



The Voter

The League of Women Voters
of the Space Coast



Volume 31: No. 2

October, 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.

Timely Topic

Amendments 5 & 6- Fair Districts

- When:** Wednesday, October 20, 2010
- Time:** 11:30 a.m.
- Place:** Tuscany Grill- 7640 N. Wickham Road, Suntree
- Menu:** **Chicken Marsala Portabella** – chicken sautéed with portabella mushrooms in a Marsala wine and light cream sauce served over angel hair pasta.
Scampi ala Tuscany – Fresh jumbo shrimp sautéed with garlic, diced tomatoes, and scallions, in a sherry wine and lemon sauce, served over angel hair pasta.
Eggplant Rollatini – Eggplant sautéed and stuffed with a blend of ricotta, mozzarella, and Romano cheeses, then baked and topped with mozzarella, served with spaghetti.
- Cost:** \$16.00
- RSVP:** Doreen Archer – 321-622-4071 by 5 p.m. on **Sunday, October 17th.**

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Florida Newspapers unanimously agree that we need to vote **yes** on **Amendments 5 & 6.**

“ The current system of drawing legislative and congressional districts is broken.” – *St. Pete Times*

“Lines shouldn’t be drawn to help a party, incumbent or anyone else.” – *Florida Times Union*

“Amendments 5 & 6 will give control of elections back to Florida’s voters, where it belongs.” – *The Miami Herald*

“The intent of the amendments is sound: give voters more power and powerful politicians less.” – *Tallahassee Democrat*

October Underwriter
The Center for Civic Education



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



President's Corner

Ruth Schechter

Dear League Members,

Time for another busy election year! I hope all of you have managed to catch the wonderful job that Ayn Samuelson, our Voter Services Chair, has done on primary forums with our partnership with the Florida Today and the Space Coast Tiger Bay Club. I saw the rerun the day I got home and it was great! Ayn and this group will be sponsoring debates from now until the General Election; check the website for the schedule and attend or at least watch.

The State League is publishing a Special Edition Voter Guide which we will share as soon as we get it – the State is also partnering with PBS television to have the major State officer candidate's debates. The place will be PBS TV from 8pm – 10pm on dates that will be announced and will precede early voting times. (Details on Page 7.)

At the end of this month the Space Coast League will be sponsoring (in partnership with the Marine Resources Council) a forum on Amendment # 4 – the so called "Home town Democracy" Amendment. See details on website and in your last Voter.

All of these activities fall under Voter Service and are educational in nature – the League has no stated position.

However, we are advocating for Amendments 5 & 6! These are the Fair Districts Amendments and must pass by a 60% margin!!

Doreen Archer and Connie Hogerty are in charge of our advocacy effort and would love to have you invite them to share our information and encouragement with any groups that you believe would like to hear our reasoning on this issue! They are our "speaker's bureau" on this topic! They can also just provide literature for you to distribute if that would be better for your group! Call them!

On a personal note – our trip was wonderful but I had to return home a little early due to a medical issue. Dealing with said issue is going to take a little longer and more effort than I'd like; so I have asked the Board of Directors to give me a "leave of absence" for a couple of months. I am completely certain that the Space Coast League will thrive with Carol McDonald as your temporary President and the wonderful women who so competently make up the Board of Directors!

In League,

Ruth



Voter Service Report

Ayn Marie Samuelson – Chair

General Election Forums and Events

- **League, WBCC, Tiger Bay, Florida Today Partnership – Three Dates**

All held at the BCC Cocoa Campus (Simpkins Center, Building 4) at 7:00 p.m.

September 23rd - State House District 30 -
Workman/Tidd

October 13th - U.S. House District 24 -
Adams/Kosmas/Ruiz

October 14th - U.S. House District 13 -
Posey/Roberts

If you have a question that you would like to submit, please do so via email to me at aynsamuelson@cfl.rr.com at least one day prior to the scheduled candidate forum.

- **Chamber Hob Nob – October 6th**
All candidates statewide invited; held at the Melbourne Auditorium from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Melbourne Beach Candidate Forum – October 7th**
Five candidates are on the ballot for 2 seats; held at the town hall at 7:00 p.m.
- **Satellite Beach Candidates Forum – October 19th**

Satellite Beach Woman's Club sponsors candidates for local and statewide seats at the Scotty Culp Center at 7:00p.m.

