



[www.LWVVC.org](http://www.LWVVC.org) PO Box 9695, Daytona Beach, FL 32120

# The Voter

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## OUR PRESIDENT'S REMARKS—A New President and New Beginnings

Dear League Members:

The League of Women Voters of Volusia County Board of Directors met on Wednesday, November 16, 2022, to accept with regret the resignation of our president Susan Bayley, effective December 31, 2022.



In accordance with our LWVVC Bylaws, as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, I want to introduce myself as the new President of our League. I am very excited to be leading such an important association, one that I have been a member of for a number of years. I look forward to collaborating with you to leverage new opportunities and to increase our League membership. As I was appointed just this January, I am still learning about the current status of ongoing projects, but I want to share my thoughts about the future of the League.

The League is a grassroots organization so we tend to think primarily of individual members, but there are so many more people and groups that are important parts of our community. We have members who are volunteers and Action Team Leaders. We have community partners who support our goals and issues. We work with other non-partisan organizations that share our concern for encouraging informed and active participation in government, working to increase understanding of major policy issues, and advocating for legislative changes and policies for the public good. I want to continue to strengthen these relationships and in partnership with them, increase member involvement and service to voters. We have so many great people and so many opportunities. I want to engage you all and want us to work collaboratively to grow the League and grow awareness of the value of our work.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Carolyn West for the outstanding job she did as the interim editor of *The Voter*. The hard work and creativity she provided our newsletter was much appreciated.

It is with the greatest pleasure that we welcome Alicia Keenon as the new editor of *The Voter*. Alicia's background brings a wealth of computer and editorial skills, and I think the *Voter* will benefit from her addition to this role.

We have a big winter season coming up with our Hot Topics and Saturday lunch meetings. I look forward to seeing you this February and March. You can reach me by emailing [president@lwvvc.org](mailto:president@lwvvc.org) and I will respond as quickly as I can.

With gratitude,  
Cathy Egley, President

**UPCOMING LEAGUE MEETINGS AND EVENTS****February Hot Topic— “Florida’s African American Landscape Painters:  
Their Art and Its Meaning”****Presenter: Gary Monroe****When: Thursday, February 9, 2023****Time: 7:00 p.m.****Place: Brannon Center, 105 S. Riverside Drive, New Smyrna Beach****Cost: \$15.00**

If you have ever wondered where the weeping Cypress and Poinciana tree paintings that define popular images of Florida got their start, come hear the Highwaymen chronicler tell their stories on Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. The Highwaymen Artists are a group of mostly self-taught African-American painters who began creating Florida landscapes in the 1950s and '60s. What began as inexpensive pieces of art are now popular with serious collectors.

Not only will Gary Moore tell us about these famous artists' lives, but there will also be a gallery of Highwayman paintings, graciously donated for the evening for our viewing pleasure.

RSVP to Carla Christianson, [reclaim4all@gmail.com](mailto:reclaim4all@gmail.com) by **Wednesday, February 6**. She will tell you how to submit your check in a return email.

**February General Meeting— “Pedestrian Safety in Volusia and Flagler Counties:  
Is There a Plan for Improvement?”****Presenter: Stephan Harris****When: Wednesday, February 22, 2023****Time: 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.****Where: TPO Office, 2570 W International Speedway Blvd #100, Daytona Beach, FL 32114**

Do you walk or bicycle in our area? Did you know that The Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach Area, which covers Volusia and Flagler Counties, is consistently listed among the most dangerous areas in the nation for pedestrians? Based on a review of national data, it was recently ranked as the most dangerous US metropolitan area for walkers.

Stephan Harris will explain how The River to Sea Transportation has been working on changing this heartbreaking statistic and its commitment to improving safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Mr. Harris was the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization's Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator from 2006 to April 2016 and is currently the Transportation Planner- Project Manager.

Following the presentation, which is open to the public, we hope you will join us for dinner at Red Lobster, 2625 W International Speedway Blvd, Daytona Beach, FL 32114. Please RSVP to: Jeanne Tanke at [jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com) by **February 19**. Be sure to let her know if you plan to join us at Red Lobster.

