



# The Voter

LWV of The Villages/Tri County Area ♦ December 2007 ♦ Vol. 2 Issue 6

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It was back to the classroom at our November luncheon at the Japanese Steak House. Our “teacher” was Nancy Lopez, retired hydrologist from the USGS and our “pop quiz” was on Water Resources. For those in attendance, we were certainly glad to find out that our grade would not be counted. However, we did find out that we have more homework to do on this very important subject. Some of our questions: what is the percentage of fresh water on the Earth; answer, 3%; which three states use the most water; answer, California, Texas and **FLORIDA**; how much freshwater do people in Florida use every day; answer 8 billion gallons a day and increasing; are we going to run out of cheap water; answer **YES!**

Nancy left us with this message: Florida must aggressively pursue water conservation and the already existing laws on the book must be implemented. Both the St. John’s Water Management District and the Southwest Florida Water Management District oversee portions of our tri-county area. We must educate ourselves to the water problems in our area and let our elected, as well as appointed, officials know our concerns before it is too late.

Just a reminder for our newer members who have recently moved to Florida, if you are planning on voting in the January 29<sup>th</sup> Presidential Primary (see article on page 5) and you have not registered, please note that the deadline for registering is December 31, 2007. Also on the ballot is the Property Tax Amendment. Please see the press release on page 4 from LWVF President Dianne Wheatley-Giliotti concerning the League’s position on this amendment.

When the LWV was formed 87 years ago in Chicago, Carrie Chapman Catt said the following: “In the League of Women Voters we have an anomaly; we want legislation, we are going to educate for citizenship. In that body we have got to be non-partisan and all-partisan. Democrats from Alabama and Republicans from New Hampshire must work for the same things.” The choice made in 1920 to neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate for public office continues today to ensure that the League’s voice is heard above the noise of party politics. As we enter the 2008 election year, we must remember Carrie Catt’s words and guard the League’s nonpartisan policy.

*Happy Hanukkah*  
*Merry Christmas*

*Joanne*

# CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

**Thurs., Dec. 13,** Holiday Party with  
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Chinese Auction. .  
Stonecrest County  
Club, Summerfield.

## JANUARY 2008

**Mon., Jan. 14, 2008** Board meeting at  
10:00 a.m. the home of Joanne  
M. Coen. Meeting  
open to all members.

**Mon., Jan. 28,** LWVUS Immigration  
10:00 a.m. Consensus Meeting  
Marion County  
Sheriff's Office, CR  
42 and Buena Vista  
Dr., The Villages.

## FEBRUARY

**Mon., Feb. 25** Florida's School  
Time & Location to be Board System  
announced. Guest Speaker:  
Lauren Ritchie,  
*Orlando Sentinel*

## MARCH

**Sun., Mar. 16-Tues.,** LWVF Legislative  
**Mar 18.** For more Seminar,  
information, contact Tallahassee  
Joanne M. Coen.

**Mon., Mar. 24** Women in Local  
Time & Location to be Politics: Com.  
announced. Barbara Fitos,  
Marion CC; Com.  
Elaine Renick, Lake  
CC.

## Membership



It was good to have Thelma **Kuperberg** back with us at the November Meeting, and we hope to see **Betsy Brody** back with us in the New Year.

Please welcome the following new members to our Member at Large Unit:

### **CAROL M. BALBES (former member of LWV of Marion County)**

732-8677  
1335 S.E. 18<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Ocala, 34471  
mbalbes@earthlink.net

### **SHEILA DAVIS (transferred member from LWV of Massachusetts)**

751-4659  
444 Corbett Dr.  
Amelia, The Villages 32162

### **BARBARA THOMAS**

751-5554  
7886 SE 167<sup>th</sup> Mistwood Lane  
The Villages, 32162  
thomasbarbaraj@yahoo.com



## DUES NOTICES

Just a reminder that you dues notice comes from the state League office in Tallahassee. When you receive this notice, please make your check payable to **LWVF** and send it to **540 Beverly Ct., Tallahassee, FL 32301**. Because we do not keep any of the annual dues, we also ask that when you renew your dues, you also make a \$10 contribution (or more) to the **LWV of The Village/Tri-County Area MAL Unit**. This contribution stays in our treasury. Contributions should be sent to **Carolyn Johnson** who is filling in for our treasurer, Thelma Kuperberg.

