



# THE VOTER

LWV of The Villages/Tri-County Area ♦ June 2009 ♦ Vol. 4 Issue 1  
<http://lwvtri.googlepages.com/>  
Nationally recognized! Locally active!

## Officers

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750-1366

Barbara Cope  
1<sup>st</sup> VP  
821-2594

Richard L. Coen  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP  
750-1366

Carolyn Johnson  
Treasurer  
751-4103

Judie Brown  
Secretary  
259-6228

## Directors

Betsy Brody  
Bernice Cozewith  
Helen Gozdanovic  
Frances Spedding  
Linda Thomas

## LWVF State Program 2009-2011

### Issues for Action Government in Florida

Support an independent reapportionment process. (Florida Constitution)  
Support repeal of tax exemptions that do not fulfill a public purpose.  
(Finance and Taxation)

Promote election audits that are based on statistically significant sample size and are completed before certification of the election. (Election Law)

### Education in Florida

Support review of funding sources to provide adequate, equitable and quality education.

### Justice in Florida

Promote reform of the juvenile justice system.

### Social Policy in Florida

Support equal pay for equal work.

### Financing & Delivery of Healthcare

Promote a health care system that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all Florida residents and controls health care costs.

### Sustainability

Support public transportation.

### Natural Resources-Land Use

Promote preservation of Florida's natural lands.

### Natural Resources-Energy

Support expansion of renewable energy sources.

### Natural Resources-Freshwater Resources

Support protection & management of freshwater resources.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization. We do not endorse political parties or candidates. We encourage informed and active participation in government and work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Otto Von Bismarck is quoted as saying that "Laws are like sausage, it is better not to see them being made." As you saw from the Action Alerts during the last weeks of the Legislative Session and continuing on through the following weeks, some laws are just bad pieces of legislation. Once again, the League's advocate and president, as well as the Lobby Corps of the LWV of Tallahassee, spent much of their time on the defense when it came to proposed legislation that would further diminish voters' rights as well as growth management issues. Again, thank you for responding to the Alerts and contacting your legislators and the governor. The final "Capitol Report" for the legislative session is available at state League website, [http://www.lwvfla.org/capital\\_reports.htm](http://www.lwvfla.org/capital_reports.htm). Some legislation never made it to the floor; some is waiting for the governor's signature. We can only hope that the governor responds to our veto requests.

Our front page reflects the Issues for Actions passed by delegates to the recent state convention. In addition, I am happy to report that the delegates approved Charlene Walker's proposed transportation study. We will be hearing more from Charlene about convention. My last piece of convention news: our League was recognized for membership growth. What a nice surprise!

Just to let you know that our League has been asked to participate in **Advocacy Days** at **Rep. Marlene O'Toole's** office during the month of June. We will be there on **Tuesday, June 23, 11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.** along with representatives from the Supervisors of Elections offices from the tri-county area. Please let your friends and neighbors know and stop by!

Even though we will be taking the summer months off from our monthly meetings, our education and healthcare committees will continue working. If you would like to join the committees, please contact **Sally Bard**, [sabinfl@aol.com](mailto:sabinfl@aol.com) (healthcare) or **Bernice Cozewith**, [berncoz@yahoo.com](mailto:berncoz@yahoo.com) (education).

If you like to read, see Carolyn Johnson' notice about a new group that is forming. Have a safe summer; see you in September!

In League,

*Joanne*

## **MEMBERSHIP**

We were happy to see **Gladys Corbin & Janet Duncan** at our Annual Meeting. Janet is still on crutches, but is getting around. **Betsy Brody** is in NYC, and we hope that all is going well with her treatments. Please note that **Helen Gozdanovic** has a new email address: [hgozdanovic@roadrunner.com](mailto:hgozdanovic@roadrunner.com).

### **June**

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Mon., June 8, 10 a.m.</b>    | Board Meeting at the home of Joanne Coen.                        |
| <b>Tues., June 9, 1 p.m.</b>    | AAUW/LWVTRI Nonfiction Book Club at the home of Carolyn Johnson. |
| <b>Mon., June 22, 10 a.m.</b>   | Education Committee Meeting at Panera's, Spanish Springs.        |
| <b>Tues., June 23, 1-2 p.m.</b> | Advocacy Days, Rep. O'Toole's office, Lady Lake.                 |

### **July – No Meetings**

Fourth of July Observance

### **August – No Meetings**

August 26, Woman's Equality Day



Happy 4th of July!

Happy 4th of July!