## March Hot Topic— “Badass Women in Florida History”

**Presenters:** LWVVC Speakers Bureau

**When:** Thursday, March 2, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** Deland Regional Library, 130 E Howry Ave, DeLand, FL 32724

Because March is Women’s History month, we will be celebrating some of the most amazing women in Florida History at our Hot Topic meeting. The stories of these trailblazers are both interesting and an inspiration. Our Speakers Bureau members will give us insight into the many ways these women have had an impact often reaching far beyond the shores and borders of the Sunshine State.

You are welcome to join us for dinner following the meeting at The Table, 100 E New York Ave, DeLand, FL 32724. Please RSVP to Jeanne Tanke - [jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com) by Monday, February 28.

## March General Meeting— “Financing the Justice System”

**When:** Saturday, March 18, 2023

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Where:** Palmetto Club, 1000 S Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL 32114

How much does it cost to operate our courts? Who pays for the courts to function?

Guilty or innocent what can being involved in the justice system cost you?

These questions are some of the ones our panel will be discussing at our March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

After the presentation, we will be having lunch at the Palmetto Club, for a cost of \$20 with payment at the door. Menu choices will include five fresh seasonal fruit plate with cheese OR boneless, skinless chicken breast with wild rice pilaf, green beans, with a sheet cake dessert. All entrees are served with fresh bread and a choice of tea and coffee. Watch for the Constant Contact for more details. Please RSVP by March 15 to: Cathy Egley at [jetski49@bellsouth.net](mailto:jetski49@bellsouth.net)

## Mardi Gras on MainStreet Dog Parade & Festival

The theme for the 26th annual Dog Parade is Mardi Gras in La Habana! Join your Volusia League friends walking in The Mardi Gras parade. Dogs and people costumed in green, purple and gold will be marching through DeLand on Saturday, February 18th. We will have a banner and beads to throw. This event is so much fun, and the more League members who participate, the merrier!

**When:** Saturday, February 18

**Arrive:** 9:30 -10:00 am - to find your spot in the line-up.

**Where:** 100 N Woodland Blvd, DeLand, FL

Participants will receive an email Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup> with all the details including our Space # and a mock-up of the line-up. **RSVP Nancy Nusbaum at [nusbanh@gmail.com](mailto:nusbanh@gmail.com)** and she will forward it to you. Plan to arrive before 10 a.m. on the 18<sup>th</sup> to find your spot in the line-up before you arrive. (Enter Woodland Boulevard from the north. If you are coming from the south, we recommend using Plymouth.) The list will be available on the DeLand parade website ([www.delanddogparade.com](http://www.delanddogparade.com)) by Friday, February 17. Please wear Mardi Gras-themed clothing in either purple, green and/or gold. The parade will start at 11:00am. The East side of Woodland will move first, and the West side will follow.

## ACTION TEAM REPORTS

### VOTER SERVICE ACTION TEAM— Vote-by-Mail Requests Expired January 1<sup>st</sup>

Although these are quiet months after the 2022 elections, our League continues moving forward on voting rights for returning citizens through additional postcard campaigns as well as general voter registration. We will continue providing voter service at community events, such as the Hispanic Festival that we attended in January, as well as the February 11<sup>th</sup> Wildlife festival and the February 18<sup>th</sup> DeLand Mardi Gras event. Look for Constant Contact and e-mail announcements for details.

**As of January 1, 2023, all vote-by-mail requests are expired.** According to the Supervisor of Elections website data on the November 2022 election, 41% of the turnout came from Vote-by-Mail ballots. However, many people do not realize that as of January 1, 2023, all vote-by-mail requests are expired and must be requested again for municipal 2023 elections and for the elections in 2024. This change in regulation was not widely communicated, and now our League's challenge is to get request forms in the hands (or on the devices) of voters.

This year we will need to strengthen partnerships and rely on our volunteers to expand our access to underserved communities and people who may not have access to voter rights information. Some of the Voter Service Action Team members are meeting on Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2 p.m. at a location in Daytona to brainstorm about this issue. Please contact me at [nusbanh@gmail.com](mailto:nusbanh@gmail.com) if you would like to join us.