## DECEMBER HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Our Holiday Lunch will be held on **Thursday, Dec. 13, 2007, 11:00 a.m.** at the **Stonecrest County Club** (just north of

the Wal Mart on 27/441). Our guest speaker will be Joseph Pine of the Metro Crime Prevention of Florida. He will discuss personal safety concerns including Identity Theft, Fraud and Scams, and Hurricane Safety and effective ways to protect you from these and other threats.

Please contact Carolyn **Johnson, 751-4103**, [cgljohnson@comcast.net](mailto:cgljohnson@comcast.net), to let her know if you will be attending and what you might be donating to the Auction. If you can get the donated item to Carolyn before the luncheon, that would be great. Don't forget—bring a friend!

In addition, if you would like to bring a gift for a teenager, we will deliver them to Haven House in Leesburg. Haven is the organization that helps abused women and children in Sumter and Lake Counties. If you have some small toiletry items from your travels, they would also be welcomed.

### **January LWVUS Immigration Consensus Meeting**

On **Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>** we will once again meet at **the Marion County Sheriff's Office at 10:00 a.m.** Our meeting topic will be the **Immigration Consensus. PLEASE** go to [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) and click on the link to the Immigration Study material which is on the lower left side of the page. Read up on the topic and the questions. This is a very complex subject. You will need to be "up to speed" on the issues so you can make considered decisions. Because of the breadth of this study and the number of questions, the meeting will run longer than usual. In addition to the LWVUS website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), other websites of interest might be the American Friends Service Organization-[www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org); for information re Visas (immigration)-<http://travel.state.gov/visa/>; Migration Policy Institute-<http://www.migrationinformation.org/>. An additional source might also be some of the church groups.

Bring along a sandwich or yogurt or whatever you eat. We will provide dessert and drinks.

The Consensus Questions are also printed on the LWVUS website, and we ask that you print out a copy and bring it with you to the meeting.

This will be our first consensus as a League and to further add to our responsibility, we are the study arm for the LWVF. So it is important that we come prepared to our January meeting. Be a part of this very important consensus! If you have any questions, please contact either Joanne or Carolyn.

### **Legislative Interviews**

As mentioned in our November *Voter*, members of the LWV across Florida are engaged in interviewing their elected representatives and senators.

For our area, the two senators we would be interviewing would be **Sen. Carey Baker, District 20** and **Sen. Evelyn Lynn, District 7**. Representatives to be interviewed are **Rep. Larry Cretul, District 22**, **Rep. Hugh Gibson, District 42**, and **Rep. Kurt Kelly, District 24**, who replaced Rep. Dennis Baxley in a special election.

Background information relative to the questions is provided by the state legislative action chair. I know that time is valuable, but your help is needed. Please let **Joanne Coen, 750-1366**, know if you would be willing to team up with another League member and interview either the senator or representative from your area. Our interviews must be completed by February.

**PLEASE RESPOND TO THE  
LWVF LOBBY FUND LETTER  
WHICH WAS RECENTLY SENT OUT.  
YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!**



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FLORIDA

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The League of Women Voters of Florida **opposes** SJR 2-D, the proposed state constitutional amendment that will be placed on the special election ballot on January 29, 2008, because it would:

- (1) Add limitations and exemptions regarding revenue sources in the Florida Constitution
- (2) Extend and increase homestead tax limitations without regard to the ability of homeowners to pay;
- (3) Extend the inequities created through Save Our Homes by allowing homeowners to transfer its benefits; and
- (4) Worsen Florida's current infrastructure deficit and the decline in the level of state services and in our quality of life.

President Dianne Wheatley-Giliotti states that "The League of Women Voters of Florida has long held the position that tax sources and revenues should not be specified, limited, exempted or prohibited in the state constitution and that local governments in Florida should have available a variety of options for generating revenues to meet local needs. SJR 2-D contravenes this principle because it increases and extends present homestead-based exemptions, creates a new exemption for tangible personal property and caps assessment increases on non-homestead real property."