## **HEALTH CARE FORUM**

Mark your calendars: On **Thursday, January 21, 2010, 7:00pm – 9:00pm** at Temple Shalom, Oxford, our League will be holding a Health Care Forum. The committee, **Frances Spedding, Richard Coen, and Sally Bard**, is in the process of scheduling speakers who will be addressing this most important issue affecting all Americans. And I am happy to welcome a new member to our committee, **Carol Dodd**. As the event draws closer we will be busy with coordinating, planning and promotion and we invite League members to become involved.

**Sally Bard, Chair**

## **QUICK FACTS ON HEALTH CARE COSTS**

- ✓ Total health spending in the U.S. reached \$2.1 trillion in 2007 – or \$7,026 per capita.
- ✓ By 2016, total health spending is projected to rise to \$4.2 trillion.
- ✓ Between 2005 – 2006, total health spending increased 6.7 percent, more than double the rate of the 2.9 percent increase in overall economic growth.
- ✓ Total health spending remained relatively constant at about 16 percent of gross domestic product from 2003 – 2006, but is projected to increase to 19.5 percent by 2017.
- ✓ Spending for home health care increased at a faster pace from 2005 – 2006 (9.9 percent) than any other category of health spending; however, its impact is limited because it accounts overall for only 2.5 percent of total health spending.
- ✓ Yearly prescription drug spending growth accelerated in 2006 to 8.5 percent from a low of 5.8 percent in 2005, in part because of full implementation of Medicare Part D.

- ✓ Between 2006 and 2007, premiums for health coverage offered by employers increased 6.1 percent, the fourth straight year of declines in the rate of premium growth, from a peak of 13.9 percent in 2003. Even so, this was more than twice the rate of growth in the Consumer Price Index.
- ✓ Of every dollar spent on health services in the U.S. in 2006, 46 cents came directly from government sources.
- ✓ Costs for program administration and the net cost of private health insurance were about 7 percent of total health spending in the U.S. in 2006 and grew 8.8 percent, a marked increase over the 3.6 percent rise in 2005.

*This list (without the original endnotes) is from “A Reporter’s Toolkit: Health Care Costs” (an Alliance for Health Reform Toolkit produced with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and is reproduced here courtesy of the Alliance for Health Care. The entire toolkit can be found at [http://www.allhealth.org/Publications/Cost\\_of\\_health\\_care/health\\_care\\_costs\\_toolkit.asp#keyfacts](http://www.allhealth.org/Publications/Cost_of_health_care/health_care_costs_toolkit.asp#keyfacts) Janis McMillen (LWVUS Board member and LWVKS) is chair of the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force. Produced by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009*

## **POLITICAL BOOK GROUP FORMING**

**LWVTRI and AAUW Lake/Sumter Branch** hope to establish a joint non-fiction study group with an emphasis on current events, political topics, etc. For fun, an occasional novel might be thrown in! If you would like to be a part of the group, call or email **Carolyn Johnson (751-4103; [cgljohnson@comcast.net](mailto:cgljohnson@comcast.net))**. An organizational meeting will be held on **June 9<sup>th</sup>** at Carolyn’s home, **2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, Village of Santiago, 1 pm**. Be prepared to recommend books.

*“You have to love a nation that celebrates its independence every July 4, not with a parade of guns, tanks, and soldiers who file by the White House in a show of strength and muscle, but with family picnics where kids throw Frisbees, the potato salad gets iffy, and the flies die from happiness. You may think you have overeaten, but it is patriotism.”*

**Erma Bombeck**

## **REDISTRICTING PETITIONS**

As you know, the Florida Supreme Court has ruled that the summaries of the two redistricting petitions met the Constitutional requirements for number of words and singular subject matter. The proposed amendments would create new requirements for drawing congressional and legislative districts. To get on the November 2010 ballot, **676,811** signatures (**for each measure or 1,353,622 for both**) need to be collected. So far, over 800,000 signed petitions have been collected. In order to provide ample time for signed petitions to be verified, **FairDistrictsFlorida.org** has set a deadline of **October 31, 2009** to collect the balance. This will provide time for the Supervisors of Elections to verify the signatures. As we have done before, League members are once again being asked to gather signed petitions. **Please help us out with this effort.** This is one way that the League can make itself visible in the tri-county area.

