



The Voter

The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast



Volume 31: No. 4

December, 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.

Holiday Luncheon at Black Tulip Restaurant in Cocoa Village

When: Saturday, December 11, 2010

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Address: Black Tulip Restaurant
207 Brevard Avenue
Cocoa, FL 32922

Menu: There will be a choice of 5 entrees and desserts. You will make your choice at the restaurant after seeing the menu.

Cost: \$20.00

RSVP: Doreen Archer 321-622-4071 by 5 p.m. on
Sunday, December 5th.

(The League must pay for lunches that are reserved, therefore, you will be charged for the lunch whether or not you attend.)

VOTER SERVICE TASK FORCE for the CONTACT 2011-2012

Everyone loves the CONTACT, our Space Coast League's Directory of Elected Officials, as it is handy to use and is a real benefit to our community. The bright yellow publication contains important information about voter registration and voting, as well as how to contact elected officials such as: the President, U.S. Congress, the Governor and other state officials, county commissioners and constitutional officers, our cities, school board members, the court system, and other county district officers.

Work will begin on the publication after the first of the year in January providing we have enough committed members to help pull it together. Volunteers are needed to help update small sections of the CONTACT, all of which are ready and waiting on my computer in Word format. The good news is that updates on the sections can easily be made at home on your own computer.


After the CONTACT is published, we will also need volunteers to help distribute the finished product to libraries, cities and other locations in the county. I look forward to your commitment to this project that provides the local League with recognition, as well as serves a larger community service. To help make this a success, please phone or email Ayn Samuelson, Voter Service Chair at 321-773-8167 or aynsamuelson@cfl.rr.com.

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December Underwriter
The Center for Civic Education



**Developers of
We the People:
The Citizen and the
Constitution and
Project Citizen**



Vice President's Corner

Carol McDonald

Did you know the League of Women Voters has a special funding tool to help it achieve its goals? It is called an Education Fund or Ed Fund. It is a tax designated 501(c) (3), tax deductible account. To obtain this designation a League must apply to the IRS. The fund has some restriction on use and all monies spent must be documented.

Although some local Leagues have their own Ed Fund, the Space Coast League does not. It relies on the LWVFL Ed Fund to bank its donations. The Ed Fund is governed by a separate board of directors from the LWVFL. In many cases they are the same people with different hats but it is a separate arm of the organization. Money may be deposited or retrieved by a written request from the local president or treasurer to the Ed Fund board. For this service, the state League charges a small fee per request. Also, at the time of deposit, the donor is sent a thank you explaining the tax deductible status of the donation. This letter is required by the tax status.

These monies are generally restricted to activities and educational efforts directed to the community or outreach programs. For example the LWVSC may fund their Contact brochure, any costs incurred with voter registration, debates or a speaker's bureau where the topic was non-partisan and both sides explained in an informative manner. Many Leagues fund a Voter's Guide, publish studied issues, and handle grants in this manner. Several Leagues offer a teen girl's program entitled "Running and Winning" and some sponsor secondary education programs for girls in Africa. The uses of Ed Fund are only limited to outreach and imagination. It is a fine way to achieve League's purpose. A limited amount of these funds also may be used to subsidize per member payments of state and national dues, but the funds may not to be used for membership recruitment or lobbying efforts.

The Ed Fund makes fund-raising easy. A good member might give \$25.00 annually but would be inclined to increase the amount to \$100.00 if it is tax deductible. This applies to community fund raising too. In fact, it is an attractive feature to business supporters. Some Leagues have found Ed Fund so successful they had to designate a minimum donation for Ed Fund because the regular League efforts also needed funding. Most Leagues, however, quickly realize the advantage larger funds can achieve for their overall efforts and learn to adapt it to their program.

When considering a donation give a bit more and make it tax deductible by designating your check to the

Ed Fund. Your gift will enable League to further its outreach and imagination.



