



The Voter

The League of Women Voters
of the Space Coast



Volume 32: No. 7

March, 2012

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.

~Two Events for March~

Timely Topic - Brevard County Health Department

A representative from Brevard County Health Department will be speaking to us and respond to our questions about Health Department Services.

When: Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Where: Holiday Inn Viera
8298 North Wickham Road

Menu: Baked Crab-Stuffed Tilapia
Chicken Cordon Bleu
Vegetarian on request

Entrees include a green salad, chef's selection of vegetables and appropriate starch, roll & butter, carrot cake, coffee or tea.

Cost: \$20.00

Reservations: Doreen Archer at 321-622-4071
By Sunday - 5 p.m. March 18, 2012

Central Florida Regional Field Trip



A Saturday field trip for League of Women Voters members from Orange, Brevard, Seminole, Volusia and Osceola counties is planned. This day-long event will take place on Saturday, March 17, 2012, and includes visits to the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Cultural Center, Dixie Crossroads Restaurant and the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Make sure you sign up to have a fun-filled Saturday with friends and League members! **Details on Page 6.**

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Underwriter for this month

Sheriff Jack Parker

**Brevard County
Sheriff's Office**



President's Corner

Barbara Whitley

Welcome League Members and friends:

Did you have as much fun as I did at Sheriff Parker's Roast? I laughed so hard and the best part was so did Sheriff Parker and his lovely wife. What fun we all had. The crowd was there for fun and showed their love, respect and genuine caring for our Sheriff. A Big THANK YOU to all of our Roasters who did a wonderful job. They knew just how to do the job. It made the evening a lot of fun and everyone got a glance of the Sheriff they would never have otherwise. I still say there are no bad baby pictures. All babies are cute.

I did not want to leave this subject without giving a big Thank You to our League Chairman for the Sheriff Roast, Doreen Archer. She and her committee of Connie Hogert, Marilynn Collins, Brigitte Sinton, Barbara Jagrowski, Priscilla Griffith, Barbara Dutton, Ruth Schechter, and Lucia Watson did a super job. I am going to borrow a line from Bill Ellis " those grey haired ladies can really put on a good dinner!" and also my THANK YOU to Bill Ellis for a wonderful evening.

Now back to Changes. A new Sheriff is going to be a big change so the beat goes on.

We have been talking about changes. Many changes have been happening in our lives. We have been living through some real change and we are living through an election year that has left us with many questions. Many people have found their income has changed, their jobs have changed and in some ways the whole structure of the way they live has changed. I thought about this when I took a client to her doctor this week and she found that she could not see her doctor but was going to see the AARPN. She wanted to see the doctor. It was explained that hers was a routine visit and she didn't need to see a doctor. In her 92 year old eyes she looked up at the Nurse and said "when I die do I get to see God?"

We have talked about the changes in the Voter office, all 152 of them and how they are coming under challenges by the League. We have had Mitch Needleman tell us about the changes in the Clerk's office and what he is doing to answer the challenges that Tallahassee has put to him. He has some different answers to some unique problems. However, most of all we have learned and we have put what we have learned to good use. The League uses this to ask even more questions.

This is what we do as Leaguers. We are fair and balanced taking into consideration both sides of an issue, not deciding who is right or wrong but trying to hear why they come to the conclusions that they do. We

do ask questions however and also hold people responsible for their words and thoughts.

In February our Timely Topics focused on the School Board and policies effecting the education of our children, particularly the Charter School's issues.

In March our focus is what is happening to our Public Health Services. This could not come at a better time for our League as the House panel has just approved a proposal to overhaul the state's public health system. Thus it is shifting the responsibilities from the Florida Department of Health to the counties. The concern is the funding for county health departments and the future of Children's Medical Services Programs. There seems to be a need to more narrowly focus the Health Departments services in the county. This will give the County a better way to direct what they need in the way of Public Health. A representative from Dr. Heshmati's office is to speak at our March Timely Topic, I am going to break my arm patting our steering committee on the back. They are right on target. The League may be a little gray haired but they are sharp and know what is happening. They are focused and more aware then you will ever know. They hit this one right on the bull's eye. Good Work Ladies.

Yours in League,
Barb



Welcome to New Member

Christine Michaels

Please add new members to your membership book.

Addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of new members will be sent to you by e-mail.

If you have friends who belong to Space Coast League of Women Voters who do not receive e-mail, it would be helpful if you could contact them and give them addresses and phone numbers of new members to add to their membership books. We discontinued printing this information in our *Voters* because of privacy concerns. Our *Voters* are distributed throughout the community and are found on line on our web site.

