



# The Voter

## The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast



**Volume 30: No. 8**

**April, 2010**

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

### Space Coast League of Women Voters Annual Meeting

- When:** Saturday, April 10, 2010
- Time:** 10:30 a.m.-business meeting followed by lunch at noon
- Place:** Eau Gallie Yacht Club  
100 Datura Drive  
Indian Harbour Beach, FL 32937
- Menu:** Choice of Prime Rib or Grilled Salmon  
With mixed green salad and bread pudding with bourbon sauce for dessert.
- Cost:** \$20.00
- Reservations:** to Doreen Archer 622-4071 or [darcher14@cfl.rr.com](mailto:darcher14@cfl.rr.com) no later than Tuesday April, 6, 2010

### 2010 Florida Legislation Session

The Florida Legislature is in session from March 2, 2010 to April 30, 2010. They will be dealing with many issues and it is important that we follow what is happening in Tallahassee. If you have access to a computer you can receive the Capital Report each week. If you are not presently receiving this information, you can go to [www.TheFloridaVoter.org](http://www.TheFloridaVoter.org) to sign up for the weekly 2010 Capitol Report. In the right hand column you will see "Join our Mailing List" or if you prefer to follow it on your own, you can click Just Released "Capital Reports".

"It appears increasingly likely that the legislature will attempt to put alternative re-districting amendments on the ballot that will be designed to confuse voters and weaken the Fair Districts Florida amendments should they pass. The League is monitoring this very carefully and will be prepared to speak against any such attempt." (Issue 2010, Volume 3 | March 5, 2010 | Submitted by Ben Wilcox, LWVF Governmental Consultant)

Offshore drilling is still an issue. However in early March the Century Commission released a report stating that oil obtained off the Florida coast would not lower gas prices.

Campaign Finance is an issue to follow.

The budget process will be a leading issue due to declining revenues and a projected deficit projected to be \$3.5 billion for 2010. Will there be new sources of revenue or only budget cuts?

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## President's Corner

Ruth Schechter

Dear League Members,

Thank you to Marilza Novaes-Card and the Children's Committee for planning, organizing, and staffing the informative program on the Whole Family - both children and seniors - Connection. We are always disappointed with our attendance when we have worked so hard to create a program and the auditorium is not full to overflowing; we must remember that we have done our job by providing the information venue and we trust the people who *almost* filled the room to carry the message to other times and places. Good job, Children's Committee!

This is March and we are heading to Tallahassee for Legislative Seminar. We have five Space Coast League Members representing our League. They are Bonnie Urban, Robert Bickley, Fern Patton, Martha Bradshaw, and David Schechter. (I have to be counted as representing the State Board - but I will be there as well!)

Our Number One Legislative Priority is Fair Districts and we have begun to seek out groups who would like to know more about these amendments. I am addressing a group in Vero Beach this month and Doreen Archer has been asked to address a group here in Brevard. The key is education of the public and that is our main mission from now until the November election. The only organized opposition to the Fair Districts amendments is the Florida legislature! They will be hitting hard with every tactic and attorney they can find or hire with our tax dollars. They will be trying to confuse the public with amendments of their own. Public education by groups like League is our only hope of getting the truth to the voting public. If you are a member of any group who would be interested in having one of our members come and do a presentation on Fair Districts please let me know and we will certainly try to accommodate you.

Also in March comes the "renew your membership" letter. Please respond to it quickly and help us keep up our membership numbers. Then go find a friend who would like to join us - so Space Coast LWV is not only maintaining but growing!!!

Hope to see you all at our Annual Meeting, April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Eau Gallie Yacht Club, 10:30 a.m. - 1:00p.m., call Doreen Archer to reserve your place.

In League,  
Ruth



## International Relations

### Mary Nicolay - Chair

Great Decisions is a program developed by the Foreign Policy Association with the goal of educating participants on current global challenges. Each year a booklet containing articles on topics written by knowledgeable researchers is made available. Eight topics are covered in a four month period. League committee members volunteer to facilitate the discussions. They do additional reading on the topic and present their findings. Thought provoking questions are provided and prompt some interesting discussions. The Opinion Ballot is the final step in the proceedings. The ballots are submitted in June and the results from the thousands of worldwide participants are shared with Congress, the White House, the Departments of State and Defense, media and other concerned organizations.