Constitutional and State Referendum

Originally, there were nine state constitutional amendments and one state referendum that were slated to appear on the November 2, 2010 ballot. To date, Amendments 3, 7, and 9 have all been pulled. When you access the Supervisor of Elections' website, locate "Election Information" on the left hand side and click on it. A drop down list will appear, at which time you can click "2010 Amendments & Referenda" to find the State Constitutional Amendments and Referendum and other City and Town Referenda as you scroll downward. You may also click on the links that will give you the full text and more information on each amendment.

The League has developed pros and cons for the amendments that can be accessed on the state website at www.lwvfla.org. Once you are at the state website, look at the left side column entitled HELP FOR VOTERS. You will note there are several choices, and the amendment pros and cons can be accessed under the VOTER GUIDE heading. This information can help you on your way to decide how you will vote in the general election on November 2, 2010.



Children's Committee

Marilza Novaes Card – Chair

In our last month's newsletter I discussed the community meeting sponsored by the Florida Department of Children & Families (Circuit 18) that our committee's members attended. The following is a summary of the recommendations obtained from participants at the meeting.

Objective 1: Adopt and develop family-centered practices to enhance child safety, well-being, permanency, and safely reduce out-of-home care.

Recommendations were made to reduce the number of children in foster care by helping families to find formal and informal services that will address the needs of all members of the family. The list included: to educate DCF's workers, community partners and the public about DCF's accomplishments, challenges and needs; to employ a data base that can be shared by DCF, Brevard Family Partnership and service providers in the community; to provide training that will focus on recognizing problems instead of symptoms; to address transportation issues; to have meaningful inter agency communications and to engage services within 48 hours of referrals.

Objective 2: Provide critical economic assistance to families.

Participants recommended a proactive job placement and assistance program that would help to decrease the number of individuals in welfare. Other suggestions were: to increase the amount of funds for relative and non-relative substitute caregivers and to continue to provide funds for families that are in the system but move out of state.

Objective 3: Integrate substance abuse and mental health services into the child welfare system.

Suggestions to help DCF achieve this objective covered issues such as the need to train case managers to become knowledgeable on a vast array of services. Therefore, instead of receiving training just in their own specialty population they would receive training in services such as adult and children's mental health, substance abuse, housing, and domestic violence. The case manager would service the whole family throughout the time that the family would be in the system. Other suggestions were to increase affordable transportation resources and options in HMO plans.

Objective 4: Confront the root causes of substance abuse and mental illness and improve systems of care.

In the area of substance abuse, mental illness and systems of care, recommendations were made to use funding in more creative and flexible ways. For example, to invest more on outreach, prevention and peer involvement in setting up programs. Also, providing therapy for family members who live with addicts and

psychiatric individuals. Participants pointed out that there is high demand for additional nursing homes and assisted living facilities for individuals with mental health and medical issues.

Objective 5: Provide safe environment for children while in child care facilities/homes.

It was pointed out at the meeting that even though there are many child care facilities and homes in Brevard and Seminole counties, funding is limited and the child care staff have low paid jobs. Some of the recommendations include: sick child care, 24/7 child care, specialized staff for children with behavioral problems, higher pay for staff with more education and training, better engagement between child care staff and families, more information on the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) process, better coverage in rural areas, more involvement of families and child care providers and programs, and including abuse registry checks as part of child care staff background screens.

Objective 6: Expand domestic violence prevention and training.

Suggestions were made to start prevention as early as elementary school instead of waiting for high school and to administer more domestic violence education for teens. Other recommendations were to engage domestic violence systems in strategic planning, to increase funding for all domestic violence programs and systems and to better define the term domestic violence in the community and at the hotline.

Objectives 7 and 8: Preserve the dignity and comfort of adults who are unable to fully care for themselves. Provide solutions to the issues of homelessness.

Some of the recommendations included: encourage local government to apply ordinances to increase transitional housing, extend CARES to include adult services, provide better transportation for adults, offer programs aimed at the needs of homeless young adults, educate the public and local government on needs and benefits of more affordable housing and more Baker Act beds, increase self-sufficient skill programs and agencies aimed at young adults and multiple one-stop processing centers to help community members to find needed services.

Objective 9: Partner with state agencies, stakeholders, and providers

Participants advised ensuring equitable allocation of services and networking to supply further resources to partner agencies in an effort to do more with limited resources. Also, contributors proposed additional law enforcement training, face to face contact among all partners, the establishment of a memorandum of understanding between providers, stigma reduction and one community calendar. *(continued on Page 4)*

(continued from Page 3)

Objective 10: Advocate for necessary funding.

