



THE VOTER

LWV of the Villages/Tri-County Area ◊ November 2009 & January 2010 ◊ Vol. 4 Issue 5
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Nationally recognized! Locally active!



TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCE & HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2009
10:30 A.M.

STONECREST COUNTRY CLUB
27/441 BELLEVIEW (JUST NORTH OF WAL MART)

BRING A GIFT FOR THE AUCTION!

RESERVATIONS: CONTACT CAROLYN JOHNSON, cgljohnson@comcast.net

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization. We do not endorse political parties or candidates. We encourage informed and active participation in government and work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I hope that everyone had a good Thanksgiving. This is a busy time with the holidays approaching and company visiting and I know that League activities are the last thing on your mind.

Our November meeting focused on taxes vs. fees. Bob McKee was unable to join us because of illness. However, he sent two representatives, David Jordan, Director Central Services, and Randy Van Alstine, Manager, Golden Triangle Office. David addressed his philosophy of taxes vs. fees and Cindy Kelly, from the city of Ocala, spoke from the perspective of the municipality as it tries to balance the budget without jeopardizing services to the community. One piece of information that was new to most of us is that Ocala has the highest unemployment in the state. Attracting new businesses to the area is of primary importance.

At the November meeting, we announced that we would be having the transportation concurrence meeting prior to the **Holiday Luncheon** on **December 8**. We will be meeting at **Stonecrest County Club at 10:30 a.m.** Immediately following the concurrence meeting, we will have our holiday luncheon and auction. The background and questions for the concurrence are reprinted in this issue and we ask that you bring them with you. If you are unable to attend, please email your responses. We would like to have as much input as possible from our members.

Our next meeting will be our **Health Care Forum** on **Thursday, January 21, 2010**. Please spread the word about this important meeting.

At this holiday season, please accept my best wishes to you and your families for health, happiness and peace. Looking forward to seeing you at our meetings in 2010! Your resolution for the coming year— get a friend to join the League and become involved!

In League,

Joanne

MEMBERSHIP

Dues for **January** are: **Helen Gozdanovic, Margie Hunt, Thelma Kuperberg and Frances Spedding**. Renewal checks should be made payable to **LWVF** and sent to **Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Dr., The Villages 32162**. Also, don't forget the "compulsory contribution" of \$10 when you renew!

Our condolences to League member, **Gladys Corbin**, on the death of her husband, Russel. Also belated get well wishes to **Diane Jacobson**.



Happy Hanukkah



Merry Christmas

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

December 9, 10:30 a.m., Transportation Concurrence;
11:30 a.m. Holiday Luncheon

Stonecrest Country Club, 27/441, Summerfield

January 21, 7:00 p.m., Health Care Forum

Temple Shalom, CR101, Oxford

February 22, 10:00 a.m., "How Big is Big?"

Community Bank & Trust, CR466, The Villages

Scott Ales, former Mayor of Eustis

Com. Barbara Fitos, Chair, Marion County Board of Commissioners

LWVF TRANSPORTATION

CONCURRENCE

Following are the questions and background information for the transportation concurrence. Please take the time to read this material over in preparation for our League's concurrence on **Wednesday, December 9, 10:30 a.m., Stonecrest County Club.** If you have any questions, please contact Charlene Walker, cawalker7@comcast.net:

The League of Women Voters of Florida (LWVF) presently does not have a position on mass transportation. When necessary, LWVF has advocated under the umbrella of the state's comprehensive growth plan. LWVF believes that "...Florida has an infrastructure deficit and that the state service levels and quality of life are declining."

- The national League (LWVUS) transportation position grew out of "efforts on behalf of equal opportunity for employment and housing. The 1971 Air Quality position added another dimension to this concern by urging measures to reduce vehicular pollution...and development of alternate transportation systems."
- Delegates to the 2009 LWVF Convention voted to support a statewide public transportation study along with this priority: "Support public transportation" to be included under "Sustainable Position."
- Prior to the start of the approved study, all local Leagues (with state Board approval) are being asked to consider concurring (accepting another League's consensus or affirmation of its position on a common program item) with the already existing positions of the **LWV of Orange** and **Seminole Counties** and the **LWV of Tallahassee**.
- It is very important that all local Leagues, regardless of size and location, give serious consideration to transportation needs.
- The federal government is stressing and funding commuter and high speed rail and public transportation projects.
- If local Leagues concur, the state and local Leagues will be in a position to take action on the transportation planning process.

The following questions represent the positions of the above mentioned Leagues:

- 1) I support the concept of Regional Transportation Authorities.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. If no, why not?