The FPA started 56 years ago. It sponsors a World Leadership Forum yearly and produces a 30 minute television program on each topic using experts from academia, government and think tanks. These programs can be seen on cable TV, WBCC, ch. 5.

Kathryn Kowalski did an excellent job facilitating the discussion of THE U.S. AND THE PERSIAN GULF. She used material from books, articles and the DVD provided by the FPA. The discussion was lively. The ballot issues voted on were as follows. A. The U.S. should withdraw its military from Iraq by the end of 2011 even if it appears that such a move would lead to increasing violence and instability in that country. B. The Obama administration should adopt the following stance on Iran. Begin tentative moves toward sanctions and other actions with key U.S. allies in a strictly multilateral setting without completely abandoning diplomatic efforts. U.S. priorities in the Persian Gulf should be: 1. Safeguarding U.S. national security interests e.g. terrorism. 2. Securing U.S. economic interests e.g., oil. 3. Promoting freedom and democracy.

Please consider joining the group which meets every other Tuesday in the month from 1-3 PM at the Satellite Beach Library. Visitors are welcomed. Phone Mary Nicolay, 723-6169 for further information.

### Schedule for Next Two Months

**April 13th**, Europe's 'far east': the uncertain frontier, Jean Tweed, leader.

**April 27th**, Enhancing security through peacebuilding, Priscilla Griffith, leader.

**May 11th**, The global financial crisis and its effects, Martha Bradshaw, leader.

**May 25th**, China looks at the world: the world looks at China, JoDee Wilfong, leader.



## Children's Committee

**Marilza Novaes Card – Chair**

**The LWV supports bill CS/HB 105 and the similar Senate bill 1096 addressing Civics Education.**

**Bill CS/HB 105:**

“GENERAL BILL by PreK-12 Policy Committee and McBurney and Hudson and Kelly (CO-SPONSORS) Adkins; Burgin; Carroll; Kiar; Kriseman; O'Toole; Plakon; Ray; Renuart; Tobia; Wood; Zapata

**Civics Education:** Designates act "Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act"; provides requirement that reading portion of language arts curriculum include civics education content for all grade levels; provides requirements for civics education course that student must successfully complete for middle grades promotion; requires administration of end-of-course assessment in civics education as field test at middle school level; provides requirements for course grade & course credit; requires inclusion of civics education end-of-course assessment data in determining school grades. Effective Date: July 1, 2010”.

LWV's members are not the only ones who believe that civics education must be part of the public school curriculum. Richard E. Minor, the Chairman of the Patriotic Education Committee in Phoenix wrote an article entitled “Key to The Constitution and Other Sources for Civics Education” (Officer Review magazine, Mar 2010, Vol. 49, Issue 7). He criticizes the lack of satisfactory civics education in public schools. Mr. Minor states that every American citizen has the obligation to understand the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. The author says that knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of citizens enables them to apply the Rule of Law.

Syvertsen, Stout, Flanagan, Mitra, Oliver and Sundar conducted a study with public school students to encourage them to engage in civics education (American Journal of Education, Nov.2009, Vol. 116, Issue 1). They randomly selected 1,670 high school students (80 social studies classes) to participate in the study. Students were engaged in electoral politics and civic life for one semester. Results showed that there was significant improvement on student's ability to cast an informed vote and a better understanding of how the registration process works. Students increased their perception that their vote matters. They were better prepared to discuss politics among themselves and developed a sense of civic obligation.

Another interesting article on civics education is called “A Politically Liberal Conception of Civic Education” by Barry Bull (Studies in Philosophy & Education, Nov.2008, Vol.27, Issue 6). The author suggests that the public school curriculum for civics education must

include “multicultural education, intellectual reflection on the society's history, and philosophical training that enables children to understand the events and policies of their nation as following from general political principles”. He states that “motivation” also plays a crucial role. Students need to be motivated to investigate the relationship between the formulation of and loyalty to civic principles at the same time that they explore their own moralities. Mr. Bull believes that the instructional procedures used to teach civics education are more significant than the curriculum in assuring students' motivation.