In addition, the League of Women Voters of Florida believes that property taxes in Florida should be levied based on ability to pay, and that tax relief or circuit breakers should be provided for all low-income persons who own or rent property regardless of age. By allowing current homesteaders to keep the Save Our Homes tax limitation, SJR 2-D runs contrary to this principle – Save Our Homes is not based on ability to pay and has introduced a bias against more recent home buyers and non-homestead property owners resulting in large inequities in the taxes they pay.

Finally, the League of Women Voters of Florida believes that our state has a present infrastructure deficit, and state service levels and our quality of life are declining. The League's position is that sufficient state taxes should be levied to reverse the decline in levels of service and improve the quality of life for all Floridians. According to the Legislature's own calculations, passage of SJR 2-D will result in revenue losses of \$12.4 billion in the next 5 years. These losses are in addition to the already mandated revenue cap passed by the Legislature during its earlier special legislative session.

Said Fiscal Policy Chair Terry Coble, "The losses in revenue occasioned by SJR 2-D would result in unconscionable cuts to our state's infrastructure and service needs at a time when revenue shortfalls are already causing the Legislature to reduce our existing state budget."



## **Presidential Primary Primer**

By Corinne Miller (reprinted from LWV Palm Beach County November Voter)

Both Republicans and Democrats officially choose their Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates by a majority vote of delegates to their National Convention. Choosing the delegates to represent the rank and file of party members takes place in the 50 states and the US territories by three different methods:

1. Statewide primary elections
2. Precinct Caucuses
3. State Party Conventions

The rules for choosing delegates are set by the national parties well in advance of the presidential election. The parties have somewhat different rules and different numbers of convention delegates. For example: The Republicans have 2459 voting delegates and use a winner take all method of allotting each state's delegates. The Democrats choose 4381 delegates in a system of proportional representation which awards delegates to candidates who get more than 15% of the vote in a state.

### **Florida Primaries**

In Florida we have a statewide primary. The parties have agreed to hold their primaries on the same day and because the election is paid for by the government, other elections may occur at the same time. Some municipalities have moved their local elections to coincide with the scheduled primary and this year a constitutional amendment is also contemplated. Florida is a closed primary state. Florida holds primary elections for Republican and Democratic candidates only. Registered Republicans and Democrats may vote only for candidates in their respective party. No crossover votes. A member of a party is someone who declares membership in a party and makes the designation a public record with the Supervisor of Elections.

### **The Florida Presidential Primary in 2008**

This year Florida's state legislature voted to move Florida's presidential preference primary from the second Tuesday in March to January 29, 2008, thus defying the established rules of both national parties. Despite the confusion this has caused, it is important to use the opportunity to express your preference. The seating of the delegates is then in the hands of the Convention Rules Committee and is often directed by the nominee. Therefore the threats of Florida losing delegates in both parties may still be modified.

**If you have not declared a party or wish to change your party, just fill out a voter registration form indicating your party choice before the deadline on December 31, 2007.**

Both early voting and absentee voting will be in place for the January Primary. Make a choice, however hard it may be, and meet the standard for League members of never missing a chance to vote.

## JOIN THE LEAGUE

- **Be a Voice for Citizens! Be a Force for Change!**
  - **Be Involved in the Process!**

**Become a member of the LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area MAL Unit.**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Village, if applicable** \_\_\_\_\_

**Community, if applicable** \_\_\_\_\_

**Former League Member: Yes** \_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_ **Where:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interested in:**

**Government in Florida** \_\_\_\_\_ **Education in Florida** \_\_\_\_\_

**Justice in Florida** \_\_\_\_\_ **Social Policy in Florida** \_\_\_\_\_

**Natural Resources** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sustainability** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are paid annually:**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	_____
<b>Household</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>	_____
<b>Contribution to MAL Unit</b>	<b>\$10.00 or more</b>	_____

**Checks should be made payable to LWV of Florida and mailed to Joanne M. Coen, 1960 Ardmore Way, The Villages 32161.**

**Your dues include a subscription to *The Florida Voter* from the state League (LWVF) as well as *The National Voter* from the national League (LWVUS).**