



THE VOTER

LWV of the Villages/Tri-County Area ♦ November 2010 ♦ Vol. 5 Issue 5
www.lwvtri.org
Nationally recognized! Locally active!

pro' * gram n.

the League's "reason for being."

In preparation for the 2011 LWVF Convention, local Leagues are being asked to look at the existing state program and make recommendations.

Join with your fellow League members

on

Monday, November 8, 2010,

10:00 a.m.

Community Bank & Trust Co.

CR466, The Villages.

What do we retain and/or delete?

Suggestions for new studies?

Have your say!

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

Well, we still have to wait until November 2 for the outcome. However, I don't know about you, but I am glad this is finally over. No more robocalls, flyers filling up the mail box and negative ads telling us what is wrong with the other candidate. The reported amounts of money spent in the state and across the country are obscene.

During her travels this selection season, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara said that "The DISCLOSE Act and Citizens United have been major topics on the road. The latest flap about the Chamber of Commerce seems to miss the key point that regardless of whether the Chamber collects dues from foreign-owned corporations, the Chamber is making the largest campaign expenditures in history while refusing to disclose its donors. The point is that secret money has no place in American elections. The voters deserve to know who is speaking to them through these ads. The irony is that the very media outlets that should be and, in some cases, are reporting on these secret expenditures are accepting the advertising money. With the DISCLOSE Act mired in Congressional infighting, the only recourse that voters have is to educate themselves and vote, in large numbers." There is plenty of blame to go around on both sides.

Here on the local level, we did our best to inform and educate with speaking engagements and distribution of the special election edition of "The Florida Voter."

I would like to take the opportunity to especially thank **Dr. Charles Mojock**, president of LSCC, **Ron Shearer** and **Jerry Fenoff**, LSCC TV for providing the facilities for the League to tape forums on Amendments 4 and 8. Both presentations were excellent, and our participants provided solid positions on both sides.

Two of our study committees, Education and Transportation, are gearing up again. Please read both pieces from Bernice and Charlene.

Note the change in date for our November meeting, and make it a point to attend. This is where the "ground up" voice of the local League is heard.

With Thanksgiving just approaching, whether you are staying in the area or traveling, I hope you have a happy, healthy and safe holiday.

See you on November 8th!

Joanne

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Monday, Nov. 8, 10 a.m., Program Planning. Brief board meeting to follow. Community Bank & Trust Co., CR466, The Villages.

Monday, Dec. 6, 12 noon, Holiday Party. Home of Carolyn Johnson.

MEMBERSHIP

Peggy Pope reports that **Owen** is recovering slowly but surely from their recent accident. As you know, they were on their way to help us out at the Lady Lake Farmer's Market when their car was involved in an accident. **November dues: Sally Bard; Janet Duncan; Helen Gozdanovic; Carolyn & Tom Johnson. December dues: Carol Balbes; Nancy Bell; Thelma Kuperberg and Judie Brown.**

If you are coming to the November meeting, you can save yourself postage and bring your renewal check with you. Otherwise, checks, including the **\$10** contribution, can be sent to **Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Dr., The Villages, FL 32162.**

PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Program Planning is not to be confused with the special programs (speakers, panel discussions, etc) that are presented at our regularly scheduled local League meetings.

On the state level, members of local Leagues come together to discuss issues of statewide interest and current or potential League

concerns. Members (you and me) recommend issues for study and action. Our board determines level of interest in those recommended issues and sends the results to LWVF board. State program is derived from the input of all local Leagues. This same process will take place on the local level in preparation for our Annual **Meeting** in 2011.

On Monday, **November 8**, at **10 a.m.** you have the opportunity to discuss the LWV State Program and decide what we want to remain in that program and what we might want to add (i.e. transportation) or subtract. Currently the **State Program for 2009-2010**, adopted 2 years ago at the state convention includes:

1. **Government in Florida** - State Constitution, Finance & Taxation and Election Law
2. **Education in Florida** - funding to provide equitable & quality education
3. **Justice in Florida**
4. **Social Policy in Florida** - Health Care financing & delivery, jobs/equal pay for equal work
5. **Sustainability**
6. **Natural Resources** - preservation and conservation and energy via renewable sources

Go to our website, www.lwvtri.org. and click on **Publications**. There you will see a link to **"Study & Action 2009-11."** **Pages 2-5** explain the Program Planning Process as well as explaining the current program for LWVF. Please print these pages out and bring them with you to our November 8 meeting. **Betsy Brody** and **Charlene Walker** will walk us through the process.