Voter Service Report

Ayn Marie Samuelson – Chair

Forums: A Successful Partnership

The partnership with our Space Coast League, BCC, Space Coast Tiger Bay and *Florida Today* was a success. People attended the primary and general election primaries held at the BCC Cocoa Campus, as well as watched the forums on WBCC and on *Florida Today's* website. Space Coast League provided timers at every forum and a League moderator at several forums. Tiger Bay arranged the forum dates and candidates for each date, while WBCC used their skill to professionally televise the debates. *Florida Today* provided advertising, articles on the forums and coverage of each forum. Many people watched the debates live at home or watched recorded coverage of the events.

These forums proved to be a great deal of work for all members of the partnership, but the outcome was that voters were provided with an excellent opportunity to ask their questions and watch the candidates in action as they responded.

League also moderated a few town forums "on the side." And thanks go out to David Sinton for moderating and Brigitte Sinton for timing at the Malabar Town candidates' forum.

Registered Voter Statistics for the General Election

The winners and the accompanying statistics are in for November 2, 2010 Election. At the closing of the General Election for 2010, there were a total of 357,820 registered voters in Brevard County. Of those, 154,057 or approximately 43 percent were registered as Republican; 130,214 or 37 percent were registered as Democratic, and 72,076 or 20 percent were registered as No Party and Others. For U.S. Congress, Governor and other state offices, 55% to 56% of the registered voters cast their ballots. In other cities and towns that had local contests the percentage of citizen voting was higher.

From a historical perspective, in 1980, there were a total of 140,969 registered voters. Of those, 50,051 or 35.51 percent were registered as Republican; 81,582 or 57.87 percent were registered as Democratic, and 9,334 or 6.62 percent were registered as Others. The No Party designation came into play in the Primary of 1994.



Natural Resources

Maureen Rupe – Chair

A Sustainable Future?

With the failure of Amendment 4, we are still left with the problem of massive growth without the resources to sustain that growth. Fortunately, Tom Pelham, Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) thinks a huge development in Brevard and Volusia Counties should not be approved in its present form. At the end of the year the DCA may be eliminated, as it is due for renewal. The Farmton and Platt developments have been passed by the Brevard County Commission, and in both cases they have been sued by the state for those decisions. If the counties are not looking out for us to ensure there are sufficient resources, who will look out for us if DCA is eliminated?

Below are excerpts from an article by Tom Pelham explaining the DCA's issues with the Farmton development.

First, the location is unsuitable for such large-scale urban development. Located in a remote rural area, Farmton contains critical wildlife habitat and is dominated by wetlands and poor soil conditions. More than one-half of the approximately 46,000-acre site is a regional wetlands mitigation bank. Of Miami Corp.'s proposed 15,000-acre development area, 24 percent is wetlands and 55 percent is in the 100-year flood plain.

Second, the Miami Corp. proposal is not consistent with the county's comprehensive plan as required by state law. In 2008, Volusia County presented to DCA its school concurrency plan amendment that designated the central portion of the county, including Farmton, a "no-school zone." The county urged the department to approve the "no-school zone" plan because it was part of the county's plan to divert future development away from the central corridor, to the eastern and western portions of the county. Now, after DCA said "yes" to the no-school zone plan, Miami Corp. and the county are proposing a massive development in the no-school zone.

Third, contrary to state law, Miami Corp.'s proposals lack plans or commitments for infrastructure. The Farmton property is located in an area with no current development and very little infrastructure. Nevertheless, Miami Corp. and the county have not proposed or committed to provide any of the basic facilities and services, including potable water, wastewater, solid-waste, schools and transportation facilities that will be required to accommodate the huge proposed development.

Fourth, the Farmton proposal exhibits many of the indicators of urban sprawl, which is discouraged by state law. It is premature, poorly planned development

that leapfrogs over undeveloped lands into remote environmentally sensitive areas without basic infrastructure. In sum, the Farmton proposal is inconsistent with state growth-management laws and the county comprehensive plan and is the antithesis of smart growth.