--Nancy Nusbaum, Chair

### OUR NATURAL RESOURCES TEAM— Protecting Land and Water Resources

As we prepare to observe the upcoming session of the Florida Legislature, working in conjunction with the League of Women Voters of Florida, our Natural Resources Team is watching and researching the bills being put forward by our legislators in Tallahassee, especially proposals which involve protecting our natural lands as well as those dealing with water quality issues.

Additionally, we are planning a Hot Topic presentation at the Ormond Beach Public Library on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. We will host a panel discussion on "How We Protect Land in Volusia County" with guest speakers from Volusia County government Clay Ervin, Brad Burbaugh, and Ginger Adair.

We will be joining the Voter Service Team at their tabling events in the new year, reaching out to our youngest "voters" to engage them in voting for their favorite animals. In the past we have been at both the Wildlife Festival at the Lyonia Environmental Center (scheduled on February 11<sup>th</sup>), as well as the Dog Parade in DeLand (scheduled on February 18<sup>th</sup>). We look forward to these fun and educational events this spring!

To take advantage of daylight hours, we have shifted our meetings times to 12:00 noon on the 2nd Thursday of the month. In conjunction with our meetings, we plan to visit local environmental venues, learning more about them. Our next team meeting will be on February 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 at the Marine Discovery Center in New Smyrna Beach. To stay up-to-date with these interesting activities, follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/lwvvc), and visit our website at [www.lwvvc.org](http://www.lwvvc.org)

--Nancy Vaughn, Chair

## LWVVC SPEAKERS BUREAU—Offering Guest Speaker and Voter Services

Our Speakers Bureau will be conducting a training sometime in February. Even if you indicated on your membership form that you were interested in our Speakers Bureau, please contact me personally so I can put you on my list: ( [ahsmith5@bellsouth.net](mailto:ahsmith5@bellsouth.net) or 386-235-3957). We plan to partner with the Voter Service Team to speak with groups **and** offer assistance with requesting vote by mail ballots, as well as any other voter service needs. Our goal is to continue to expand our outreach with other topics of interest.

For those of you active in other organizations, we hope you'll recommend the League Speakers Bureau. Anyone interested in our services can contact me at the email and/or phone number above.

I encourage you to attend the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Hot Topic program, to enjoy our Speakers Bureau presentation for Women's History Month. We truly do have some outstanding women we will be highlighting (and some of us are old enough to remember some of them 😊)!

--Ann Smith, Chair

## OUR MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE—Welcome New Members!

**We are so pleased to welcome our newest League members:**

Dorothy DelRose	Andy Bowen	Beverly Johnson
Uilez Sempler	Mary Samarat	Jeanne Jeffs
Barbara Ludlow	Derek Lamontagne	Ellen Juliano
Robert Ludlow	Kristen Frankel	John Juliano
Laura Claude	Deb Driskell	Katherine Barnard
	James Driskell	

To those who renewed their 2023 membership – **Thank You!** Our League chapter now has over **200** members. It is going to be a busy year! We need you! Thank you for your support!

## Getting to Know Your League: New and Current Members are Invited

Plan to join us for an orientation in Port Orange on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4 p.m. as League Members share information about the League and Volusia County Chapter. This is an opportunity for you to meet other members, learn about the League's mission in our community and chose what role you may want to play in League activities. Watch for more details in the March Constant Contact e-mail.

Judy Gordon, Membership Chair

## GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION TEAM—Focus on Sustainable Development

Our League's Growth Management Action Team (GMAT) has been busy since its creation in October 2022. Team members will focus on growth, development and redevelopment issues and plan to promote sustainable, quality community development while studying the governmental processes that can influence it. At their first meeting, they decided to focus on resiliency planning and sustainable development.

In November, Action Team members met at Riverside Conservancy to learn about shoreline restoration and more specifically to view the Conservancy's own shoreline restoration project. Conservancy Executive Director, Kelli McGee, provided a very informative session on shoreline planting and its mitigation successes.