Diversity Mission Statement

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



Ayn Marie Samuelson – Chair

REDISTRICTING IN FLORIDA

Who's in Charge of Redistricting?

Every ten years after the U.S. Census results, Florida redistricts its congressional, state house and senate districts. Florida's census came in at 18,900,773 individuals. The state legislature is responsible for drawing all districts. In the Senate it is handled by the Select Committee on Apportionment and Redistricting, and in the House by the Committee on Reapportionment. The Florida Constitution requires that redistricting be done in the 2012 session of the Florida Legislature, or in a special session called by the Governor, if districts are not drawn by the end of the regular session. The state Supreme Court will step in if the legislature fails to meet the candidate-qualifying deadline. The Governor has veto power over the congressional plan but not over the state legislative district plan; that plan is adopted by joint resolution of the Florida Legislature.

What is the redistricting timeline?

- In last year's 2011 legislative session, various Committees held introductory meetings.
- July through September 2011, the state legislature held public hearings all around the state.
- Mid-September through December 2011, the Legislative redistricting committees held interim meetings.
- January 10 through March 9, 2012 is the state legislative session in Tallahassee. The Legislature will draw and pass redistricting plans that affect Congress and the state senate and house districts.
- Beginning March 10, the courts will review the redistricting plans.
- U.S. Department of Justice has 60 days after court approval to review plans for compliance with the Voting Rights Act.
- June 8th is the last day to qualify to run for the new congressional districts.

What are the Standards for Establishing District Boundaries?

According to Article III of the Florida Constitution, in establishing district boundaries:

- No apportionment plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent; and districts shall not be drawn with the intent of denying or abridging

equal opportunity; and districts shall consist of contiguous territory.

- districts shall be a nearly equal in population as is practicable; districts shall be compact; and districts shall, where feasible, utilize existing political and geographical boundaries.

Where Can the Proposed State House and Senate Plans Be Viewed?

The plans can be viewed at www.floridaredistricting.org You can visit the site and click on "[View All the Districts Approved by the Florida House in One Document](#)" to see the proposed districts for state house, senate and congressional districts. I found that each of the proposed districts for my residence would change significantly, and the numbers of those districts would also change. The site claims the current plans meet the requirements/standards set forth in the state Constitution and to be one that, for the most part, keeps municipal boundaries and counties intact.

The State League's Redistricting Proposal

The League, in concert with two other organizations, submitted a House and Senate redistricting plan for consideration. The plans submitted "nest" three House districts into each Senate district. They state that "nesting" would "give voters the advantage of having a more efficient and logical form of representation with a dedicated delegation that can work together to serve the needs of their communities. Nesting would make it easier for voters to know their Senators and Representatives and would create a political community within a reasonable compact area. The nesting concept is exactly what the Fair Districts amendments were intended to produce: compact, common sense, non-gerrymandered districts that were created without regard for protecting incumbents or political parties." Of course, citizens need to research who they are voting for, get to know their candidates by listening to debates and forums, and then cast their informed vote.



Board Bytes

- 119 members
- Roast for Sheriff Parker was very successful.
- Net profit from Roast was \$2669.
- We were pleased that so many non League members attended the Roast.
- Marilyn Hooper (Smitty) joined the board as Justice Chair. Please let a board member know if you would like to serve on this committee.
- Annual meeting will be Saturday, April 14th.



Children's Committee

Doreen Archer – Chair

At the time of writing this report, most bills that have been filed in Tallahassee are still in committee, and some may never make it to the House or Senate, but the outlook does not bode well for our youngest citizens, especially those from low-income families, who have to live with the consequences of shortsighted legislation.

The worst example is an extensive re-write of Florida's early learning/school readiness system which was unveiled by the House Business and Consumer Affairs subcommittee in late January. Proponents admit that the purpose of changing the current system, which balances quality education and the number of poor children served, is to ensure that more children can be in the program. By law, matching federal funds require that quality education will be a top priority and the proposals fail to recognize this.

Some real consequences are:

1. Much less accountability for quality and education standards -- including screening, assessments and curricula -- in school readiness programs.
2. Far less ability for Early Learning Coalitions to decide what's best for the children of their own communities.
3. Fewer business and private-sector people on the coalition boards
4. Less funding for school-age child care (often forcing parents out of the workforce).

A University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study, known as the Abecedarian Project, began in 1972 with over one hundred babies from low-income families. Half were enrolled in quality early childhood education from birth to kindergarten and the other half were in a control group who received whatever care their families could provide.