If anyone would like the complete article, please let me know. The Farmton development spanned large areas of Volusia and Brevard County. Just within Volusia County the Farmton development would allow 23,100 residential units and 4.7 million square feet of nonresidential development, or the equivalent of a large city with approximately 70,000 residents with four regional shopping malls.



International Relations

Mary Nicolay – Chair

At the December meeting on Tuesday, December 14th, orders will be taken for the 2011 Great Decisions books.

Topics for 2011 are:

1. *Rebuilding Haiti* by Barbara Crossette
2. *U.S. National Security: 10 years after 9/11* by Gregory Treverton
3. *Horn of Africa* by Charles Dunbar
4. *Responding to the Financial Crisis* by Anna Gelpern
5. *Ascendant Germany* by William Sweet
6. *Sanctions and Nonproliferation* by Ronald Bee
7. *Crisis in the Caucasus* by Neil MacFarlane
8. *Global Governance* by David Shorr

If you are interested in knowing more about the group, please call Mary Nicolay at 321-723-6169 or Karen Raboin at 321-728-8237. New members are welcome to join in studying and discussing world topics.

Update

Please make these changes to your membership book.

Jill Jefferies has a new e-mail address
jjimm32940@att.net

There was an error for the e-mail address in our membership book for

Margaret and Norman McDonald.
 The correct e-mail address is

mcdonaldmaggie3@gmail.com



Children's Committee

Marilza Novaes Card – Chair

One of the disturbing realities affecting children in Florida is the growing number of homeless families. Data from the Florida Department of Education (<http://www.fldoe.org/bsa/titlex.asp>) shows that in Brevard County, in 2009-2010, there are 965 homeless students. The number has been increasing steadily not only in Brevard County but in the state of Florida as well. In 2008-2009, there were 478 homeless students in Brevard County and in 2007-2008 there were 70 homeless students. The total number of homeless students in Florida in 2009-2010 is 49,104, an increase of 7,818 homeless students from 2008-2009. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act is a federal legislation that guarantees that homeless children and youth receive appropriate services in order to enroll, attend and succeed in school (i.e., Head Start, Even Start, health care, dental, mental health, free lunches). This program gives homeless children access to the same kind of preschool, elementary and secondary school education available to non-homeless children.

Public schools in Florida provide homeless parents information from the Florida Department of Education that lists the rights of their children. They are the following:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there.
- Continue in the school you last attended before you became homeless.
- Receive transportation to the school you last attended before your family became homeless or the school they last attended, if you or a guardian requests such transportation.
- Participate in school programs with children who are not homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school where you are seeking enrollment even while the school and you seek to resolve a dispute over enrolling your child.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.

The term “homeless students” is defined as children and youth who live in cars, parks, campgrounds, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations. It also includes the ones who live in hotels, motels or sharing the housing of other persons due to economic hardship, the ones living in emergency or transitional shelters, FEMA trailers, abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care (Brevard County Public School 2010-2011 Handbook).



Local Government

Priscilla Griffith

The Local Government Committee met on November 1, 2010 Present were Marilynn Collins, Barbara Jagrowski, Brigitte Sinton and Priscilla Griffith, Chairman.

The discussion centered around arranging our work in a different order and on how we could best keep our members informed about what we learned from our research. We decided on a series of articles in the VOTER as the main vehicle.

Our first topic will be the current powers of the Clerk of the Court. We plan to get an appointment with Mitch Needleman, who will take office in January. Marilynn and Priscilla will be the lead persons on this task but the other committee members will suggest questions to use.

The second topic for emphasis will be the Special Tax Districts--what they are and what fiscal aspects apply to those under the county commission's jurisdiction.