**ABOVE: GMAT chair, Saralee Morrissey, and members at Riverside Conservancy**



**LEFT: Action Team members examine mangroves, oyster beds**

The Growth Management Action Team hosted the League's Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup> Hot Topic— "Storms and Flooding – Will Resiliency Protect Us?" Guest speakers were two resiliency planning experts, Tara McCue, Executive Director of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and Katrina Locke, Sustainability and Resilience Manager for Volusia County. Both women discussed the many efforts at collaborating with other entities involved in resiliency, including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as well as state and county Emergency Management Departments.

The Regional Planning Council also includes eight central Florida counties as well as 78 municipalities! While discussing the many plans and policies, Action Team members realized that policies must be turned into action through development regulations and capital projects for the area to truly become more resilient. Fortunately, this year Volusia County will begin a new vulnerability assessment project.

The Growth Management Action Team will continue to track and be involved in this and other related efforts, including the recent residential development moratorium in New Smyrna Beach. To join the GMAT, contact Saralee Morrissey at [saraleemorrissey@gmail.com](mailto:saraleemorrissey@gmail.com)

--Saralee Morrissey, Chair



## **OUR EDUCATION ACTION TEAM—a Three-Year Plan to Deal with Learning Loss**

The Education Team featured Rachel Hazel, Deputy Superintendent for the Volusia County Schools, at the general meeting on January 21, 2023. Ms. Hazel reported on the strategies used by teachers and staff to work with all students adversely affected by two years of COVID, as well as two hurricanes, and the general upheaval of the school routine.

Volusia County Schools are now looking at a new three-year plan to help bring success to students whose education was interrupted. Learning loss is being tracked, and new programs include afternoon and weekend tutoring and camps, in addition to private tutoring and other means. Most of these programs are being funded through the American Rescue Plan and Elementary Secondary Schools Relief funds.

Ms. Hazel explained the new testing schedule designed to assess progress and show areas of need. It will also contribute to school grades for all districts in Florida. She helped to answer the many questions raised by an interested audience that included teachers, parents and other interested community members.

--Pat Drago, Chair

## **OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS—Our Observer Corps Needs YOU!**

**Olga Hernandez - Observer Corps Coordinator**

The Observer Corps needs volunteers. Some of our observers have stepped away for travel or personal issues. We need observers in Daytona Beach, Daytona Beach Shores, DeBary, Deland, Deltona, Holly Hills, Lake Helen, Oak Hill, Orange City, Ormond Beach, Pierson, and Ponce Inlet. If you live in any one of these jurisdictions, and you care about your area, the best way is to attend these municipal meetings to learn what is going on. I will be happy to provide training and an Observer badge (thank you Linda Mojer and Nancy Nusbaum). I thank all the Corps members, past and continuing, you do the League and the community a great service. Do contact me at [OAH@Vyndicar.com](mailto:OAH@Vyndicar.com).

**Daytona Beach Shores City Council**

**November – December 2022 – Janet Babbitt, Observer**

### **November 15, 2022**

- Meeting focused on impact to the Shores from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole.
- City Manager, Kurt Swartzlander, report was the focus of the meeting.
- December parade canceled so City staff can focus on hurricane recovery efforts.
- Discussed various temporary seawall efforts made after Hurricane Ian. Most efforts failed due to Hurricane Nicole. Temporary seawalls are meant to protect from high tides and storms, not hurricanes.
- Discussed mandatory evacuation of condominium buildings and homes in the Shores. Discussed focus on human safety.
- Discussed potential damage due to King Tides 11/23 -11/24.
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) will use Shores community rooms to meet with residents about hurricane recovery issues.

- Residents in audience and commissioners requested residents send letters to local, state, and federal officials requesting help with various hurricane related assistance.
- Boards of condominium HOAs are meeting to share hurricane-recovery plans, including funding and seawall ideas.

