session Facilitation Training and will engage as non-profit stakeholders in the process for Citrus and Hernando Counties. Contact us at [sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com) for more information. Article Courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group

Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan  
Take the Flood Risk Survey

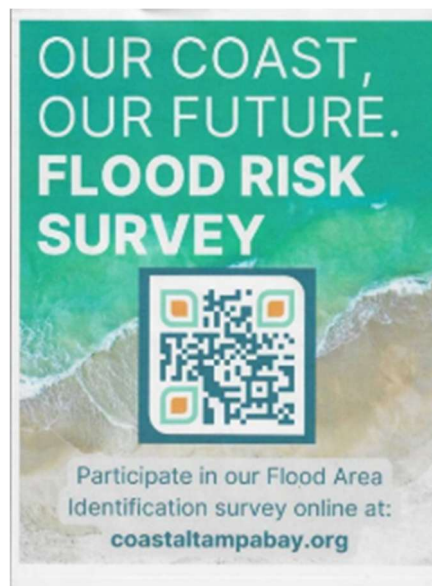


The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council is creating the Tampa Bay Regional Resilience Coalition—a voluntary alliance of local governments and partner organizations working together to strengthen the region’s ability to adapt to climate change. By aligning with the Coalition’s shared goals, the Tampa Bay Master Coastal Plan (TBMCP) advances coordinated, region-wide resilience strategies that reflect local priorities and foster long-term collaboration across jurisdictions. The study area spans over 4,400 square miles of diverse inland and coastal ecosystems across Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Sarasota counties—home to more than 4 million residents.

The Tampa Bay region faces escalating climate-related risks, including sea level rise, storm surge, extreme rainfall, and high-tide flooding. These threats are compounded by rapid population growth and limited regional coordination on flood mitigation and current efforts are often fragmented and lack a cohesive, long-term strategic framework.

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group has agreed to become a collaborating partner and leaders have participated in training sessions which will now be followed by planning community listening sessions.

The Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan (TBCMP) enhances regional resilience by addressing flooding impacts through a coordinated, data-driven, and community-based planning process. Over the course of this four-year, grant-funded initiative, the TBCMP will identify flood-vulnerable communities, prioritize restoration and flood-reduction projects, and guide long-term adaptation strategies. Take the flood risk survey at the QR code below:



Article Courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group

The application was “continued” (postponed) by the Planning & Development Commission, because more information was needed and legislation pertaining to data centers was being considered at the Florida Legislature, which was not scheduled to finish session until March 13.

The application will come back before the Citrus County Planning & Development Commission on June 18 at 9 am, Lecanto Government Center, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto.

Meanwhile, SB 484 Data Centers was passed:

The FL legislature has recently passed legislation regarding Data Centers - with some good features and one deceptive dangerous feature. If signed by the Governor, it will take effect July 1, 2026:

SB 484 is aimed at regulating large-scale data centers to protect residents from increased energy and water costs. It requires that AI and other large-scale data centers cover their own infrastructure and utility costs, preventing higher bills for residential customers.

Local Control: It confirms that local governments maintain control over comprehensive planning and land development regulations for “large load customers” (megawatts).

Water & Energy Usage: It introduces stricter regulations on water usage for cooling and requires developers to bear the costs of energy usage, ensuring that local utility capacity is not compromised.

Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs): A final, amended version allows state agencies to enter into NDAs with companies, allowing them to keep development plans secret for a year. (!)

Targeted Projects: The legislation is a direct response to rising concerns over the environmental and infrastructural impact of new, high-demand AI data centers.

(Thank you to fellow board member RN for this excellent summary of SB 484.)

-----  
Meanwhile the County Commission is conferring with state authorities and working on coming up with guidelines for data centers in light of the fact that they have health and environmental impacts including noise, pollution, and excessive water and electricity needs.

While county commissioners voted unanimously in February 2026 to have staff draft land development code guidelines, a final decision on these regulations—and a specific project proposal—is currently pending further review.

Some Data Center Resources

<https://www.thecitrusinsider.com/good-data>

<https://baynews9.com/fl/tampa/news/2026/03/05/citrus-county-officials-want-regulations-in-place-before->

eyeing-data-centers?cid=id-app15\_m-share\_s-web\_cmp-app\_launch\_august2020\_c  
producer\_posts\_po-organic <https://nodatacentercitrus.org/>  
[https://www.change.org/p/protect-the-nature-coast-oppose-the-holder-industrial-park-expansion-cpa-202500012?recruiter=46794940&recruited\\_by\\_id=4ce8bc80-82b0-0130-db6c-](https://www.change.org/p/protect-the-nature-coast-oppose-the-holder-industrial-park-expansion-cpa-202500012?recruiter=46794940&recruited_by_id=4ce8bc80-82b0-0130-db6c-3c764e049c4f&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=starter_onboarding_share_personal&utm_medium=copylink&utm_content=cl_sharecopy_491068025_en-US%3A8&share_id=zcwdzp5FZt)