The remaining topics are the state of the county and the effectiveness of the county fiscal advisory board. Barbara will be contacting County Manager Howard Tipton to see if we can obtain and use a copy of the speech he recently gave to Lead Brevard on that topic. Priscilla will contact Amy Tidd for her "take" on how effective the fiscal advisory board has been. She has been on this board. We may also contact an appropriate person in county government about this same topic.

Next meeting of the committee will be Monday, December 8th at the Sun Coffee Shoppe, Melbourne.

Submitted,

Priscilla Griffith, Chairman



Book Review by Ruth E., Almeida

The Post-American World
by Fareed Zakaria. 2008, 259 pages plus notes and index.

Born in India, Fareed Zakaria arrived in the U.S. at age 17 where he attended both Yale and Harvard. He remained in America and currently is an editor (Newsweek International) and political commentator (CNN and PBS).

Zakaria brings a unique bi-cultural insight to his work with less on the political and economic decline in America and more on the rise of the rest, particularly China and India as well as Russia, Brazil and others. He sees the future as the birth of a truly global order.

Despite the recurring threat of terrorism, major wars and casualties have declined in recent years. Capitalism has supplanted socialism particularly in Russia and China aided by global financial and communications networks. "Across the world, economics is trumping politics." The challenge he sees is preventing global growth from turning into disorder and disintegration.

Zakaria maintains that America is no longer the indispensable center of international activity. Powers may interact with each other without dealing through America. The balance of world power is shifting and traditional western based organizations such as the United Nations have not changed to reflect this new reality. "The permanent members of the U.N. Security Council are the victors of a war that ended 60 years ago."

Flexibility and resilience will be vital if the U.S. is to adjust to the new realities of these rising global powers particularly India and China. Zakaria devotes at least a third of the book to describing the cultural, political and economic history and developments in these two countries.

His warning to America is that we must strengthen our political system to develop coalitions in our government which can solve complex problems. The real test he sees is our ability as a country to adjust to the shifts in economic and political power both within and outside the U.S.

"An open democracy is America's greatest strength and we cannot afford to lose that advantage through fear or repression of others."

This is a highly readable book about key challenges facing America as well as the wider world. Recommended. Ruth E. Almeida



Board Bytes

- The Local Government Committee will meet on Monday, December 6 at 10:30 A.M. at Sun Shoppe Cafe in Melbourne
- The Local Government Committee will be presenting a series of articles on the office of the Brevard County Clerk of the Courts
- Politcos on Parade Fashion Show fundraiser scheduled for January 28, 2011 at Eau Gallie Yacht Club.
- Discussion on an event promoting conservation/ecological awareness around Earth Day 2011
- Voter Service Task Force needed to assist with the creation and distribution of our 2011-2012 CONTACT brochure



Legislative Priorities

The LWVF board is asking local Leagues to send recommendations for the state Program that will be adopted at the Convention in March 2011. The issues selected by the state board will be used for state study, concurrence, and action during the next two years. Local Leagues have until December 23rd to send their suggestions to the State.

Local Leagues are asked to identify **three issues** that their League concludes are most important for LWVF Action in 2011-2013.

Program selection criteria should be based on the following 11 items:

1. Whether a proposed item is within the scope of **The Principles** found in the *Study and Action 2009-2011 Booklet*.
2. Whether a proposed item involves a problem that state government can help solve.
3. Whether a proposed item warrants state governmental action.
4. Whether the timing is ripe for study of, or action on, a proposed item.
5. Whether political realities will permit effective League action on a proposed item.
6. Whether study of, or action on, a proposed item will increase the League's credibility and influence.
7. Whether LWVF will have sufficient resources to study, or act on, a proposed item.
8. Whether multiple sections of the state are interested in a proposed item.
9. Whether diverse interests are interested in a proposed item. (continued on Page 6 – 2nd column)



Save the Date

POLITICOS ON PARADE 2011 January 28, 2011 Eau Gallie Yacht Club

Plan to set aside Friday, January 28, 2011 for another fun afternoon with some of your elected officials. POLITICOS ON PARADE 2011 has a whole new group of recently elected men and women from city councils, school board, county commission and constitutional offices modeling the latest women's and men's fashions. Women's fashions will be provided by **Talbots** and men's fashions will be provided by **Jos. A Bank**; both retailers are located at TheAvenue Viera.

