



The **VOTER**

**November 2008
Volume 44 Issue 8**

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization dedicated to promoting political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to acting on selected government issues.

2008-2009
Board &
Committee
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The VOTER
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A Message from your President

I can't remember an election day in the past that to me felt like a holiday - a celebration. On November 4 I kept telling friends and family "Happy Election Day!" Not because of who won or who lost, but because of the culmination of much anticipation, engagement and enthusiasm demonstrated throughout the process. For the League of Women Voters, this represents our "raison d'etre." Though hardly alone in providing election information and working to get out the vote, we did our share and we should all be very proud of that. I will let **Pat Price**, list our activities and recognize all those who helped. I would like to thank her as Voter Services Chair for all the hard work and her steady hand in organizing and overseeing the many activities our League gets involved in. Pat has long guided our League through highly visible election activities always mindful to protect our nonpartisanship while trying to capture the most meaningful aspects of those issues and races on a ballot. I would also like to thank **Kim Noyes**, office manager. It is hard to imagine us being able to provide the number of events we do without her help. In addition to helping us prepare these events, Kim fields countless telephone and email requests from people seeking information on election/ballot questions. Kudos to Pat and Kim, and all of you, who helped our community members participate in our democratic process and make informed election decisions!



Yours In League, *Cindy Guest*

**Upcoming
Events**

Hot Topic Forum on Medicare

What is the status of Medicare in Sarasota County? Is Medicare meeting the needs of its patients? Are Sarasota physicians and hospitals sufficiently reimbursed for Medicare services? What are some of the proposals being presented to cut the cost of Medicare?

Come join the League of Women Voters in a forum on Medicare. The panelists will include: Larry Polivka, Ph.D., Professor at the University of South Florida, and Acting Director of the Florida Exchange Center on Aging, Michael Patete, MD, President of the Sarasota County Medical Society, David Verinder, Chief Financial Officer of Sarasota Memorial Hospital, and Dan Miller, former U.S. Representative, academic, and entrepreneur.

WHERE: Troyer's Dutch Heritage
3717 Bahia Vista Street

WHEN: November 24
11:30 a.m.

COST: \$15 and includes a buffet lunch.

Please RSVP to lwvsc@comcast.net or call 921-9778





Membership Update

Andrea Rogers, Chair

Our League's new Membership Committee is scheduled to meet for the first time on Monday November 3. Many thanks to members Millie Headdy, John Lewis, Michele Mician, Kerly Sekera, and new member Tracy Seider, who volunteered to serve on the committee. Our goals for the remainder of fiscal 2008 – 2009 will be membership retention and recruitment.

A special thanks to Mrs. Lucille Wallace, who volunteered the use of her home for the Membership Committee to host a New Member Tea or Coffee. We look forward to taking advantage of Mrs. Wallace's generous offer sometime after the Holiday season.

Cindy Guest, Millie Headdy and Kim Noyes have been going through our local League database to facilitate tracking our membership. I am pleased to report that our League has 27 new members since the beginning of the year, four in October! On behalf of the LWVSC, I would like to welcome October's new (or renewed) members Suzanne Atwell, Teresa Carafelli, Donna Clarke, and Nancy Feehan.

If you have any comments, suggestions or other feedback about LWVSC membership, please do not hesitate to contact me. My e-mail address is:

andrea@sarasotapartychic.com
 contact phone number: (941)954-6972

November 2008 Board Bytes

- Patty Schreiber was appointed new Treasurer to fulfill Barbara Bain's remaining term.
- A letter on the League's positions on the amendments will be sent to the media. (This was sent and published.)
- Hot Topic and Food For Thought events are well in hand for the months of November and December, including themes of updates from the outgoing and incoming Board of County Commissioners, Health Care and Sustainability.
- The National Popular Vote Compact Study due to be completed May 2009 will be undertaken with interested members. Members will be notified via the Voter.
- The membership committee has been formed and will be meeting early November. The committee currently has 5 members.
- Voter Services has been very active with Voter Guide and State Amendment publications being distributed, voter's registration, working with the Ethos Dance Company, part of the Booker High School VPA program, in distributing election materials at its patriotic themed performances around town and numerous candidate events.

The next Board meeting is Tuesday, November 18, 5:15 p.m. at the Orchid Oaks Clubhouse. Members are invited to attend. Contact Cindy Guest for further information cguest01@yahoo.com

November 14

Retiring County Commissioner and newly elected Commissioner Carolyn Mason.