In addition, Charlene will explain the transportation study which the delegates to the 2009 LWVF Convention approved and bring us up to date on it. As the problems related to it have not been resolved, we may want to add Transportation to the 2011-12 state League agenda. Also, you might want to consider other local or state issues that you would want to suggest to the state League for a new study. There are many possibilities!

HOLIDAY PARTY

Our fourth annual **Holiday Luncheon** will be on **December 6th** at **noon** at **Carolyn Johnson's** home, **2615 Caribe Drive**, in the **Village of Santiago, The Villages**.



we will have a salad luncheon where you will bring your favorite salad additive (croutons, radishes, oranges, blueberries, celery, blue cheese, etc. etc.) and Carolyn will provide the greens, rolls and dessert. Of course you need to let her know if you are coming so she can set a place.

In lieu of our usual Chinese auction we are asking for a **\$10** donation to help defray the cost of our shiny new website. We have not forgotten about your white elephant items. Pick a nice item to regift and wrap it in holiday paper; we will have a grab bag so everyone will go home with something new (at least to them!). You can call **Carolyn** at **352 751-4103** or email her at cgljohnson@comcast.net to tell her you are going to join us. Deadline for reservations is **Monday, November 29**.

Carolyn Johnson

TRANSPORTATION STUDY: WHY WE NEED IT!

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a philanthropic organization dedicated to improving the environment and the lives of children and families. Their recently completed research gives a myriad of reasons why we should be concerned with transportation planning. Here are just a few. For a more comprehensive look at this research, visit their website, <http://www.rwjf.org>.

Two new resources released by *Active Living Research*, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, examine the relationship between investments in active transportation, physical activity and obesity rates, and the extent to which regions across the country are making such investments.

Making the Link from Transportation to Physical Activity and Obesity summarizes the most up-to-date research showing that transportation investments encourage healthful activity. The brief details how increasing access to public transportation, making streets and sidewalks safer, and developing trails and bike lanes impact people's health and how much they bike and walk for transportation. Among other findings, the research brief concludes that public transit use is linked with higher levels of physical activity and lower rates of obesity.

In 1987, the LCV Orange County Transportation Committee initiated a study of transportation and land use planning in the metropolitan Orlando area. As chair, I gave the following statement developed by that committee and presented, in various forms, to county and city commissions, MPOs, legislative delegations and state legislative committees since 1984.

"Planners and engineers too often make moving the automobile their primary, and frequently the only, planning objective. Comprehensive planning is only given lip service. Proof abounds that poor planning creates environmental and human disasters and government's accountability to the people continues to avoid addressing that proof.

We must find a way to make comprehensive planning and implementation a reality instead of creating plans that include bikeways, sidewalks, public transit, park & rides, HOV lanes - to be built sometime in the future - if there are any funds available - and after we build just that one more road that will solve all our problems - and after we have covered Florida with asphalt.

The social consequences alone of such poor planning robs those unable to drive a car - the elderly, young, handicapped, homeless and poor - of the accessibility to critically needed transportation and independence.

To quote Andreas Duany and Elizabeth Zyberk, who are architects and builders of livable communities, 'The chief criterion of town design, in our history, is the flow of automobiles. The chief concern is getting the cars through quickly. Now, cars and people are not incompatible; most of the beautiful cities have cars and people together. But when the cars are given precedence, then the people don't fit.'"

Please volunteer to help with our local transportation study. We can impact what is done in the tri-county area.

Charlene Walker

Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Half-times take twelve minutes. This is not coincidence. **Erma Bombeck**

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO EDUCATION IN AMERICA?

Diane Ravitch is a historian of education, an educational policy analyst, and former United States Assistant Secretary of Education who is now a research professor at New York University. She is a graduate of Wellesley College, has a Ph.D from Columbia University, and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Ravitch has written numerous books on education her newest book: "The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Undermine Education" (2010) became a surprise best seller a month after its release. She critiques the punitive uses of accountability to fire teachers and close schools, as well as replacing public schools with charter schools and relying on superstar teachers. While she originally supported No Child Left Behind and charter schools, she became "disillusioned," and wrote, "I no longer believe that either approach will produce the quantum improvement in American education that we all hope for."

Our **Education Committee** would like to invite you to join us on an adventure to investigate "Race To The Top," the administration's education policy and how it will play out here in Florida. Ravitch's new book may be a good starting place. If you are interested, please let Bernice know. Her email address is berncoz@yahoo.com.

Bernice Cozewith

VOTERS SERVICES COMMITTEE

What did the League do during this election season?