The Eau Gallie Yacht Club chefs will prepare the delicious meals. Choices this year will be **Prime Rib of Beef, Stuffed Cantaloupe with Chicken Salad or Vegetarian** on request. Lunch will start with a soup and finish with mouthwatering strawberry shortcake. Rolls, butter, tea and coffee are included in the \$35.00 cost.

To start off the fun, a cash bar will be serving at 11:30 a.m. while you visit with old and new friends. Lunch will be served about noon and the fashion show will begin around 12:45 p.m. Raffle tickets for the 50/50 drawing may be purchased at any time during the event.

This is our major fund raiser for the year so plan to attend and invite your friends and acquaintances to join us. The success depends upon participation of our members and friends. If you cannot attend, consider sending a donation.

Reserve your seats by calling **Doreen Archer at 622-407** no later than Friday, January 21st and sending a check for **\$35.00** for each lunch. The check should be made out to **LWVSC** and mailed to **Brigitte Sinton, 6629 Canal Road, Melbourne Village, FL 32904**. Be sure to indicate your entrée choice. Your check is your receipt.

Models will be announced in the January Voter.



Celebrating 90 Years

Letter from Elizabeth MacNamara, President of League of Women Voters.

I couldn't be prouder of the League this election season. During my travels to nine states before the elections, I saw firsthand the incredible work done by local Leagues and their volunteers — registering tens of thousands of new voters, providing nonpartisan information on the candidates through millions of

printed and online voters' guides, and holding hundreds of candidate debates seen and heard by thousands over the course of the campaign.

Our examination of this year's election has brought to light two major players during this election season that demand our immediate attention: secret money and incivility.

When the Supreme Court ruled on the Citizens United case earlier this year, huge amounts of secret money were turned loose in American politics. Congress' failure to act and pass the DISCLOSE Act only added to this problem.

As a result, not surprisingly, voters were overwhelmed by millions of dollars in negative ads this year but didn't know who paid for many of them. Leagues across the country have been calling on their elected officials to support the DISCLOSE Act, which would require corporations and unions to disclose the dollars they spend in elections.

With the 2012 presidential election season having already begun on November 3, the League will continue to address the other major issue this election season — incivility. The tone of the 2010 campaign exhibited a disturbingly new low in American politics. Not only was this evident in the expensive advertising, but we also saw it in candidate debates and forums and in the public discourse.

As we have for the past 90 years, the League will continue to help our fellow citizens discuss the issues in a civil and fact-based way and fight for transparency, accountability, and disclosure in America's elections!

Voters, not money, should be at the center of our democracy.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth MacNamara

Legislative Priorities *(continued from Page 5)*

10. Whether significant member interest is expressed in a proposed item.
11. Whether other organizations and non-League members will join with LWVF to study, or act on, an item.

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.

Photos from Timely Topics on Amendments 5 & 6



Marilynn Collins & Marilza Novaes-Card



Katherine Kowalski & Priscilla Griffith



Vera Walker



David Sinton



Alberta Wilson



Vivian Smith



JoDee Wilfong, Ann Downing, & Susan Little



Jill Jeffries

Calendar for December 2010

~Members Welcome at All Meetings~

December 6, Monday
December 11, Saturday
December 13, Monday
December 14, Tuesday

Local Government Committee at Sun Shoppe Café in Melbourne at 10:30 a.m.
Holiday Luncheon at Black Tulip Restaurant in Cocoa Village at 11:30 a.m.
Children's Committee Suntime Library at 1:30 p.m.
International Relations Meeting Satellite Beach Library 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

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

Issue Date: December 2010

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