**December 13, 2022**

- Proclamation issued for retiring County Council member Billie Wheeler.
- City Manager report included:
  - \$19,000 in permit fees waived as of 12/6/22. Can apply for waiver through 1/9/23.
  - Discussion on grant and loan opportunities via FEMA and SBA.
  - Commissioner Bryan is on a seawall task force with a small number of Shores residents.
- Shores will receive approximately \$8,000 from the Walmart Opioid Settlement.
- Granted \$1,600 in Beautification Improvement Grants.
- Carried forward one Non-conforming Sign Removal Incentive Grant application. (In 2012, the City Council adopted a sign ordinance requiring all new signs within the city be monument style and the removal of nonconforming, freestanding ground/pole signs within a 10-year period in order to enhance the city's streetscape. The Non-Conforming Sign Removal Incentive Grant Program is a 50-50 matching grant. The funds are awarded through a grant application process and the award limit is \$6,500.)
- Approved four Non-conforming Sign Removal Incentive Grants.

**Edgewater City Council Meetings****November, December, January (end Q4, partial Q1) - Linda Mojer, Observer**

After certification of his election win by a 55% margin, 18-year-old Diezel DePew was sworn in as the City of Edgewater's new Mayor and presided over City Council meetings in the period. Council continued to address residual storm impacts, year-end budget adjustments, land-use issues, long-term policy studies, and populating standing committees through appointments.

**January 9, 2023**—The city kicked off the New Year by recognizing participants in holiday contests and parades, followed by renewed citizen comments on the issues of growth, zoning infractions, service on advisory councils, emergency response, environmental concerns, noise ordinances, stormwater, and infrastructure. Newly elected councilmembers settled into their roles, reporting on public appearances, making queries and suggestions, as well as requesting information sessions to aid them in getting up to speed. First readings were recorded for annexation, zoning, emergency housing, and land use; along with funding resolutions for reserves, pensions, and escrow accounts. In other business, the City chose to take part in a proportionate cost-sharing plan to fund a traffic signal at the NSB High School, and Gigi Bennington was named Vice Mayor.

**December 15 & 22, 2022**—Special meetings were scheduled to propose and consider the purchase of property to be developed for a future City Hall and Fire/Police/Emergency Operations Center. Land on Indian River Boulevard, just east of Cow Creek Road, is centrally located between current business/residential areas and future development west of I-95. The parcel includes approximately 27.12 acres of buildable land on a 56-acre lake, with an asking price of \$2,665,000 or approximately \$32,062 per acre. The City has contracted the purchase with added stipulations and plans to allocate monies received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to underwrite the acquisition.

**December 5, 2022**—Following the special meeting to swear in newly elected Mayor and Council members, Mayor DePew took the gavel to convene the regular meeting before a sizable group. In response to the City's follow-up report addressing storm impacts and historic levels of damage, Councilman Powers reiterated the need for rigorous attention to development limits, resiliency, and infrastructure needs. Consent items addressed utility rate study services, emergency debris hauling, staffing, and parking agreements; along with adopting an amended budget for FY22-23. Historic live oak tree removal drew spirited exchanges by citizens, ending with denials for both a developer clear-cutting plan and a single-lot owner who had planned to mitigate removal by replanting.

**November 14, 2022**—In the meeting immediately following Election week, Council conducted business as usual, honoring outgoing Mayor Thomas and Councilwoman Power, authorizing multiple service purchase orders and legal contracts, approving final budget appropriations, goal-setting for senior staff, replacement board appointments, and reviewing emergency management procedures under the direction of the Department of Environmental Services. Citizen comments continued to focus on flooding, vegetation/drainage and pressing repair concerns.

**Port Orange – Port Orange City Council Meetings  
December 6, 2022 – January 17, 2023 – Karol Rainier, Observer**

A swearing-in ceremony was held at the beginning of the December 6, 2022, meeting for newly elected City Council member Kat Atwood and newly re-elected members Reed Foley and Scott Stiltner. The auditorium was filled with family members and many Volusia County officials.