The community has to understand that if the proposed constitutional amendments are adopted by Florida voters, congressional and legislative districts could not be drawn to favor incumbents or political parties. Districts would also have to be compact, contiguous and utilize existing city, county and geographical boundaries. The petitions will give Florida voters the opportunity to end the political manipulation of districts by the legislature to protect incumbents and enhance political party power.

Presently, I have a supply of blank petitions and additional blank petitions can be obtained by going to <https://www.fairdistrictsflorida.org/petitions/FreeFDFPetition.pdf>.

We are a small group, but let's get out into the community and get these petitions signed.

**Joanne Coen**

## **Musings of a Treasurer**

A dues refresher for us all: The League fiscal and membership year begins June 1 and ends May 31. This is due to the fact that as a Member at Large Unit, we are technically members of

state League and our "year" coincides with theirs. Your dues are due on the anniversary of your joining the League. So, if you joined originally in April you are paying your dues almost at the end of the year but getting the benefits of the whole year. As we begin a new League year on June 1st, the dues you pay will be for the 2009-2010 year. I will send you a reminder about your dues.

As of May 31, 2009, our treasury is \$1075. This is primarily due to your Compulsory Contributions of \$10 each, other donations and our little Chinese Auction in December at our Holiday Meeting. Since most of our activities are self-supporting, this amount is probably adequate for our activities. As you know, the \$50 dues check goes directly to LWV Florida.

We began the League year 2008-09 with 37 members. We are beginning the League year 2009-2010 with 34 members, a net loss of 3 valuable members.

As a group we are all members of the membership committee, and we need to concentrate on finding others who would enjoy the League.

**Carolyn Johnson**  
**Treasurer**

## **FROM LWVUS**

With regard to the one year study of the National Popular Vote Compact, following is a statement from the LWVUS Board:

### **Recommendations to LWVUS Board about the National Popular Vote Compact Consensus**

Two criteria were established for a successful consensus study. The requirement for participation by 1/3 of local Leagues was met with participation by 390 of 766 Leagues (51% of local Leagues). While the second criterion, requiring 2/3 of participating Leagues to achieve consensus on the use of the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact, was not achieved, the consensus elicited very strong support for the

NPV Compact (about 50% of responding Leagues in favor). However the remaining 50% were split almost equally between not favoring the NPV Compact or not being able to reach consensus. Comments from many Leagues reflected: (1) concerns about bias in the questions (about half the Leagues complained about the questions or bias, primarily bias against the NPV Compact), (2) the misunderstanding that a choice had to be made between advocating for abolition of the electoral college OR supporting the NPV Compact, and (3) statements which seemed to contradict a given League's responses to the questions.

Based on an analysis of the responses to the questions and the comments offered, the NPV Compact Committee and Program Planning Committee recommend that the LWVUS continue to examine opportunities to achieve the goal of direct election of the president in addition to the unlikely opportunity of abolishing the Electoral College by constitutional amendment. Options could include examination of other plans similar to the NPV Compact, proposing a concurrence at Convention 2010 on the NPV Compact, or continued examination of the NPV Compact itself. The committees also discussed an option for an extension to the study to take a direct online survey of members who attended consensus meetings with a question up or down on the NPV Compact.

In considering the experience of this "quick" study, the committees recommend that:

1. If we do a "quick" study again, then we should carefully reconsider the process to achieve maximum member understanding of the issue(s).
2. Any consensus questions for any study be tested, before approval by the Board, for understandability, suitability and non-bias by League members who are not part of the study committee, the staff, or the Board.
3. A task force be formed to examine the study and consensus process.

In conclusion, the committees recommend a statement of our position based on the consensus reports from local Leagues: **"The LWVUS affirms its support for the direct election of the president and abolition of the Electoral College, but the LWVUS has no position on the National Popular Vote Compact as currently proposed."**

## **"Travels with Charlene"**

### **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FLORIDA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FLORIDA EDUCATION FUND Meeting in Convention May 15 – 17, 2009 Jacksonville, FL**

League Conventions are always grand affairs and this one was no exception. Jacksonville greeted me with a gully washer as I arrived during rush hour. Dining with the current and the future presidents plus the LWVF executive director made it all worthwhile.

#### **Friday May 15, 2009 11:00 AM**

After renewing long time League friendships at registration, I attended the Program Planning Process Workshop where we discussed how LWVF developed the program that was included in the Convention material and Workbook. I would like to have attended the other workshops on Budgets and Parliamentary Q & A. Not possible.