Attention was called to the need to create a community coalition between Brevard and Seminole Counties and to establish a procedure to help people with no resources. It was suggested that there is a need to become more familiar with funds that are available in the local communities and to advocate for additional funds. Also, attention should be paid to the fair allocation of services providers.

The participants concluded that some of the barriers to implementing the above additional services consist of the following: reduction in budgets, the economic state of the country, lack of choice in HMO plans, low pay and undesirable hours that keep away well-qualified child care staff, the public lack of basic child care knowledge that result in unnecessary hotline calls, not enough mental health services being available, not enough Baker Act beds, lack of services for young adults especially for single males, overspecialization of case managers, a growing elderly population but not enough housing and treatment to serve them, lack of adequate domestic violence information for all ages and lack of adequate transportation due to funding limitations and the fact that there is not a central agency in charge of coordinating and providing services.

According to Heather Howlett, the Operations and Management Consultant for the Department of Children and Families, the above recommendations will be sent to Tallahassee where a decision will be made concerning which suggestions will be included in their 5 year plan.



Local Government

Priscilla Griffith

On May 20, 2010, the Local Government Committee produced The State of the County Program, which was held in the county commission chambers. We had an excellent panel which consisted of Howard Tipton, County Manager; Dr. Brian Binggeli, Superintendent of Schools; Sheriff Jack Parker, Brevard County Sheriff; and Bob Lay, Director of Emergency Management, Brevard County. The fact that Mr. Tipton and Dr. Binggeli were new to the county added to the interest of the audience. The presentations were enlightening and engendered many questions from the audience. The program was taped by the government channel staff and was repeated at least once at a later date. It was broadcast live, also. Approximately 50 people were in attendance.

The hardworking committee which put this program together was Marilyn Collins, Barbara Jagrowski, Marilza Novaes-Card, and Brigitte Sinton. Ayn Samuelson was the moderator. President Schechter

opened and closed the meeting. League mugs were presented to each of the panelists.

There will be four amendments to the county charter up for a vote in the general election. These were discussed at the September Board meeting. It was determined that League would not take a position on any of them. You can read them in this Voter issue.

For the remainder of this League year, the committee will be devoting its time to reviewing the program of work approved at the annual meeting:

1. Observe county commission meetings.
2. Research the current powers of the Clerk of the Courts.
3. Research the fiscal practices of the county with respect to
 - a. a citizen advisory board to make fiscal recommendations.
 - b. an annual county status report.
 - c. periodic review of special tax districts.

We also plan to observe county commission meetings. If you are interested in any of these activities, please contact me. Our next meeting will be on September 29th at 10:30 a.m. at Sun Coffee Shoppe on New Haven Avenue in Melbourne.

Priscilla Griffith, 723-7101

AMENDMENTS TO COUNTY CHARTER

1. Shall the Brevard County Charter be amended to require that the Brevard County Charter Review Commission obtain an analysis of the fiscal impact of a proposed charter amendment prior to transmittal of the proposed charter amendment to the Brevard County Commission for placement on the ballot for consideration by the electors of Brevard County?
2. Shall the Brevard County Charter be amended to require that county charter amendments approved after December 1, 2010, that conflict with, transfer or limit a municipality's service, power, or authority apply to that municipality only if the amendment is approved or consented to by a majority of voters in that municipality voting in the referendum?
3. Shall the Brevard County Charter be amended to provide for a section entitled "Citizens Process for making Recommendations to the County Commission" to provide process which allows for citizens or organized groups to make recommendations to the County Commission with respect to the enhancement of County Government's effectiveness and efficiency, and
(continued on Page 5)

(Charter Amendments continued from Page 4)
 require the County Commission to review and either accept, accept with modifications, or reject the recommendations within a specified time frame?

4. Currently the Charter commences with Article 1, entitled "Creation, Powers and Ordinances of Home Rule Charter Government". Shall the Charter be amended to create an introductory Preamble by moving language from the existing Section 1.1 of the Brevard County Charter into the new Preamble?



International Relations

Mary Nicolay – Chair

October 12th the INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE will meet at the Satellite Beach Library from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The group will be watching the movie CAPITALISM: A LOVE STORY produced by Michael Moore. It has been reviewed in Macleans as "His best one yet. Moore is at the top of his game." TIME magazine wrote of it, " This is Moore's magnum opus". Hugh and Mary Nicolay also found the film educational and entertaining. Come see if you agree and let us discuss the points raised by Mr. Moore.

