

League of Women Voters News - DECEMBER 15, 2018



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

2019 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER



# A Whole **NEW** World

1920 **2019** 2020

**JANUARY 12TH, 2019**

Atlantis Country Club • 1-4 p.m. • Cost \$50  
*190 Country Club Drive, Atlantis, FL*



**FEATURING**

The Maltz Jupiter Theatre  
Youth Touring Company

**LUNCH, ENTERTAINMENT AND MORE!**

Raffles • Art Work • Incredible Baskets • Door prizes  
Special Cash Prize • Tickets Make a Great Holiday Gift

**BRING YOUR FRIENDS!**

**RSVP BY JANUARY 5, 2019**

Online at [lwvpsc.org](http://lwvpsc.org) or call Estelle Friedman at 561-968-4123

REGISTER FOR FUNDRAISER

# HOT TOPIC LUNCHEON

## *Why Courts Matter*

GUEST SPEAKER



*Damien Filer*  
Communications Director  
Progress Florida Education Institute

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2019**

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

*Doors open and registration at 11:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m. lunch served  
at Atlantis Country Club, Atlantis, FL.*

\$25 before February 13th • \$35 after February 13th

Register online at [lwpbc.org](http://lwpbc.org)  
or call Estelle Friedman at 561-968-4123

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT

For a complete listing of events,  
click the button below to go to our Calendar!

Calendar of Events

## **THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE REMAINS HARD AT WORK**

**By Kathy Gundlach**

The Education Committee continues to work on informational sheets for legislators and others concerned with education in Florida. The committee will be trained on advocacy in January to work effectively to educate legislators and others on our Legislative Priorities of Charter Schools, and Funding. Information that will be included in the funding information follows.

### **EDUCATIONAL FUNDING STATE OF FLORIDA**

The Florida's Constitution states, "The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education and for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning and other public education programs that the needs of the people may require." The legislature has failed for a number of years to follow this mandate.

- Education Week in 2018 reports 0.1percent of students in Florida attend schools where spending exceeds the national benchmark.
- The national average of per-pupil spending in 2018 was \$12,526 with Florida allocating \$9,737 per student.

- Florida ranks 42nd in overall educational funding (2017)
- Florida ranks 44th in K-12 funding per student (NEA-2017).
- In 2017 Florida ranked 3rd in the amount of enrolled students.
- In 2017 Florida ranked 50th in instructional staff salaries.
- Florida Tax Credit Scholarship has caused a loss of \$698 million in revenue since its inception.
- In the 2018 legislative session, charter schools were allocated over \$150 million in capital funds with traditional schools receiving \$50 million. Charter schools account for 10% of the students in the public schools of Florida.
- The Florida Legislature's school property tax reductions over the past three years have eliminated over \$1.7 billion in potential funding for the upcoming school year.

### **Suggested Areas of Oversight**

- Examine legislators' conflicts of interest pertaining to charter schools.
- Examine the number of students returning to traditional public schools from charter and voucher program.
- Demand oversight of the tax credit scholarship system.

The League of Women Voters opposes any use of tax payer money for vouchers or tax credit scholarships.



**JUST HOW MANY FELONS ARE AFFECTED BY THE PASSAGE  
OF AMENDMENT 4?**

**Taken from a memo by Howard Simon, Executive Director of the ACLU of Florida to coalition members working to implement Amendment 4.**

"We have been concerned that several speakers and organizational allies (as well as the press) have been using different numbers for the returning citizens who could be affected when Amendment 4 is approved by the voters. We have seen figures ranging from 1.2 million to 1.8 million.

Not only might this make the campaign look disorganized, but more importantly, by using a number that reflects the entire population of people with felony convictions, we could be inadvertently supporting the narrative that the ballot issue is about "felons voting" or "voting rights for felons," rather than the narrative we want to advance – 2nd chances for those who have successfully completed the terms of their sentence and, thereby, should be able to fully participate in their community."