#### **1:00PM-5:00PM**

After an impressive opening ceremony with color guard, welcome by LWV Jacksonville and a welcoming speech by the mayor of Jacksonville, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Biennium Convention of the League of Women Voters opened with the first Plenary Session. After the customary order of business: Advice from Parliamentarian, Appointment of Credentials Committee, Adoption of Convention Rules, Adoption of Order of Business, Appointment of Action Motions Committee, and Appointment of the Reading Committee came the Roll Call of Local Leagues, MAL Units.

That was your chance to shine – and you did. Convention delegates were visibly impressed by the report of activities that Joanne gave me to present. Be proud and enjoy the accolades including the award for the most increase in members for Leagues of this size.

More business followed: Audit Committee Report, Financial Reports, Report of Nominating Committee, Presentation of Proposed Bylaws, Presentation of Proposed Budgets, Presentation of Recommended Program, and Presentation on Not-Recommended Program-this was not approved for consideration. Please note: the floor is open only to requests for clarification only during the first plenary.

The LWVF Lobbyist gave her Legislative Wrap-Up and a recess was announced until 7:30 AM tomorrow.

**6:00 PM-8:00 PM**

The Reception and Banquet provided a much needed break in the action. The panel that followed brought us back to our roots, the reason we are League members -- "Ethics & Corruption in our Government." The panel covered all aspects of this very sticky topic and left most of us convinced more than ever of the need for redistricting and civics education.

**9:30 PM**

The Transportation Caucus was a pleasant surprise. Even though the Panel ran quite late, and the caucus did not begin until after 9:30 (scheduled for 9PM), there were about 20 people in attendance. Excellent discussion, ideas and recommendations were given. These brought about an amendment to the proposal that strengthened it.

**Saturday May 16, 2009**

**7:30 AM**

Breakfast and Speaker: The scheduled speaker did not make it in time to speak. The versatile LWVF president-elect gave an excellent substitute speech that covered the topic "Increasing/Retaining Membership" very well.

**9:15 AM-Noon**

Second Plenary Session: Convention reconvened and we continued with the business of the League including Report on Previous Day, Nationally Speaking (Elizabeth McNamara, LWVUS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President), Communications Awards, Credentials Committee Report, Discussion/Vote on Proposed Bylaws, Discussion/Vote on Proposed Budgets and the prickly Program Discussion and Debate which was suspended because of time constraints and need for further discussion.

**Noon**

Luncheon and Speaker: Florida's Water Management System, the outreach coordinator for the SWFloridaWMD, mentioned bottling companies because he knew it would come up and he thought he would defuse the question. He didn't and he did not answer, to anyone's satisfaction, the question of why bottlers receive permits.

**2:00-5:15 PM Workshops**

Redistricting: I attended this excellent workshop and brought back several items for us to use in our campaign for signatures. The other two workshops were Finances and Program

Planning. I did not attend an 3:45 workshop: they covered Presidents' responsibilities, League membership building (covered at breakfast) and Building a Dynamic Website.

**5:30 PM**

Hospitality room provided a place where we gathered to socialize and watch the Preakness. Three cheers, long live the victor.

**6:30 PM**

Boarding time for the Dinner Cruise: good food, good company, smooth cruise and an informative speaker again on Water Management.

**Sunday May 17, 2009 7:30 AM**

Third Plenary Session: Convention reconvened and we continued Program Discussion and Debate after taking care of regular business. Concluding discussion on Program several items were amended and Issues for Action were changed or deleted such as "Support for decriminalization of drug use" under Justice in Florida was defeated. Watch for final Program adoption wording on the LWVF website.

Study Items: The Education Study was dropped because of the lack of resources. The Transportation Study was adopted as amended under Sustainability. Now the work begins. Program was adopted as amended.

Election and installation of the 2009-2010 Officers & Directors provided a fitting finale to an exceptional Convention. The new president, Deirdre Macnab will represent LWVF very well.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity and support to represent you this year. I hope each one of you will attend in the future.

**ADJOURNED**

**Charlene Walker**

Now that you have had a taste of what a League Convention is, think about attending the 2010 LWVUS Convention in Atlanta. It is only several hours up the road on I75.

**Be sure the National League has your email address!** Individual members can add their own email address to the national database through the national website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) and then go to "For Members" and then "Update Your Information."



**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:

Individual \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Household \$75.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution to  
MAL Unit \$10.00  
or more \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made payable to  
LWV of Florida  
and mailed to  
Carolyn Johnson, 2615 Caribe Drive, The Villages, FL 32162.

Your dues include a subscription to *The Florida Voter* from the state League.