- ✓ We sponsored two forums that were taped at LSCC TV on Amendments 4 (growth management) and 8 (class size limits). Both of these forums aired numerous times on LSCC TV.
- ✓ Our candidates and issues forum, which was cosponsored with AAUW, was held on October 6, and we were pleased that all of the local candidates for school board and the county commission from Marion County were in attendance in addition to the candidates for the Lake County commission. Also in attendance was a representative for Rich Nugent who is

campaigning to replace Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite. Rep. Alan Hayes, who is running to replace Sen. Carey Baker, was also present. Last, but not least, Bob Jenner, a candidate for the Lake County Water Authority Board of Trustees, District 2 presented his case. As you can see, there were no candidates present from Sumter County. The reason? There was only one contested race in the August primary and that was for the school board. None of the commissioners up for reelection had opposition in the primary.

- ✓ At the end of September, a delivery truck stopped at my house and dropped off 15,000 copies of the LWV of Florida special election edition of "The Florida Voter" We distributed several thousand copies to the supervisor of elections and libraries in the tri-county area as well as to the recreation department of The Villages.
- ✓ In addition to the forums, the League spent every Tuesday in October at the Lady Lake Farmer's Market where we distributed copies of the special election edition of "The Florida Voter." Many thanks to **Judie Brown, Steven Cooper,**

Barbara Cope, Beth Hicks, Margie & Bill Hunt, Sylvia Jones and Diane Jacobson, for working at the Farmer's Market. Additional thanks to **Steven Cooper** for coordinating the scheduling.

- ✓ Our loyal band of speakers did a great job making presentations on the amendments to groups in, and outside, The Villages. Our travels took us to Leesburg, Ocala and Crystal River. Many thanks to **Betsy Brody, Richard Coen, Bernice Cozewith, Janet Duncan, Diane Jacobson and Carolyn Johnson** for giving up time in the evenings and on the weekends to do this. In addition to our PowerPoint presentation, we had our redistricting maps and the special election edition of "The Florida Voter."
- ✓ We had an opinion piece appear in the "Ocala Star Banner."

This was our League's first time taking the show on the road, and I think we learned a few things which we will keep in mind for 2012! It was a good experience for all of us, and our presentations and material were greatly appreciated.

Joanne M. Coen



LWVF LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR & LWVF CONVENTION



Legislative Seminar & Convention are being combined into one event and your attendance will help improve Florida!

When: March 23-26, 2011

Where: Tallahassee, Florida

Who: All of **YOU**, the MOST important, influential, and intelligent people in the state of Florida!

Why: Many of Leaguers look forward every year to attending

Legislative Seminar and lobbying as a group during Legislative session for League issues. Many Leaguers also look forward to the biannual **State Convention** where the very important League work of electing new officers, passing our budget, and setting program items for the coming year is done. We know your time and resources are valuable! We don't want you to have to choose which event you have the time and resources to attend. We want everyone to have the opportunity to do **BOTH** in 2011!

Highlights: Work and Fun!

Welcome dinner on the 22nd floor of the Capitol overlooking beautiful Tallahassee, including a very important guest speaker to be announced soon!

reception in the historic Capitol Senate Chambers with all newly elected officials! Fun and informative **Convention surprise dinner** Friday night, including another guest speaker and League activity! Optional **tours and activities** to make your time as action packed and busy as you want it to be!

We are pleased to announce that we will be returning to **The Doubletree Hotel** as our central location for these two events at a special room rate of \$105/night. FREE parking, FREE breakfast, and walking distance to all activities!

Mark your calendars **TODAY!** If you have never attended one or both of these events, this is the year!!!

HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE TO BE ACTIVE IN THE LEAGUE?

Do you have an extra **5 minutes** once a year?

In **5 minutes** you can pay your dues.

In **5 minutes** you can join click a button to make your voice be heard. In **5 minutes** you can:

- Check www.lwvtri.org
- Check www.lwvfla.org
- Check www.lwv.org

THAT IS BEING ACTIVE IN LEAGUE

Do you have an extra **20 minutes** a month?

In **20 minutes** you can read what your dues and contribution pays for:

- The Voter
- The Florida Voter

THAT IS BEING ACTIVE IN LEAGUE

Do you have **an extra hour or two here and there?**

Look at the things you can do at that time:

- Attend a League meeting
- Join a study committee

THAT IS BEING ACTIVE IN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS!

*"A small group of thoughtful people
could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

Margaret Mead



**League of Women Voters of The Villages/Tri-County Area
 Be a Voice for Citizens! Be a Force for Change!
 Be Involved in the Process!
 www.lwvtri.org**

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:

Susan B. Anthony	\$100.00	_____
Individual	\$ 50.00	_____
Household	\$ 75.00	_____
Student	\$ 25.00	_____
Add'l. Contribution	\$ 10.00	_____

**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*.**