*After Mr. Simon describes, in detail, his methodology and the available statistics regarding felons, fine and cost payments, and restitution payments, he concluded:*

"Based on this research and because neither we nor the state has any hard data on the fines/fees population, we would be technically correct – and we hope that we can all agree going forward -- to describe the scale of the impact as follows: Under Amendment 4, as many as 1.4 million Floridians who have completed supervision of a felony sentence have earned a 2nd chance to fully participate in their community and could be eligible for the restoration of their ability to vote upon payment of fines, fees, and restitution."



**THANK YOU MEMBERS!!!  
YOU MAKE THE LWVPBC PROUD.**

Our LWVPBC was very visible and active in the recent November elections. Did you know?

- Our Voter Service Group registered more than 4,000 new voters.
- Our Candidate Forums Group held four Judicial Forums.
- Our Speakers Bureau Group presented explanations of the ballot amendments to 110 groups that included more than 6,645 people.

- Our Voters Guide Group printed and delivered our 28 page publication. (Research shows that 2.3 people in a household read a product. This means we actually reach over 250,000 voters).
- Our campaign to restore voting right to people with a felony record favorably impacted 1.4 Floridians.

**Over 300 volunteers made this happen. Thank you volunteers!**



## **GET YOUR TICKETS FOR OUR FUNDRAISER NOW!**

**January 12, 2019 is fast approaching!**

***Buy on line at [lwvpsc.org](http://lwvpsc.org)***

**Bring cash to purchase 25 chances for \$20. You may win:**

- A basket of fine wines for your next party
- a 4-some at PB Par 3 followed by lunch on Al Fresca's balcony.
- Sunday Brunch for 2 with mimosas on the waterfront.
- Brunch for 4 at the Palm Beach Yacht Club
- A Lobster Pot with your choice of seafood!
- Tea Party with all the trimmings!
- Everything needed for a day at the beach
- And much, much more

**\$\$\$ Plus, a separate opportunity to win \$500 cash! \$\$\$**



Purchase Tickets to Fundraiser

## What's the Affordable Housing Issue Group Up To? The 2019/2020 Florida Legislative Session

By Sammy R. Alzofon, Chair  
Affordable Housing Issue Group

Our League's Affordable Housing Issue Group realizes it is not too soon to set their agenda for the Florida Legislative Session that begins March 6, 2019. All budget appropriations will be decided in committee before year's end. We've started speaking with our Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation members, as well as setting time to testify at the delegation's January public hearing in Belle Glade. While there are many sources of funding for affordable housing, our focus will be on a major source: the documentary tax stamp funded housing trust funds (aka, Sadowski State and Local Housing Trust Funds).

The forecast for this this year's Trust Funds will be comparable to last year, approximately \$322,100,000. Although the Senate recommended full funding and the Governor supported \$230,300,000 to be put to use for affordable housing, the final budgetary distribution for the 2018/2019 budget year was the House supported \$123,630,000. The remainder of the trust funds for last year were "swept" into the general budget, approximately \$182,000,000.

The November 25, 2018 *Palm Beach Post* noted incoming House Speaker Jose Oliva speaking of a "... lean role for government ... criticizing local planning decisions, for example, for contributing to a state shortage of affordable housing." Blaming local government is not an accurate assessment. The reality is this: of a total collection of trust funds amounting to almost \$5.9 billion dollars since enactment of William E.



Sadowski legislation, the State has legislatively "swept" \$2 billion for other budgetary uses since 2001.

It is acknowledged by all that there is an affordable housing crisis. Jaimie Ross, head of the Florida Housing Coalition, says there are "...currently almost one million very low income Floridians spending more than half their income on housing - they need the assistance provided by the Sadowski State and Local Housing Trust Funds." Our issue group will be asking the state legislature for two simple things: 1. Don't take housing trust funds for inclusion in the general budget, and, 2. Don't use housing trust funds for hurricane recovery. The legislature has a "rainy day" fund totaling more than \$3.5 billion and the federal government is providing disaster relief.

Contact your representative(s) and tell them you support full affordable housing funding by clicking the button below.