[3c764e049c4f&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_campaign=share\\_petition&utm\\_term=starter\\_onboarding\\_share\\_personal&utm\\_medium=copylink&utm\\_content=cl\\_sharecopy\\_491068025\\_en-US%3A8&share\\_id=zcwdzp5FZt](https://www.change.org/p/protect-the-nature-coast-oppose-the-holder-industrial-park-expansion-cpa-202500012?recruiter=46794940&recruited_by_id=4ce8bc80-82b0-0130-db6c-3c764e049c4f&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=starter_onboarding_share_personal&utm_medium=copylink&utm_content=cl_sharecopy_491068025_en-US%3A8&share_id=zcwdzp5FZt)

Understanding the impact of data center noise pollution:

<https://www.techtarget.com/searchdatacenter/tip/Understanding-the-impact-of-data-center-noise-pollution>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/communities-are-raising-noise-pollution-concernsabout-data-centers>

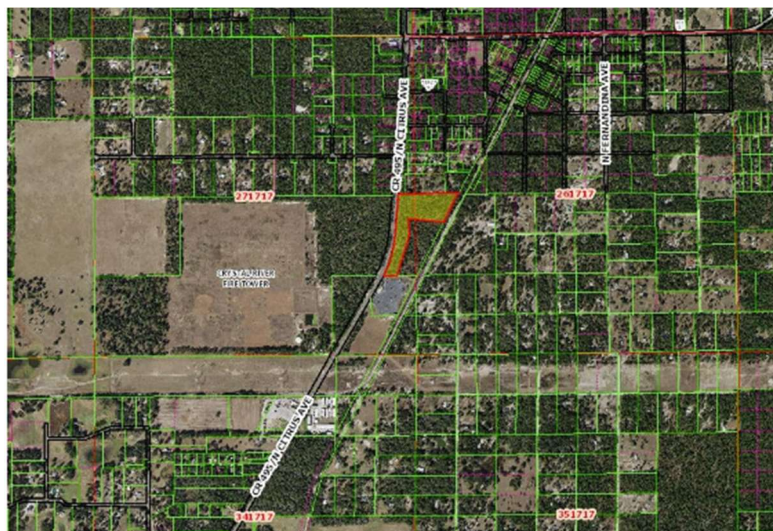
The Dangers of Data Centers by Elan Justice Pavlinich, PhD, Feb 27, 2026

<https://www.environmentalhealthproject.org/post/the-dangers-of-data-centers>

A direct response to rising concerns over the environmental and infrastructural impact of new, high-demand AI data centers.

### Citrus Planning & Development Hearing on Proposed Asphalt Plant

Postponed to November 19th – 9 AM



A 22-acre Asphalt Plant on Citrus Ave /Co Rd 495 has been proposed in a rural area of Citrus that would require a zoning change from commercial to industrial. The site is near hundreds of residences just north of the Suncoast Parkway's final extension that will cross Citrus Avenue and terminate to the West at Hwy 19/98, around 5 miles south of the proposed Barge Canal /Port Citrus site.

Please plan to attend and you will have an opportunity to speak during Public Comment. The Planning & Development Commission hearing on the application has been postponed from April 2 nd to April 16 th and then to November 19 th at 9am at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room #166, Lecanto, FL 34461. There are now more than 3,300 signatures on a petition to oppose this application already. (<https://www.change.org/p/stop-zoning-change-from-general-neighborhood-commercial-to-industrial>)

Learn more at Channel 10 Tampa Bay article:

<https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/local/citruscounty/proposed-asphalt-plant-crystal-river/67-9dc1469e-3109-4a7f-8968-9c4128f220b5>

Video: [https://www.instagram.com/reel/DU6yYITjHe-](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DU6yYITjHe-/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTlwNjQ2YQ==)

[/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link&igsh=NTc4MTlwNjQ2YQ==](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DU6yYITjHe-/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTlwNjQ2YQ==)

Curtiss Bryant's Citrus Insider blog summarizes the application and includes a link to the petition here:

<https://www.thecitrusinsider.com/next-up-asphalt-plant/>

Anyone interested in learning more by viewing the application documents from the cancelled planning meeting can go

here: <https://citrusclerk.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8980/overview> to

view or download. Article Courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group

## Florida Legislature Sets Special Budget Session for May



According to an April 23 rd WUSF article, more than a month after ending the regular session without passing a budget, legislative leaders say they have a deal on top-line spending levels. The special session to hammer out the budget will run May 12-29, although as we go to press, the formal proclamation for the session hasn't been issued.

During the regular session the Senate passed a \$115 billion budget and the House passed a \$113.6 billion spending plan. House Speaker Daniel Perez, R-Miami insisted on a budget

that was less than the current year level of \$115.1 billion. Budget talks between the chambers remain at odds on major issues.