The following will be the schedule for the coming months. All are invited to attend the meetings which are held on the second Tuesday of each month in October, November, December and January from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Satellite Beach Library. During the months of February, March, April and May the group will meet two times a month to complete the GREAT DECISIONS SERIES. Dates to be announced.

Topics for the **Great Decisions Series** which begins in February are as follows:

- Rebuilding Haiti*
- U.S. National Security: 10 years after 9/11*
- The Horn of Africa*
- Responding to the Financial Crisis*
- Ascendant Germany*
- Sanctions and Non proliferation*
- Crisis in the Caucasus*
- Global Governance*

Please consider joining us for some lively discussions.

Martha Bradshaw led an excellent discussion from the 2010 Great Decisions' topics. The summary of her report follows: **The Global Financial Crisis and Its Effects by Martha Bradshaw**

The global financial crisis began in late 2008, resulting in crippled markets, fluctuating funds, and an estimated loss of more than \$3.4 trillion in the value of financial institutions' holdings. While the U.S.

unemployment rate fell, some Asian economies' exports were reduced. Four factors can be identified as having led to the crisis: Pacific Rim capital flooding US asset markets in global savings glut, declining American savings rate and growing imports as exports fell, foreign purchasing of dollar-denominated assets whose rising prices then fueled consumption in the US, widening the trade deficit even more.

Before September 2008, a series of deregulatory actions in the US led financial institutions to take ever-riskier actions at the same time global capital markets became more interdependent and large amounts of capital were moved around without oversight. In the US, economic policymaking was governed by a belief that markets would behave rationally, although occasional adjustment of monetary policy might be necessary to moderate the economy. Later as the crisis developed and spread, policy responses were ambitious, with public support of private asset markets and large fiscal stimulus packages.

The financial crisis is affecting the distribution of power in the world. Retaining its hegemony, the US spends more on military power than the other major military powers combined, continues to be the most powerful in science and technology output, and controls a great share of the world's resources. But American reliance on Chinese financing and China's expanding economic influence in other parts of the world have already led many Americans to believe that China is economically more powerful than the US. China, however, faces a domestic credit bubble and social unrest that threaten its stability.

Power and authority are moving from the West to the rest of the world, as the shift from the G-8 to the G-20 demonstrates. Notable among the effects of the Great Recession is that policymakers worldwide have not enacted nationalistic measures to protect their individual economies, thereby not repeating the mistakes of the past which might affect the common future.



Board Bytes

1. 120 Members – 9 are Nationals.
2. Resignation of Bonnie Orban accepted with regret. Bonnie and her husband are moving to the state of Washington.
3. Help is needed!! Openings for Finance, Health and Justice. Please call a board member if you are interested in more information. Board meetings are open to all members who would like to become more involved in League.
4. Doreen Archer and Connie Hogerty are available to speak to groups on Fair Districts.
5. Printed Voter's Guides from State League will be distributed in libraries.



Natural Resources

Maureen Rupe – Chair

Platt Property

It appears the real reason for the Parkway has disappeared; morphed into a huge development of thousands of homes and businesses. The Brevard County Commission just passed a comprehensive Plan amendment for a transfer of up to 3,000 homes, to allow the North Corridor (Platt Ranch) to develop up to 4,680 homes.

The St. John’s Heritage Parkway was originally called the Palm Bay Parkway. The Municipal Planning Organization voted unanimously for the original plan in 1998, with three distinct goals: 1) A limited access roadway to discourage urban sprawl; 2) A high speed roadway to allow movement from Palm Bay to north areas; and 3) An effective hurricane evacuation route.

Since the route was announced, developers have bought thousands of acres of land south of the Platt Ranch, and west of I-95. Thousands of homes are planned to be built. With all this planned development (urban sprawl), they have had to change the plans to a controlled access road (45 mph with stoplights) instead of a limited access highway like I-95. The Parkway will never be able to be used as hurricane evacuation route with all the planned development.

One issue the St. John’s River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has with the latest comp plan amendments on the Platt property is an increase in the amount of freshwater discharged to the Indian River Lagoon would have an adverse impact in the lagoon. They state the only way to protect the lagoon is to ensure the runoff volume is retained and infiltrated on-site, but the soil in this area makes retaining runoff difficult, and any increase in intensity of development would exacerbate the problem. The county refers to the comp plan stating the first inch of runoff is retained on site. However, how many rainfalls do we have with more than an inch of rain? Quite a few, and it’s not just the first inch of runoff that does all the damage, but the total amount of fresh water discharged into the Indian River Lagoon. The Indian River Lagoon is currently dying thanks to the state’s and county’s inadequate protection of this precious one of a kind resource.