Update

Please add this information to your membership book.

~We Welcome New Members~

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**The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast will promote in all aspects of the League's activities, a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition and issues of the community.**



## Voter Service Report

Ayn Marie Samuelson – Chair

### Campaign Finance: Supreme Court Decision - Citizens United v. FEC

In the wake of the January 2010 Supreme Court ruling regarding the First Amendment and campaign/election contributions, here are selected excerpts from the February 18, 2010 letter sent to the U.S. Senate membership by LWVUS President Mary Wilson:

*With the Supreme Court's recent decision in Citizens United v. FEC, it is critically important for Congress to update campaign finance laws, especially disclosure requirements governing corporate and union spending. ... After Citizens United, we urgently need enhanced disclosure. ... The Court pointed in the direction of enhanced disclosure when it said that disclosure is important to "providing the electorate with information." It also supported disclaimer requirements "so that the people will be able to evaluate the arguments to which they are being subjected." We couldn't agree more. After providing enhanced disclosure, the next most important step for Congress is to do no further harm.*

The primary issue of First Amendment free speech is critical to the debate, but so is transparency of campaign contributions. Shouldn't U.S. businesses, unions and any group that hires lobbyists to advance their interests be required to give disclosure of their campaign contributions to candidates? Should *any* group or entity be left out of the loop to disclose? No, they should not.

Campaign finance bills with complex regulations and restrictions will likely abound in Congress exempting this or that favorite group or even a favorite campaign contributor. Yet to date, with the many restrictions and regulations already in place, has government actually stopped the flow of money into campaigns or ensured cleaner government?

A novel idea, especially for politicians, would be *not* to try to circumvent the Supreme Court decision or the Bill of Rights, but to build on both to insure that free speech and transparency march hand-in-hand for campaign contributions. Keep the process as simple as possible or risk more loopholes and complications. No double standard should be allowed when it comes to protection of free speech or transparency.

### U.S. Voting Machine Deal Nears Completion

The Justice Department is on the verge of allowing a merger of the country's two largest voting machine manufacturers, as Election Systems & Software Inc. (ES&S) moves to close a deal to purchase rival Premier Election Solutions Inc., a unit of Diebold Inc. While the agreement is valued at \$5 million and estimated to be too small to require a mandatory antitrust review by the Justice Department, the disclosure prompted an

onslaught of opposition from election officials and computer-security experts.

Subsequently, after negotiations with the Justice Department, ES&S indicated that the company would agree to a "settlement" to sell Premier's voting system, (Assure 1.2) a federally certified system, to another competitor. While federal certification is voluntary, according to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) (an independent commission created by the Help America Vote Act that serves as a national clearinghouse and resource of information regarding election administration), at least 12 states require the use of federally certified voting machines.

A total of four voting systems have been federally certified through EAC's testing and certification program. Those systems include the Unisyn Open Elect 1.0 (optical scan), the Microvote EMS 4.0 (direct recording electronic), the ES&S Unity 3.2.0.0 (optical scan), and the Premier Assure 1.2 (optical scan and direct recording electronic).

The ES&S settlement, even after selling Assure 1.2, would continue to permit states that own any of Premier's machines to have them serviced by ES&S. Therefore, it is questionable whether this conditional settlement will be agreeable to election officials, lobbying groups and computer-security experts who directly oppose a merger that would allow control of some 75% of the U.S. voting machine market.

Would this merger "deprive voting precincts of choice and leave the country's election system more vulnerable to failures"? The bottom line is that the entire election process must ensure that the casting and counting of ballots is as secure and trustworthy as possible, and it is the Justice Department's job to require that outcome. (Information was gleaned from the Election Assistance Commission website and the *Wall Street Journal*.)



## Board Bytes

1. National League asked for recipe suggestions for a 90<sup>th</sup> year anniversary cookbook. Years ago Space Coast League compiled a cookbook. A copy of our cookbook will be forwarded to the national office.
2. A future Timely topic will be held on Florida Hometown Democracy before the November election.
3. Plans are in progress for State of the County program on May 20<sup>th</sup>.
4. Health committee is considering a program with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders on the subject of "healthy eating."
5. 25 donations have been received so far for "Stay Home and write a check. Final results will be in the May Voter.