There are wide gaps between the chambers on land conservation programs. We're concerned that full funding for Florida Forever and the Florida State Parks Program is at risk. During the regular session, Adventure Coast Group printed 100 postcards that members and supporters signed urging our Florida Senator Ralph Masullo to support full funding. We noted that "There are 135 projects now on the Florida Forever priority list of approved purchases and a backlog of repairs estimated at almost \$800 million dollars for our award-winning parks that need funding to ensure thriving parks for people and wildlife. We hope we can count on you to support them. Thank you." He actually mentioned that he had heard from his constituents on the floor of the House during budget discussions.

Then, when the budget was sent to the Senate and House Budget Committee Chairs for negotiation, we printed up and mailed out another 100 postcards to Senate Budget Chair Ed Hooper and House Budget Chair Lawrence McClure with a similar message. Thanks to everyone who signed the postcards. We'll keep hoping they realize the value of biodiversity and conservation to improve our lives and that of all living things.

Source: WUSF | By Gray Rohrer, News Service of Florida / Published April 23, 2026.  
Article Courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group

### **A Lifetime of Earth Days Hope vs. Loss by Joe Murphy**

I was born April 21, 1970. My first full day of life was April 22, 1970: the original Earth Day. I have been alive for all the Earth Days and am hopeful for a few more – 56 years of hope and loss.



U.S. Sen. Edmund Muskie, author of the Clean Air Act, speaks on Earth Day in Philadelphia on April 22, 1970. (Peter54321, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons)

The original Earth Day helped launch a conservation movement that produced great progress and soaring hope. The Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the National Environmental Policy Act were all passed within a few years. Just six years earlier, the Wilderness Act passed.

Major cities were choking on pollution, the Cuyahoga River had literally caught fire and iconic species were in danger of disappearing. The public demanded action and, to their credit, elected officials responded. Hope flowed like a river and the future seemed bright. Power and profit though do not simply disappear when challenged. They pushed back. Earth Day 1970 eventually led to folks like Interior Secretary James Watt under President Ronald Reagan and his radical anti-environmental agenda. Powerful forces set in motion loss that lessened hope. We see that today as our nation's environmental laws are gutted.

Corporate America became very good at co-opting the message of conservation and Earth Day and branding it, selling it and using it for their goals. The focus shifted to individual actions, not community actions that would change policy or practice and be accomplished through laws and regulations.

What "we" can do was shifted to what "you" can do. Individual actions and responsibility are important, but in an era of climate change, global trade, rampant development and wholesale gutting of environmental policy, people acting together, in shared purpose, have the best chance of conserving public health and the natural world.

Fifty-six years after Earth Day 1970, we still teeter between hope and loss. Five decades later, the cost of failure is much higher. Climate change and sea-level rise have consequences that could impact us for centuries. The Age of Extinction we are in now is fundamentally altering evolution and humans are now driving extinction and loss through our actions. We have become the variable that determines who survives, and who enters extinction.

So, we must choose. Hope versus loss. Action versus apathy. Protecting the rights of future generations or abandoning our responsibility to them. I say we choose hope. We need to work with hope driving our hearts, science leading our minds and the wonder of nature guiding our souls. We need to think big and act big.

The Florida Wildlife Corridor gives me hope. The audacity and bold vision of connecting over 18 million acres of habitat for large wildlife to transverse Florida from the Everglades to the Panhandle to the Okefenokee is amazing. And it is happening.

The growing grassroots resistance to never-ending growth and development in Florida gives me hope. I talk with people every day who are of different parties, perspectives and ideologies who all agree they want to see rivers and springs protected, overcrowding reduced, green space conserved and the endless creation of rooftops abated. Candidates who ignore this undercurrent of opposition may do so at their peril. The 2026 elections in Florida could offer some true surprises. Prescribed fire as a land management tool and its continued and expanded use gives me hope. It is tough to conduct as Florida develops, but landscapes that were robbed of fire and its life-giving value for decades now are being reborn in fire. Fire in Florida is as important as rain to the natural world, and Florida's land managers have embraced that. Public lands are better for it.

If you care about the conservation of wild Florida, you can succumb to the feeling that loss is everywhere. And it is surely occurring. But it is balanced with glimmers of hope. Progress has been made with some species and in some landscapes, but it is fragile. It must be nourished and protected. Every acre of natural Florida must be cherished and conserved to avoid loss overcoming hope.

The powerful truth is loss will only expand if left unopposed. The irony is that the very species that is driving the natural world toward continued disaster is the same species that has the power to reverse the loss.

Hope versus loss: Let us choose hope, then act with it, share it, cultivate it and celebrate it. Let us do it together. That is an Earth Day to celebrate.

Joe Murphy is a native and lifelong Floridian who lives in Brooksville. Follow Joe's "Season of Public Lands" on Instagram (@naturecoastjoe) and Facebook (<https://bit.ly/joemurphyfacebook>). Sign up for The Invading Sea newsletter by visiting here or email Editor Nathan Crabbe.

- Article Courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group

- \_\_\_\_\_

- Politics & Government

- Florida Phoenix | Ahead of Earth Day, environmentalists blast proposal to remove protections for endangered species (4/22)

- \_\_\_\_\_

- Updated 4/28/26



