The children were followed throughout their school years showing better scores in reading and math and the latest data from the now adults indicate that 23% of those who received early education graduated from a four year college versus 6% in the control group.

We live in a state where maybe 30 percent of the children start school way behind – and many then get further behind. Reducing the quality of early education will increase that percentage and providing less funding for after-school care for children of working parents may impact the juvenile justice system.



International Relations

Mary Nicolay – Chair

The topics for our March International Relations meetings are **Middle East Realignment on March 13th** and **Indonesia on March 27th**. Both meetings are at Satellite Beach Library from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Our February 14th Great Decision's topic was *Mexico: transborder crime and governance*.

Mexican President Calderón's main goal when he took office in December, 2006 was to make great progress against the drug supplies heading into the United States. As we know from following the news that the drug cartels are powerful and killing thousands of people in Mexico. The drugs are not just coming from Mexico but working their way from Central America into Mexico and heading north to the border with the United States.

The Mérida Initiative was a multi year proposal from the U.S. to counter drug-fueled mayhem that threatens both sides of the border. It was a 1.4 billion dollar U.S. assistance program to Mexico and Central America. This was started in 2007 and has had limited success. Unless programs like the Mérida Initiative are woven into a more holistic U.S. drug policy focusing on reducing demand as well as supply, many analysts predict that they are unlikely to have a significant impact on drug flows in the region. The U.S. Treasury has made it more difficult to launder money within financial institutions. Consequently the preferred mode to transfer the drug proceeds back to Mexico is shipments of bulk cash. The drug trade is a circular one. Illegal narcotics flow north while illegal money flows south. It is reported that the Mexican cartels operate in 48 U.S. states and at least 195 cities. U.S. officials estimate that 90% of the firearms recovered from crime scenes in Mexico originated in the United States. Mexico has strict weapon laws so these weapons are arriving illegally. Globalization adds to the problem. Organized crime groups operating via Mexico have become increasingly decentralized, diversified and complex.

It is important that the two countries work together to try to solve the problems. In recent years Mexico and the United States have engaged in much closer collaboration in counter-drug efforts. There has been cooperation on extradition of criminals, exchange of information, police and legal training, the sharing of equipment and technology.

Mexico is the second largest supplier of crude oil to the U.S. refineries. The United States is Mexico's largest trading partner. Mexico is an ally on numerous issues of global concern from addressing climate change to fighting terrorism. These are positive things but a major problem still exists that does not have an easy answer.

Lucia Watson

LWV Space Coast Proposed Budget 2012-2013

INCOME

1100 Dues	
1110 Individual	3,850
1120 Household	1,575
1130 Student	-
TOTAL 1100 Dues	5,425
1200 Contributions (by Members)	
1210 Additions to Dues	650
1220 Memorial Gifts	100
1290 Other	250
TOTAL 1200 Contributions	1,000
1300 Donations	
1310 CONTACT	1,000
1320 VOTER Underwriting	1,800
1360 Voter Services	100
1390 Other	-
TOTAL 1300 Donations	2,900
1400 Fund Raising	
1410 Letters to Members	-
1420 Fashion Show	4,400
1450 Other Event	-
1490 Other	-
TOTAL 1400 Fund Raising	4,400
1500 Meetings	
1510 Annual Meeting	1,000
1520 Lunches	3,200
1590 Other	800
TOTAL 1500 Meetings	5,000
1700 Miscellaneous	50
TOTAL INCOME	18,775

EXPENSES

2100 Per Member Payments	
2110 National	3,255
2120 State	1,630
TOTAL 2100 PMP	4,885
2200 Operating	
2210 Incorporation Fee	65
2220 Telephone	455
2221 Post Office Box	100
2222 Web Hosting	130
2230 Miscellaneous	150
2231 Donations	100
2232 Insurance for Events	100
2240 Printing CONTACT	1,500
2250 Printing Member Directory	250
2260 Printing VOTER	1,600
2261 Postage Permit	190
2262 Postage Bulk Acct	400
2263 Stamps & Supplies	50
TOTAL 2200 Operating	5,090
2300 Administrative	
2310 Committees	250
2320 President	50
2330 Secretary & Treasurer	50
2340 Membership	250
2350 Voter Services	100
TOTAL 2300 Administrative	700
2400 Fund Raising	
2410 Letters to Members	-
2420 Fashion Show	2,500
2430 Other Event	-
2490 Other	-
TOTAL 2400 Fund Raising	2,500
2500 Meetings	
2510 Annual Meeting	900
2520 Lunches	3,000
2590 Other	700
TOTAL 2500 Meetings	4,600
2600 Conventions	
2610 Legislative Seminar	500
2620 State Meeting	500
TOTAL 2600 Conventions	1,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	18,775

Program of Work for 2012-2013

There are no changes in Positions for 2012-2013

Information is to be voted upon at Annual Meeting in April.