Contact Your Legislator

**Here are some additional information sources:**

- Sadowski Webinar link November 14, 2018  
<http://www.flhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Sadowski-Trust-Fund-Webinar-2018-11-14-1.pdf>
- Contact our Speakers Bureau to schedule a presentation of our affordable housing power point.
- Contact Sammy Alzofon at [sammy.alzofon@gmail.com](mailto:sammy.alzofon@gmail.com) or (561) 800-8274.

## Book Review

By Faith Shullstrom

***World without Mind: Why Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple Threaten our Future***  
by Franklin Foer

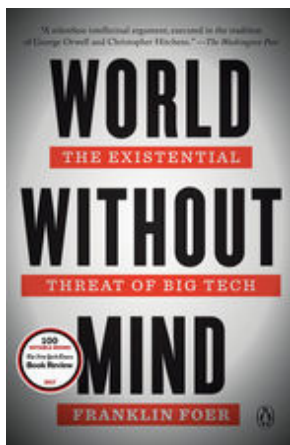
GAFA, (Google, Apple, Facebook & Amazon) as the Europeans call them, threaten our privacy, our culture, our democracy and our minds. This timely and provocative polemic, on how the big four technology companies monopolize and influence our individual and collective minds, reveals a shared worldview among their leaders that aspires to mold and control human behavior and thought and, even, to create intelligence that surpasses the human brain's capability.

Google prioritizes the information we receive, Apple entertains us, Facebook shapes our social interactions and Amazon controls our buying habits. They share the capacity to amass data, a belief in the power of algorithms, the desire to meld man and machine, and the luck to operate in a climate hostile to regulation and friendly to monopoly allowing them to dominate our culture and impact our choices.

Foer provides historical context and current reality to illuminate how GAFA, with massive sets of data and powerful algorithms, narrows the individual mind and limits access to information. Further, it devalues individual thought in preferring peer production and distributed knowledge to supporting the individual genius and fearless exploration necessary for creativity.

"Section III: Take Back the Mind" recommends governmental intervention in the form of reasonable regulation and personal action in the form of active, silent reading. He warns against caring more deeply about convenience and efficiency than about things that last.

This is a passionate book, important and a "must read."



**Donate to LWVPBC'S ED FUND**  
**by Shopping [amazon](#)smile!**

**amazon**smile.com is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice, LWVPBC.

**Here's how to shop amazon**smile:

1. Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)
2. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials
3. Choose League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County Education Fund (EIN 46-2821816) to receive donations, or search for League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County
4. Select LWVPBC
4. Start shopping!



## **WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE FLORIDA RECOUNT...**

**By Marsha Vinson & Kimberly Spire-Oh**

Several LWVPBC members volunteered for the vote recount in Palm Beach County. Here are some of their observations.

### **(Lack of) Security@Florida Recount Sites**

Initially, security was scarce. In light of reports of meddling and more, our Leaguers expressed their concerns to local officials. When the recount began, the public easily gained access and milled around the recount sites. Security improved as the recount went on, and law enforcement became a presence. The lack of security was symbolic of the apparent disorganization and absence of formal planning. The lesson to be learned here is that our League should urge officials to plan for what probably will be: another complicated recount in 2020 - now.

### **Vote By Mail Drawbacks**

There are a few issues with Vote By Mail ballots that must be addressed.

- strict delivery deadlines should be changed to accommodate post office delays not caused by voters
- damaged ballots, which may be rectified by the Supervisor of Elections (SOE),
- voter signature, whether missing or mismatched

### **Undervotes vs Overvotes**

Undervotes, failing to vote in a particular race and overvotes, selecting more than one candidate per race, are equally problematic. Whether the voter undervotes and/or overvotes intentionally or accidentally, it has the same effect: the validity of the ballot is questioned because they will not be counted by machine in the first pass.

### **Write-in Candidates & Scribbles**

Voters must be made aware of the impact and/or lack of impact concerning write-in candidates. The perils of scribbling in thoughts about candidates played a significant role in the Florida Recount. Who reviews voter scribbles and whether scribbling counts – sounds silly – but is far from funny when the results are very close.

### **Voting Instructions**

The PBC League did an outstanding job of registering voters but teaching voters to correctly mark their ballots is crucial. This is especially true when voting by mail is encouraged. While marking one's ballot is second nature for most of us, it can prove very confusing to first-time voters and those who have motor difficulties.