Commissioner Mercier will reflect on his eight years on the Board of County Commissioners and Commissioner elect Mason on her plans for the future as a member of BCC.

9 - 10:00 a.m. \$3.00

Waterside Estates, 4540 Bee Ridge Road
(just past the light at McIntosh going West or just before the light going East. South side of Bee Ridge)

Please RSVP to Pat Price,
 at 349-0908 or patt52@comcast.net

**RESERVATIONS
 ARE REQUIRED**

A Message from our Voter Services Chair Pat Price

At a time when there are so many crucial issues affecting all of us, the League of Women Voters finds it deplorable that ads, both televised and in our mailboxes, were filled with lies, distortions and character assassination. We hope voters weren't deceived by these smear campaigns and untruths. Indeed, such campaign strategies and tactics reveal much about a candidate's ethics and integrity.

There is plenty of informative, issue-related material available through the guides published by the League of Women Voters and other nonpartisan organizations and media. In the future, voters seeking "just the facts" can visit www.lwv.org, www.votesmart.org or www.politifact.com, for information about national and local candidates and voting.

Unfortunately glossy mailings and splashy TV spots came into people's homes without being solicited.

The League commends candidates that did not use these tactics and stayed on message.

JOIN NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT STUDY

Delegates at the LWCUS Convention 2008 voted to study the advisability of using the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact among the states as a method for electing the U.S. president. The text of the Compact, which describes the way the NPV will operate, follows. In addition, the LWVUS NPV Study Committee is researching and writing materials, which will be published later this fall. The deadline for the NPV consensus is May 2, 2009. ***If you are interested in helping the NPV Committee locally to prepare for the spring consensus, please contact Cindy Guest, cquest01@yahoo.com or 922-0585.***

Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by Nationwide Popular Vote

Article I - Membership

Any state of the United States and the District of Columbia may become a member of this agreement by enacting this agreement.

Article II – Right of the People in Member States to Vote for President and Vice President

Each member state shall conduct a statewide popular election for President and Vice President of the United States

Article III – Manner of Appointing Presidential Electors in Member States

Prior to the time set by law for the meeting and voting by the presidential electors, the chief election official of each member state shall determine the number of votes for each presidential slate in each State of the United States and in the District of Columbia in which votes have been cast in a statewide popular election and shall add such votes together to produce a “national popular vote total” for each presidential slate. The chief election official of each member state shall designate the presidential slate with the largest national popular vote total as the “national popular vote winner.” The presidential elector certifying official of each member state shall certify the appointment in that official's own state of the elector slate nominated in that state in association with the national popular vote winner. At least six days before the day fixed by law for the meeting and voting by the presidential electors, each member state shall make a final determination of the number of popular votes cast in the state for each presidential slate and shall communicate an official statement of such determination within 24 hours to the chief election official of each other member state. The chief election official of each member state shall treat as conclusive an official statement containing the number of popular votes in a state for each presidential slate made by the day established by federal law for making a state's final determination conclusive as to the counting of electoral votes by Congress. In event of a tie for the national popular vote winner, the presidential elector certifying official of each member state shall certify the appointment of the elector slate nominated in association with the presidential slate receiving the largest number of popular votes within that official's own state.

If, for any reason, the number of presidential electors nominated in a member state in association with the national popular vote winner is less than or greater than that state's number of electoral votes, the presidential candidate on the presidential slate that has been designated as the national popular vote winner shall have the power to nominate the presidential electors for that state and that state's presidential elector certifying official shall certify the appointment of such nominees. The chief election official of each member state shall immediately release to the public all vote counts or statements of votes as they are determined or obtained. This article shall govern the appointment of presidential electors in each member state in any year in which this agreement is, on July 20, in effect in states cumulatively possessing a majority of the electoral votes.

Article IV – Other Provisions

This agreement shall take effect when states cumulatively possessing a majority of the electoral votes have enacted this agreement in substantially the same form and the enactments by such states have taken effect in each state. Any member state may withdraw from this agreement, except that a withdrawal occurring six months or less before the end of a President's term shall not become effective until a President or Vice President shall have been qualified to serve the next term. The chief executive of each member state shall promptly notify the chief executive of all other states of when this agreement has been enacted and has taken effect in that official's state, when the state has withdrawn from this agreement, and when this agreement takes effect generally. This agreement shall terminate if the electoral college is abolished. If any provision of this agreement is held invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected.