Question 1, Background: Currently, there are five Florida regional transportation authorities created pursuant to ch.343, F.S. They are: South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Miami-Dade, Broward & Palm Beach Counties); Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Orange, Osceola & Seminole Counties); Tampa Bay Commuter Transit Authority (Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Citrus, Hernando & Pasco Counties); Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Corridor (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Walton, Okaloosa, Bay, Gulf, Franklin, & Wakulla Counties); and the Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota Counties). There is one local transportation authority, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. These authorities have various membership structures powers and duties. The authorities are empowered to construct, finance, and manage a variety of mass transit options as an integrated system. They have numerous statutory powers and responsibilities, including the power to acquire, sell, and lease property; to exercise the power of eminent domain; to enter into purchasing agreements and other contracts, to enforce collection of system rates, fees, and other charges; and to approve revenue bonds issued on its behalf by the State Division of Bond Finance. As part of their study, the Orange County League included the subject of a transportation authority.

- 2) Concurrence on the need for a comprehensive, integrated and multi modal system of transportation that will provide an effective system of Public Transit (including but not limited to buses, commuter and light rail, trolley) sidewalks and bikeways (multi-modal). I believe that state, counties, municipalities, regional authorities or combinations of all should work together to create a transportation system that serves the needs of all Floridians and protects the environment.

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. If no, why not?

Question 2, Background: Beginning with the LWVUS position on transportation which is: "action to promote energy efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems that enhance the well being of cities and afford better access to housing and jobs," the Committee worked through study and consensus on local ordinances pertaining to sidewalks and bike paths.

In 1985, the LWV of Orange County adopted a local program to study and reached consensus on local ordinances pertaining to sidewalk and bike paths. Members of the Orange Transportation Committee met regularly while conducting parallel studies on sidewalks/bike paths (multi-modal) and mass transportation. The goal was to present a clearer picture of what local governments and the transportation authorities were doing to fulfill the national League position and to affirm local support for that position and for their local program.

Over the course of their study, they discovered a comprehensive bike plan; researched transportation authorities; found ordinances on sidewalks, and met with local and state officials. They also studied the governments and authorities responsible for dealing with and solving transportation problems.

At several meetings in 1986, members of the Orange County League concluded that "an effective authority must incorporate in its development program an integrated system which considered alternate modes of

transportation including but not limited to: restricted access highways, bus, light rail, bikeways and sidewalks."

- 3) Concurrence on the need for Dedicated Funding Sources: Provisions should be made for adequate, ongoing financing for construction and maintenance, and operation of the multi-modal transportation systems listed above in question 2. Many funding options have been proposed. Local and regional governments should have the ability to choose which option(s) are best for their areas.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. If no, why not?

Question 3, Background: As part of their study, LWV Orange County considered many funding sources. A large number of techniques or taxes are possible sources of funds for public transportation. Among them are: broad based taxes and revenue sources (retail sales tax, property tax, payroll tax, occupancy tax, etc.); charges on motor vehicle users (fuel tax, vehicle tax, commercial parking tax); charges on property benefiting from transit (service charges, special benefit assessment, tax increments dedicated to transit); borrowing strategies (bonds, equipment trust certificates, tax-exempt industrial revenue bonds, etc.), and joint ventures with the private sector (leasing air-rights, leasing property adjacent to transit facilities, participation in land development). Some authorities also receive state and federal grants.

*Note: Under current consideration is a rental car surtax.



November 2009 General Meeting





HEALTH CARE FORUM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2010

7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

TEMPLE SHALOM, CR101, OXFORD FLORIDA

GUEST SPEAKERS

PROF. R. PAUL DUNCAN, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

**DALE HOCKING, SR. V.P. & C.F. O., CENTRAL FLORIDA HEALTH
ALLIANCE**

RICHARD LYTLE, FORMER EXEC. DIR. SOCIAL SECURITY

REP. GINNY BROWN-WAITE STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

COSPONSORS

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE VILLAGES/TRI-COUNTY AREA
EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE SHALOM**

For Information Contact: Joanne M. Coen, joannejon@aol.com



JOIN THE LEAGUE



**Be a Voice for Citizens! Be a Force for Change!
Be Involved in the Process!**

Become a member of the LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area MAL Unit.

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Address _____

Email _____

Zip Code _____

Village, if applicable _____

Community, if applicable _____

Former League Member: Yes No Where: _____

Interested in:

Government in Florida _____

Education in Florida _____

Justice in Florida _____

Social Policy in Florida _____

Natural Resources _____

Growth Management _____

Dues are paid annually:

Individual \$50.00 _____

Household \$75.00 _____

**Contribution to
MAL Unit** \$10.00
or more _____

**Checks should be made payable to
LWV of Florida
and mailed to**

Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, FL 32162.

**Your dues include membership in the LWVUS and LWVF as well as a subscription to the
*Florida Voter***