Justice Program

1. Tour of the Brevard Correctional Center in Sharpes.
2. Collaborate with Children’s Committee about education of children in the Juvenile Justice System.
3. Research physical, mental, and financial abuse of the elderly.

Local Government Program

1. Research the status of the Brevard County Library System:
 - a. Review current fiscal practices and the effects of budget cuts.
 - b. Research the effects of new technologies on library services.
2. Review all Special Tax Districts in Brevard County.

Natural Resources Program

1. Monitor and report the efforts of DEP to clean up the Banana and Indian River Lagoon. Educate the public about these efforts and their results and what can be done to insure a positive outcome.
2. Water Resources – Monitor our fresh water supply and the comprehensive plans to insure continued supply of potable water. This includes protecting wetlands and encouraging the acquisition of flood plains in the upper St. Johns River.
3. Monitor sewage disposal planning. This has become a hot topic lately as other areas are privatizing this occupation.
4. Growth management: This is also a hot topic as the Brevard County long range comprehensive plan has been changed to be virtually ineffective for protecting our environment.

Social Policy/Children’s Issues Program

1. Monitor and report to the public the results of Brevard County’s Charter Schools status and student achievement results.
2. Collect information about the education of children in the Juvenile Justice system (collaborate with Justice Committee).
3. Monitor and support efforts to provide basic health care for all Brevard County’s children.
4. Monitor and support measures that provide adequate living conditions for all of Brevard County’s children.
5. Monitor and report the status of early childhood education efforts in Brevard County.

Report of Nominating Committee

Presented by Sue Mart –Chair.

Members of the committee were: Martha Bradshaw, Ann Downing, Priscilla Griffith, and Connie Hogerty.

Slate for 2012-2013

- 2nd Vice President – Ayn Samuelson 2012-2014
- Treasurer – Brigitte Sinton 2012-2014
- Director – Priscilla Griffith 2012-2014
- Director – Connie Hogerty 2012-2014
- Director – Marilyn Hooper (Smitty) 2012-2014
- Director – Barbara Jagrowski 2012-2013

Nominating Committee for 2013

Margarite Orban - Chair

Linda Kyvik and Carol Riley.

These three members will serve with two members elected from the Board of Directors.

Central Florida Regional Field Trip

(continued from Page 1)

ITINERARY:

10 AM: Arrive at Moore Cultural Center, enjoy coffee, cake and chat before touring the center.

11:30 AM: Drive to Dixie Crossroads Restaurant for lunch and presentation on environmental policy by Laurilee Thompson (**Note: participants are responsible for their own lunch cost**)

2 PM: Convene at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge for a guided tour of scenic Black Point Wildlife Drive. (It is not necessary to attend all events.)

Cost: \$15.00

Information on this event has been sent to League members who have e-mail addresses so **you can register on line.**

Members who do not have computers and want to go to the event on **March 17 can send a check. Make it payable to the League of Women Voters of Florida, include a note that the check is for the Central Florida Regional Field Trip on March 17, 2012. Cost is \$15 per person. The event is for League Members only.**

Get your checks in quickly as the event has a limit of 45 people, so it will be first come first serve. Your check must be received in order to participate. No reservations will be taken after **March 8, 2012.** Of course registering online is much more efficient.

Mailing address:

**League of Women Voters Florida
540 Beverly Court
Tallahassee, FL 32301-4559**

Photos of Sheriff Parker's Roast



Sheriff Jack Parker



Rob Rains



Lionel Cote



Bill Ellis



Tim Parker



Phil Archer



Greg Purden



Calendar for March 2012
~Members Welcome at All Meetings~

Monday, March 5
Monday, March 12
Tuesday, March 13

Wednesday, 21

Tuesday, March 27

Board meeting at Suntree Library at 10:00 a.m.
Children's Committee meeting at Suntree Library at 1:30 p.m.
International Relations Committee meeting - Satellite Beach Library
1.p.m. to 3 p.m. Subject is Middle East Realignment - Priscilla Griffith
Timely Topics Holiday Inn Viera - 11:30 a.m.
Brevard County Health Department Services
International Relations Committee meeting - Satellite Beach Library
1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Subject is Indonesia - Rhoda Bosley

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