Each council member sits on Council Committees. The current appointments include the following:

- Kat Atwood: ArtHaus and First Step
- Drew Bastian: Municipal Police Officers Retirement Trust
- Mayor Don Burnette: Port Orange – South Daytona Chamber of Commerce and Roundtable of Elected Officials
- Reed Foley: River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization and Municipal Firefighters Pension Board
- Scott Stiltner: General Employees Retirement Trust Fund

Councilman Foley reported that he was concerned with the performance of the Firefighters Pension Plan. He requested that the plan be reviewed. Mayor Burnette stated that the council needs to know when retirement plans are underperforming as it is the city's and pension boards' responsibility to make sure plans are performing optimally.

City Manager Wayne Clark reported the completion of the temporary repair of Cambridge Pump Station wall (dam) that collapsed during Tropical Storm Nicole. Walls and pumps are in place. A permanent rebuild is being studied now. City manager Clark also reported that they are hoping that the money spent on debris removal will be covered by a grant from the state.

Executive Order 26 for Tropical Storm Ian extended the local state of emergency to January 23, 2023, and Executive Order 16 for Tropical Storm Nicole extended the local state of emergency to January 17, 2023.

The Council approved the final Plat and Plans for Leila's Hammock Subdivision. Originally the plan was to add 24 multi-family units to this area. Although this parcel is zoned for multifamily dwellings, the community was not happy with this plan. The owner and the community worked together to lower the number to just six single family units. The council complemented the owner and the current residents of the subdivision on working together to create a resolution acceptable to all.

An update was provided on a utility rate study that is underway on water, wastewater, reclaimed water, and miscellaneous service charges and fees.

**South Daytona City Council  
November 2022 – January 2023 – Olga Hernandez, Observer Corps Coordinator**

The debris from hurricanes Ian and Nicole have been picked up. The city is trying to upgrade the look of the area by having better code enforcement and some grants to help. The city passed a resolution to use "American Rescue Plan Act" funds to replace all water meters in the city to better track usage by both residents and the utility. The meters will be state-of-the-art with installation over the next two years. Residents will be notified when their turn comes. The blighted property at 509 Big Tree is being given a deadline to improve or be demolished. The Silvestri Townhome/Condo project on 3151 Ridgewood is again delayed. January 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm a drive-in movie 'Spider-Man No Way Home' will be shown at Reed Canal Park. On February 2nd there will be a ribbon cutting for the renovated Piggotte Community Center. A Civics 101 class will be presented there by the Volusia League of Cities.

**New Smyrna Beach – New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meetings  
January 2023 – Nancy Nusbaum, Observer**

**January 10, 2023—** City Commission meetings for the last several months continue to address residual flooding and damage from the two recent hurricanes. New Smyrna Beach experienced 21" of rain and 4' of storm surge in a 24-hour period flooding around 1000 homes in the city limits. We hear from a steady flow of frustrated homeowners, many who believe the floods in their neighborhoods were exacerbated by the elevation of new construction. The city has engaged a team of engineering experts for a public meeting on January 18 to gather input from residents. This data collected will be shared with Staff with recommendations and a report to follow in 3-4 weeks. The goal is to find out how and why the floods happened and to develop a mitigation plan.

Meanwhile, the Commissioners approved an ordinance for a "temporary moratorium on the consideration of any applications for rezonings, major amendments to a master development agreement, site plan approval, plat approvals or variances for contiguous property 10 acres in size or larger proposed for residential development located in FEMA floor zones A and AE for a period no later than June 27, 2023. A storm water masterplan is priority in prioritizing projects for the \$14 million in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds.

**School Board of Volusia County  
January 10, 2023 - Ann Harrell, Observer**

The Volusia County School Board met in regular session with Chairman Jamie Haynes calling the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Members present: Ms. Jamie Haynes, Chairman, District 1; Mrs. Anita Burnette, Vice Chairman, District 2; Mr. Ruben Colón, District 5; Mr. Carl Persis, District 4; and Mrs. Jessie Thompson, District 3. Also present: Dr. Carmen J. Balgobin, Superintendent; and Mr. Aaron Wolfe, School Board Attorney.