## Natural Resources

Maureen Rupe – Chair

### State Sues Brevard County over Farmton Development

The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) filed a notice of Intent to find as to the Ordinances adopted on Dec 15, 2009 pertaining to the Farmton Local Plan and Future Land Use amendment. The lawsuit is based on non-compliance with the Objections, Recommendations and Comments Report (ORC Report) issued by the DCA on Nov 20, 2009. The Brevard County Commission chose to ignore the report and vote for approval anyway. The next step in the process is an administrative hearing where both parties try to negotiate a workable solution. If the state and the county cannot work out an agreement, the issue will go to court.

There are two parts to the state's complaint against Brevard County. The first part is pertaining to the county's Future Land Use Element (FLUE) and the second part pertains specifically to the Farmton development.

Part one of the state's complaint concerning inconsistent provisions in the Brevard FLUE concerning:

- Short-Term and Long-Term Planning Horizons
- Energy Conservation and Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Natural Resource Protection and Conservation
- Failure to address Statutory Updates
- Working Waterfronts
- Wetland Protection
- Affordable Housing

The state's recommended solution is to fix the elements of the county's comprehensive plan to address the issues, including items that the county said it would address in its 2006 amendments submitted to the state.

Part two of the state's complaint was specifically addressed towards the proposed Farmton development within Brevard County. The state's complaint dealt with the following:

- Inconsistent with Florida Statute 163, which states a proposed land use shall not cause any significant, adverse, and un-mitigatable impact to significant wetlands, water bodies, or habitat for listed species.
- Does not list standards, guidelines, or programs that will be used to set a number of issues such as zoning, conservation,

transportation impacts, wetland impacts, water impacts, just to name a few. The Plan only gives inspirational wording such as "should", "shall promote", "shall encourage", and "as nearly as possible", which cannot be measured.

- Sets up different long-term planning horizon that is inconsistent with what Brevard County currently uses for planning. For example, gives a 2060 plan, where the county cannot determine infrastructure needs such as transportation, water, schools, etc.
- Does not show county will determine when county infrastructure will be provided, or determined, such as availability of current water supplies, tie in to the county's transportation system, etc. The plan also does not show how these infrastructure projects will be mitigated to protect protected areas or wildlife corridors.
- The proposed development constitutes urban sprawl by setting up townships well away from current developed areas, jumping over large tracts of undeveloped land.

The above is a very basic summary of a large number of DCA issues. Many of the issues cannot be addressed without significant additional data and analysis.

The Farmton Development plans spans over two counties, which includes 29,500 housing units (23,500 in Volusia County, and 6,000 in Brevard County). The development plan includes office, retail, warehousing, light manufacturing, educational, research and development, a 120-room hotel, and a 160-bed hospital. Most of the non-residential plans are in Volusia, not Brevard County.

Note: Farmton, known as "The Farmton Tree Farm" or "Farmton Tract" is 59,000 acres situated in both Volusia and Brevard counties. The property provides a critical wildlife corridor linkage for the regional ecosystem. Farmton is adjacent to or near other conservation lands including the Buck Lake Conservation Area property owned by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), the Colbert-Cameron Mitigation Bank and Wiregrass Prairie Preserve also owned by the SJRWMD. The property also is near the Lake Monroe Mitigation Bank and the South Lake Harney Conservation Areas.

### Featured Space Coast League member is Doreen Archer.



Our featured member this month has lived on three continents during her very active life. Doreen Archer was born in South Africa and attended school at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg obtaining a degree in Botany and Zoology. She taught high school for two years. She then spent time in Europe and worked for three years as a laboratory assistant making yellow fever vaccine at the S.A. Institute for Medical Research. Her boss was Dr. James Gear, who developed a vaccine for polio at the same time that Dr. Salk did his work in the United States.

She was married in 1949 and lived in England from 1952 to 1955. They returned to South Africa but emigrated to Montreal, Canada in 1960 and to the United States in 1961.