### **ADA Compliant Election Machinery & More**

In Palm Beach County, the lack of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act was blamed for the out-of-date equipment utilized in the 2017 midterm election. Our League should work closely with officials to assure that the most technologically-advanced systems will be purchased and utilized in 2020.

### **Other Problems**

In addition to the many Recount issues reviewed above, unrealistic deadlines and poorly trained/overworked volunteers led to many of the election issues reported in the media.

### **The Fix!**

These problems can be solved by voter education and amendments to existing laws, and should be undertaken before the next election.

A special thank you goes out to all of the LWVPBC members who volunteered their time and effort to ensure a valid election process.

***If you know of any other election or voting related issues, please contact Nancy Cohen, Co-chair of the Voting Rights Coalition by clicking the button below.***



Email Nancy Cohen

**PARTYING AT THE POLLS**  
**Voter Services Committee Partied Till They Dropped**

## **By Pam Maldonado, Voter Services Chair**

Voter Services capped their successful year by celebrating democracy with Parties at the Polls in Belle Glade, Riviera Beach and Greenacres.

What's a Party at the Poll? It's an event that awards voters for their effort with topical themes, games, food, election souvenirs and fun, fun, fun. It also creates a fair-like atmosphere so that early voters can tell others to come, vote and enjoy. It highlights the importance of being a voting role model for adults and educates children that voting is a right and an obligation.

Marcia Halpern led the Riviera Beach conga line. She marshaled a committee of Leaguers and community organizations, such as the Barry University School of Social Work and the Park Manor Neighborhood Association. They organized games and crafts for children. Joining in were the Black Chamber of Commerce, Palm Beach Young Black Professionals, Urban League, ACLU, and MAMA (Mother's Against Murder Assn.) Pastor JR Thicklin piloted a group of congregants directly from church to the polls for "Souls to the Polls Sunday".

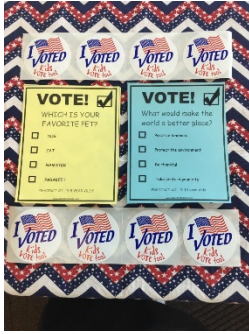
Teri Mitze was the impresario for the Belle Glade party. A Gospel DJ aired a live radio show from the catered event. The Urban League sent their youth group, the NuLLtes to assist. The Election turnout broke all records, but the majority of people attending were workers from the Gillum campaign. What, no Republicans? LWV serves all voters and would have loved to serve them also.

In Greenacres, Pam Maldonado and her trusty crew--Lynn Hankin, Marc Bruner, Nancy Ballen, Anna and Leo Gagne held a mini-fair with games, campaign paraphernalia, hot dogs and treats. Best of all was their set up for a children's polling station with age appropriate candidates (such as favorite pets) and an awesome photo booth with democracy/election props. The kids were excited to "vote" and take celebratory photos. Their parents also loved the idea of exposing their children to the voting process in a way that will be memorable. Heart pounder of the day goes to Pam, who encountered a first time voter who spoke only Spanish. She guided him to the polls and he received a standing ovation when he successfully voted!

At the end of the day, Leaguers were spent, but generally gratified with their efforts. Lessons learned will inform improved events and turnout for the next election!

Congratulations to all who tirelessly volunteered to make the events successful.

**Onward to registering the 1.4 million felons who will  
be eligible to vote starting on January 8<sup>th</sup>!**



**WELCOME!**  
**New LWVPBC Members:**

**Linda Cohen**, West Palm Beach; **Maria Collier**, Palm Beach; **Marjorie Federman**, Palm Beach Gardens; **Debra Grodin**, Delray Beach; **Armande Herold**, Wellington; **Joanna Hollis**, West Palm Beach; **Diane Kershenbaum**, Palm Beach Gardens; **Lillian Khanna**, Lake Worth; **Anne Kruse**, Boca Raton; **Mary Lansing**, West Palm Beach; **Deborah Leach-Scampavia**, West Palm Beach; **Myra Leizman**, Palm Beach Gardens; **Alexandra McGivney**, Palm Beach Gardens; **Jon Meyer**, Delray Beach; **Arthur Morrison**, West Palm Beach; **Syril Morss**, Highland Beach; **Jamie Orens**, Boynton Beach; **Norma Poretz**, Atlantis; **Sara Sikes**, South Palm Beach; **Lara Kashdan Stolzberg**, Greenacres; **Sharon Webb**, West Palm Beach; **Sydney Webb**, Jupiter; **Marilyn Weintraub**, Delray Beach.