Following five administrative appointments, the Teacher of the Year five finalists were recognized. Dr. Carmen J. Balgobin, Superintendent, and Mr. Bob Davis, CEO of Hotels & Lodging Association of Volusia County, asked the 5 Finalists for the 2023-2024 Teacher of the Year to come forward. Mr. Bob Davis presented each of them with a special gift of 2-night accommodations at a local hotel. The 5 Finalists are: Vonda Morris, Spruce Creek High School; Dodi Gaines, Seabreeze High School; Valerie Marcus, DeBary Elementary School; Cassandra Steward, RJ Longstreet Elementary School; Tamika Harvard, Westside Elementary School. Each talked briefly about her experiences with teaching at Volusia County Schools.

Public Participation speakers spoke on the following topics:

- Elizabeth Albert - board room update, human resources update, International Teacher Program
- Amanda ElShemi - staffing priorities
- Rich Pernell - a program for consideration: interpersonal conflict resolution for students
- Sheila Butchart - staffing and school
- Scott Cleary - human resources
- Carol Sawyer - the new board room set-up
- Laura Bechard - teaching conditions
- Jeannie Maddox - school counselors' job description
- Dorothy Featherston - the discipline matrix.

Issues to watch in Volusia School District in 2023:

- Spending of federal and state funds in the district.
- Flexibility on spending at the local level
- Direct State control over the curriculum
- Censorship in schools
- Pay for veteran teachers.

**LWVVC Calendar for February-March 2023**

**Thursday, February 9 at 7 p.m. Hot Topic: “Florida’s African American Landscape Painters, Their Art, and its Meaning” Guest speaker: Gary Monroe.** At the Brannon Center, 105 S. Riverside Drive, New Smyrna Beach. The cost for tickets is \$15. **RSVP to Carla Christianson, [reclaim4all@gmail.com](mailto:reclaim4all@gmail.com) by Wednesday, February 6.** In return email, Carla will explain how to submit your check.

**Wednesday, February 15 at 4 to 7 p.m. LWVVC Board meeting.** All League members are invited to attend. River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization, Indigo Professional Center, 2570 West International Speedway Boulevard, Suite 100 Daytona Beach, FL 32114

**Saturday, February 18, beginning at 11 a.m. The Annual Mardi Gras Dog Parade and Festival** in downtown DeLand. If you’re interested in joining the march, **RSVP to Nancy Nusbaum at [nusbanh@gmail.com](mailto:nusbanh@gmail.com) .**

**Wednesday, February 22 at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Hot Topic: “Pedestrian Safety in Volusia County and Flagler Counties: Is there a Plan for Improvement?” Guest speaker Steven Harris.** Mr. Harris is the Transportation Planner-Project Manager with the TPO. River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization. After the presentation, join us for dinner at the Reb Lobster. **RSVP to Jeanne Tanke [jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com)**

**Monday, March 2 at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Hot Topic: “Badass Women in Florida History” with members of the LWVVC Speakers Bureau.** Deland Regional Library, 130 E Howry Ave, DeLand, FL 32724. Join us for dinner at The Table after the meeting. **RSVP to Jeanne Tanke [jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com) by Monday, Feb. 28.**

**Wednesday, March 15 at 5:00 to 7 p.m. LWVVC Board meeting.** All League members are invited to attend. Location will be announced. Watch for Constant Contact for details.

**Saturday, March 18 at 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. including lunch following the program. “Financing the Justice System.”** Palmetto Club, 1000 S Beach St, Daytona Beach, FL 32114. **RSVP to Cathy Egley [jetski49@bellsouth.net](mailto:jetski49@bellsouth.net)**

(Refer to articles inside this *Voter* issue for more event details.)

**LWVVC Board Officers:**

Cathy Egley: President

Carla Christianson: 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President     Saralee Morrissey: 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Nicki Junkins: Secretary     Ken Fischer: Treasurer

***The Voter:*** Editorial Team: Carla Christianson, Judy Gordon, Alicia Keenon, and Carolyn West