Doreen was an active Girl Scout volunteer for many years before joining the staff of what was then the Citrus Council. She was Field Director and then Director of Program Services from 1985 until she retired in 1991.

Doreen has been very active in the local AAUW chapter serving on its board and two terms as president. She is still very involved with the Child Care Association where she was chair for two terms and currently is secretary.

She joined Space Coast League of Women Voters in 1997. She has served on the board in various capacities. She served as co-president with Priscilla Griffith from 2001 to 2003 and with Shirley Jin from 2003 to 2005 and 2005-2007 as president. Currently she is on the board filling two positions as Legislative Action chair and is the Hospitality committee. She has been responsible for several community events that the League has sponsored with AAUW, NAACP and the United Nations Association.

Her hobbies include needlework, reading, bridge and gardening.

### Florida League Priority Issues 2010

The LWVF has six program areas this year that include Government, Education, Justice, Social Policy, Sustainability and Natural Resources. Under three program areas there are priority subcategories as follows:

#### Government

##### Equitable Taxation

The League supports tax legislation which does not jeopardize local service, addresses infrastructure deficits and removes unfair tax exemptions which affect governments' ability to serve citizens. Several bills have been filed, but so far little action has been taken. It's expected the League will once again be in opposition to the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) although the bill has yet to be filed. Other legislation has been filed which the League is monitoring including a review of sales tax exemptions, applying the sales tax to Internet sales and requiring multi-state corporations to pay corporate income tax on profits made in Florida. Governor Crist has also proposed reducing the corporate income tax.

##### Redistricting Reform

The League supports single-member election districts that are equal in population, that provide access for minorities, are compact and, when possible, take local characteristics such as political and geographical boundaries into consideration. Committees in both Houses have been meeting to discuss the 2012 cycle of redistricting and the possible effect amendments 5 and 6 would have on the process. Fair Districts Florida has said they will make a presentation to the committees in the near future. In the meantime, much of the discussion has centered around the question of whether the amendments would hurt minority representation. It appears likely the legislature will try to attack the amendments in some fashion and the League is prepared to oppose those attacks.

##### Citizen Initiatives

For the past four sessions, the League has fought against passage of new restrictions on the citizen's initiative process. As bills addressing citizen initiatives arise; the League will oppose bills that increase the moneyed interests' strangle-hold on the initiative process and the legislative process and, where appropriate, advance the idea of a citizen statutory initiative.

##### Elections

The League supports legislation that promotes stricter election audits and would give the Supervisors of Elections more flexibility in selecting early voting sites. *(continued on Page 7)*

(Florida League Priorities 2010 continued from page 6)

**Education: Priorities are Funding, Accountability and Civic Education.**

**Civic Education**

The League is supporting HB 105 and Senate Bill 1096 which would create the "Justice Sandra Day O'Conner Civics Education Act." It would require an end-of-the year test on civic education at the middle school level.

**Social Policy: Priority is Health Care.**

**Health Care Reform**

The League will continue to work with a coalition of organizations including the Florida Public Interest Research group to promote a health care system that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all Florida residents and controls health care costs. (2010 Capitol Report Issue 2010, Volume 1 January 31, 2010 Page 2 of 3 )

**Photos from Recent League Events**



Mary & Hugh Nicolay



Speaker Mike Knight, Director of Brevard County EEL Program



Karen Raboin & Barbara Jagrowski



Panel for Community Services Forum  
Frank Barger, Ian Golden, Marilyn, "Bunny" Finney, Dr. Brian Binggeli Maria Stahl, Joe Steckler

**Calendar for April 2010**

**~Members Welcome at All Meetings~**

- April 10, Saturday Annual Meeting at Eau Gallie Yacht Club at 10:30 and lunch at noon.
- April 12, Monday Children's Committee Suntree Library at 1:30 p.m.
- April 13, Tuesday International Relations Meeting at Satellite Beach Library 1p.m. to 3 p.m.
- April 24, Saturday Health Care Committee Cocoa Library 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.
- April 27, Tuesday International Relations Meeting at Satellite Beach Library 1 p.m to 3 p.m.

**Voter: Monthly publication (except June, July, August)**

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