**Orientation for New Members  
and Others Interested in the League!**

Saturday, February 9. Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth. Registration at 9 a.m. Program starts at 9:30 a.m. and ends 12:30 p.m. For directions and to RSVP contact: Darlene Kostrub at [dkostrub@aol.com](mailto:dkostrub@aol.com)/561-852-0496.

## **Name Tags are In!**

Name Tags ordered before November 1 are in and available for pick-up at the Hot Topics Luncheon, February 20. If you want yours mailed, contact Darlene Kostrub at [dkostrub@aol.com](mailto:dkostrub@aol.com) and mail a check for \$5 made out to LWVPBC, c/o Dorneth Weir, 9433 Worswick Ct., Wellington, 33414.

## **A Personal Thank You From Our President**

I want to thank all the LWVPBC members and friends for stepping in and assuming some of my responsibilities. I truly appreciate the support and comfort you have supplied during our family tragedy. Your attendance at my daughter's Celebration of Life and your contribution to Peggy Adams Animal Rescue, Trustbridge Hospice, and the Education Fund of LWVPBC are wonderful legacies to her memory.

Thank You.  
Karen Wilkerson

## **LWVPBC Extends Heartfelt Sympathies to Carole Sherwood**

Sadly, Carole lost her husband, Everett Peckham Sherwood, in November. The **News** staff and members of the League extend our deepest sympathies to Carole and her family at this time of grieving.

## Congratulations Amy!

LWVPBC Board member, Amy Robinson, and her husband are welcoming a baby boy in the Spring! Welcome to our future League member.

## HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR DUES YET?

If not, please do so as soon as possible. Those unpaid by late December will be taken off our League roster before dues to state and national Leagues have to be paid. Individual dues are \$60, Susan B. Anthony level is \$100, Household for 2 people at same address is \$90. You are important to our League and we value your membership support. You can renew by logging on to our web site, just click on the "renew" button below and log in to your account. Remember, you can update your member profile while there! If you have questions about your dues, contact **Dorneth Weir**, Treasurer, at [dornethweir@gmail.com](mailto:dornethweir@gmail.com) or **Darlene Kostrub**, Membership chair, at [dkostrub@aol.com](mailto:dkostrub@aol.com). Thank you!

Renew your Membership!

## Learn to Log-In!

If you haven't logged in to the LWVPBC.org website yet, you are missing out! Get more information about your League. Update your profile! Renew your membership! See what you've missed at Hot & Cool Topics...and much more.

To get step-by-step instructions, click the "Tech Tip" button and watch a "You Tube" video of our "Tech Tip" master, Ken Horkavy, with easy-to-follow instructions.

**TECH  
TIP**



Tech Tip!

Visit our website

Sample Button. (This one doesn't work)

## Use the Buttons!

You can go directly to a web page, email, or website with the click of a button! Simply put your cursor over the button and right click for a shortcut. You will go directly to the web page described on the button. If it is an email link, it will take you to the email page on your computer with the email address already there...no looking up addresses or worrying about typos.

### NEWS EDITORIAL VOLUNTEERS

Debra Chandler, Managing Editor  
Ken Horkavy, IT

Carol Hershey, Marsha Vinson, Karen Corbin, Mary Jane Range,  
Cecily Feldman, Kristen Murtaugh, Rita Wachs, Mary Mertz, Faith Schulman, Emily Rosen

Find Your State Representative

Find Your State Senator

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

Contact Your League: [info@lwvpsc.org](mailto:info@lwvpsc.org) | [www.lwvpsc.org](http://www.lwvpsc.org)

STAY CONNECTED