Article V – Definitions

For purposes of this agreement, “chief executive” shall mean the Governor of a State of the United States or the Mayor of the District of Columbia; “elector slate” shall mean a slate of candidates who have been nominated in a state for the position of presidential elector in association with a presidential slate; “chief election official” shall mean the state official or body that is authorized to certify the total number of popular votes for each presidential slate; “presidential elector” shall mean an elector for President and Vice President of the United States; “presidential elector certifying official” shall mean the state official or body that is authorized to certify the appointment of the state's presidential electors; “presidential slate” shall mean a slate of two persons, the first of whom has been nominated as a candidate for President of the United States and the second of whom has been nominated as a candidate for Vice President of the United States, or any legal successors to such persons, regardless of whether both names appear on the ballot presented to the voter in a particular state; “state” shall mean a State of the United States and the District of Columbia; and “statewide popular election” shall mean a general election in which votes are cast for presidential slates by individual voters and counted on a statewide basis.

**Andrea Rogers:
Membership Chair**



Andrea Rogers is a member of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Sarasota County and serves as the 2008 – 2010 Membership Chair (Andrea is responsible for the our League’s new look in membership materials).

Previously from Martha’s Vineyard, MA, Andrea has lived in Sarasota full-time for three years. Upon moving to Sarasota, Andrea turned a passion and flair for event/party planning and design into a small local business named Party Chic (“Sheek”, not “Chick” as some say!). And, in a town with so many fundraising events, there is no shortage of projects to delve into! Gradually, her business branched out to include making custom gift arrangements and home accent pieces (visit her web site: www.sarasotapartychic.com)!

In addition to a passion for event/party design and making custom gift arrangements, Andrea shares with many Sarasotans a passion for community affairs. Having come from a small New England coastal town where everyone knew each other in business and politics, at first Andrea found it a bit confusing to sort through the who’s who and goings-on in Sarasota. In an effort to come up to speed, Andrea joined the local League in 2006 and was invited to join the Board in April of this year.

In addition to her involvement with our League, Andrea is a 2008 spring graduate of the City of Sarasota Citizen’s Academy. She is a member of Tiger Bay and ABWA. She has served on the Leadership Council of United Way Women’s Initiative, and Board member in just about every capacity at her condominium Association for the better part of six years. This year, she is fundraising chair for the Siesta Key Kiwanis Club, and will serve on the committee for the 2009 Mistletoe Ball.

How lucky can we get in finding someone like Andrea and the skills and interests she has to take on “Membership.” Andrea has contributed lots of energy and enthusiasm, and with all the events the League offers, her event planning skills has been a tremendous bonus for us.

League Members Participate in Ballot Design Survey

By Millie Headdy

Cindy Guest, Carole Nikla and I participated in a study conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law; it was held at Supervisor of office. The purpose of the study evaluation was to get feedback on the effectiveness and usability of the New Hampshire General election ballot. We were interviewed to get our profile, then we voted using the mocked up ballot and then were questioned to obtain our feedback on the usefulness and usability of the ballot

Usability specialists collect this kind of feedback from representative users in real-world environments to help ensure that the final product will be effective and usable by the intended users. Including user experience testing of ballots and voting systems significantly improves the quality of the products

We will receive the results of the study when it is completed.

2009 Legislative Interviews

The League conducts interviews with our state reps every year at under the direction of LWVF, who compiles information as a result of these interviews on the positions of elected officials on a variety of State issues. Two League members conduct each interview. This takes place in a couple of months and is a very interesting opportunity and a great way to get to know your elected officials. If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Millie Headdy, at irisone23@aol.com

Report of Voter Services Activities for 2008 Primary and General Election

by Pat Price, Voter Services Chair

We held 3 Voter Fairs: An opportunities for candidates and voters to meet "one on one", one for the Primary election at Gulf Gate Library in partnership with friends of the Gulf Gate Library, and 2 for the General election at Jacaranda Library, and at South Gate Community Center--sponsored by Gulf Gate Rotary Club; **Voter Registrations:** At various places in the county; **Forums:** State House and Senate, County Commission, Public Defender and Hospital Board; **Interviews:** Radio and television; We distributed 3000 plus copies of Florida Voter state-wide candidates and pros and cons on the amendments, produced two issues of Voter’s Guides, one for the primary and one for the general election, funded by Supervisor of Election Office with 7500 distributed for each election.