Another issue the SJRWMD has with the Platt property comp plan amendments is the L-74N levee on the west side of the property that was built to protect agriculture land and not to protect urban areas. The SJRWMD emphasized their point by comparing the New Orleans flooding that happened with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. DCA’s ORC Report also gave their public safety concerns with the L-74 levee.

The county’s citizens need to remember that both Melbourne and West Melbourne are both interested in annexation. If this property is annexed, which the applicants have shown interest in the past, this agreement will completely change, no matter what they agree to now. There will be a new agreement which will be changed to comply with the city’s comp plan, not the county’s. We’ve already spent \$2 million and committed another \$24 million (as of now). If the land is annexed the county will still bear the cost of the road.

Update

Please add this information to your membership book.

~We Welcome New Members~

Patricia (Pat) Davis
479 Angelo Lane
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
321-784-0238

Ruth Fountain
479 Angelo Lane
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
321-784-0238

Renewal

Nina Zimm
933 Indian River Drive
Cocoa FL 32922
321-446-4971
ninazimm@aol.com

New Phone Numbers for
Margaret and Norman McDonald
386-776-1920
321-427-7178 –cellphone

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.

Center for Civic Education

Our underwriter this month is Center for Civic Education, We the People, The Citizen and the Constitution. " **We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution** is a nationally acclaimed program focusing on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights for upper elementary, middle, and high school students. The **We the People** curriculum is aligned with the *National Standards for Civics and Government* and correlates with the social studies standards of many states. . What makes the program so successful is the design of its instructional program, including its innovative culminating activity."

Mission Statement"The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries." Their website is www.civiced.org

Several of our Brevard high schools have participated in this program. They compete after using the curriculum at the county level and winners go to state competition.

Governor and U.S. Senate Televised Debates – October 14th

- Candidates for Florida's Governor and Florida's U.S. Senate seats will face off on the topic of health care in unprecedented back-to-back debates Thursday, October 14th, in Orlando. Florida Public Broadcasting Stations, in partnership with the League of Women Voters of Florida, are planning these historic debates, which will be hosted by the Florida Hospital Association. Senior Correspondents of PBS's *The NewsHour*. **Gwen Ifill** and **Judy Woodruff**, will moderate.

These will be the last scheduled debates prior to the launch of early voting, giving Florida citizens a final opportunity to evaluate the candidates before casting their vote. The debates will have a focus on healthcare; however, will cover a wide range of issues important to Florida's citizens. Audience members, as well as the public, will be able to question the candidates by submitting questions in advance.

"With the national attention on these key races, and the importance of the subject of health care to our Florida citizens, these debates should be a must see for all," says Janyth Righter, President of PBS Florida.

League President Deirdre Macnab says, "With Florida having the third highest number of those with no health insurance in the country, this opportunity for the candidates to differentiate their vision and ideas on how to improve access and affordability of healthcare for Florida citizens could be a pivotal event in determining how Florida votes."

This stellar partnership will bring public broadcasting's top political analysts and Senior Correspondents of PBS's *The NewsHour*, Gwen Ifill and Judy Woodruff, to serve as moderators. The event will be hosted by the Florida Hospital Association's state convention at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando and is scheduled to air from 8 PM to 10:30 PM on your local PBS and NPR stations.

With a 99% reach into Florida homes, the debate is produced by Florida Public Broadcasting stations, with WEDU Tampa as the producing station, and the League of Women Voters of Florida, and sponsored by Florida Hospitals Foundation. Florida Public Broadcasting stations and the League of Women Voters of Florida bring extensive experience and expertise in producing and delivering political debates both on a statewide and local level. This fall's debate continues a strong tradition of raising the political conversation.

Calendar for October 2010

~Members Welcome at All Meetings~

October 7, Thursday	Board meeting at home of Doreen Archer- Melbourne – 10:00 a.m.
October 11, Monday	Children's Committee Suntree Library at 1:30 p.m.
October 12, Tuesday	International Relations Meeting Satellite Beach Library 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
October 20, Wednesday	Timely Topic – Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6 at Tuscany Grill at 11:30 a.m.

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

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