Of course it took the efforts of many members to accomplish these goals and I wish to thank them all.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Barbara Bain | George Babigian | Nanci Babigian |
| Marilyn Boyle | Kim Cartlidge | Marilyn Gerkin |
| Cindy Guest | Ann Hardy | Millie Headdy |
| Helen Janssen | John Lewis | Michele Mician |
| Marie Millet | Frank and Dot Moore | Kim Noyes |
| Chris Pfahler | Casey Pilon | Corky Pezzati |
| Andrea Rogers | Patty Schreiber | Kerly Sekera |
| Beth Winston | | |

Thank You !

Hot Topics Election Year Wisdom with Susan MacManus, By Kim Cartlidge

USF Professor Dr. Susan MacManus spoke to a full house at the October Hot Topics luncheon at the Community Foundation meeting room. One week before the election, MacManus had been analyzing daily polls and said Florida was still too close to call. "We're in a giant poker game in Florida," MacManus. "Those younger independents are very swayed by who comes to town. The last candidate here may well be the one who gets the votes."

As she was speaking, news was breaking of a Barack Obama visit to Ed Smith Stadium in Sarasota. Both John McCain and Governor Sarah Palin returned to Tampa for rallies before Election Day.

The 2008 election redefined campaigns in key areas, MacManus said. Despite the length of the presidential election, the voters tuned into all the debates and were still paying attention and engaged. Candidates spent a record \$2.8 billion dollars before the fourth quarter reports had been submitted. "I think we can say unequivocally that the days of public finance are over. We're back to ground zero," MacManus said. The role of the national media as a credible source of information was further diminished as people chose their media based on their ideological dispositions and tended to disbelieve the rest. The speed with which Internet rumors can spread posed new, daily tactical challenges for candidates. "There's no truth-checking on the Internet," she said.

MacManus remarked that she was personally offended by the vulgar treatment of female candidates during the election, as were many women over 50 who had to struggle to break in to the professions. It was like reliving that era, she said, and "It reminded them of that feeling and that they haven't made a lick of progress."

A member asked what MacManus thought about the media's investigation of Joe the Plumber after his conversation with a candidate was mentioned in the debates. She replied that it can hinder participation. "When I talk to my students about running for office, the two things they mention most frequently as deterrents are having to raise money and scrutiny by the news media," MacManus said.

MacManus attended both political conventions as a WFLA News Channel 8 analyst, and she was in high demand during the campaign as a political scientist and media pundit. The league thanks Dr. MacManus for making the trip to Sarasota during the final days of the election to share her insights.

A Grand Time at LWV Events



Booker VPA students in a VOTE themed dance



Candidates Laura Benson and Keith Fitzgerald with supporters at our Candidate Fair



LWV Vice President Michele Mician and George Spector



Candidate Frank Moore and friends at our Candidate Fair



Dr. Susan MacManus and former student Liz Barber at Hot Topics



A nice crowd attended our Hot Topics with Dr. Susan MacManus

DIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT: The League of Women Voters of Sarasota County will promote, in all aspects of the League's activities, a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition and issues of the community.

TREE FREE HOME-

As much as possible, create a tree free home.

- replace paper napkins with cloth napkins
- replace paper towels with a special set of cloth towels/napkins - store the used ones in a small container in your kitchen and just wash and reuse
- purchase bleach-free, toilet paper that is made from the highest post-consumer waste content you can find (80% minimum)
- if you print documents, print on once-used paper and/or bleach-free, recycled paper with the highest post-consumer waste content available (or hemp/alternative-source paper, if you can afford it)
- create and use note pads from once-used paper
- leave messages for family members/roommates on a reusable message board
- make your own cards/letters from once-used products or handmade paper
- If you will be doing construction on your house, search out alternative using newly cut wood like composite decking, straw bale, bamboo, (Plyboo or Teragren), natural linoleum, and previously used wood. Also look at cob.

welcome new member

**Sharon "Micki"
Pflugner**



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941-921-9778

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Sarasota, FL 34231

The League of Women Voters - Nationally Respected, Locally Engaged