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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.

2007-2008
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Upcoming Events

Pancakes and Politics!

At the November 9 Pancakes and Politics, we'll welcome

Sarasota County Property Appraiser
JIM TODORA

The Fountains at Lake Pointe Woods

3240 Lake Pointe Blvd.
(1/2 mile north of Sarasota Square Mall
on the east side of U.S. 41)

Your \$3.00 donation covers breakfast
and benefits the LWVSC
9 to 10 a.m.

For reservations, contact Kim Noyes
at lwvsc@comcast.net or call the
League phone line 921-9778

Hot Topics!

We'll see you in
December
Happy
Thanksgiving



Coming in December

Our December 7
Pancakes & Politics
speakers will be
State Representatives
Doug Holder and Keith Fitzgerald

A Message from your President

Cindy Guest



LWVSC Positions Regarding the November 6 Election

Extension of 1% Sales Tax for Sarasota County

The League of Women Voters of Sarasota County **supports** the continuation of the 1% sales tax in Sarasota County. In the past ten years this tax has funded many projects that have improved the quality of life in Sarasota, Payne Park being the most recent addition to our pleasures. A continuation of that tax will continue to improve our libraries, parks, roads, public safety, schools – all improvements that will also protect and increase our real estate values.

As the League of Women Voters of Florida asserts, "Local governments should be authorized through enabling legislation to utilize additional sources of revenue to finance capital improvements and major maintenance projects." We also "believe that Florida's tax structure should be reformed in order that a greater proportion of taxes would be levied on the basis of ability to pay." In the meantime, this 1% sales tax will help keep Sarasota a beautiful place to live in and spread the cost of needed maintenance and improvements evenly among the local citizenry and the visiting and part-time residents.

Instant Runoff Voting for City of Sarasota

The League of Women Voters of Sarasota County **supports** changing the Sarasota City's election runoff process to the Instant Runoff Voting system as proposed as a Sarasota city charter amendment on the Nov. 6 ballot.

The current system requires a costly separate runoff election if no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the general election and does not accurately poll the voters as the runoff election invariably has a low voter turnout. The Instant Runoff Voting system would be both cost effective and accurately reflect the voter's wishes.

Continued on page 2

Presidents Message Continued...

The Instant Runoff Voting system (IRV) is simple. The voters rank the candidates on the ballot, marking their first, second and third choices, depending on how many candidates are in the race. (If there are only two candidates, IRV need not be used.) However, the voter need not for vote more than one candidate, or two, or whatever. When the votes are counted, a candidate who gets 50% + 1 of the votes wins. If no one has a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and his votes are then transferred to the second choice listed on each ballot. This process continues until someone wins the majority of the votes and is declared the winner.

This process has been tried and proven to be true. Both San Francisco and the entire country of Australia use it successfully, among several others. The LWVSC believes that Sarasota should save money and reflect the wishes of the electorate more accurately by instituting the Instant Runoff Voting system.

Sarasota County Super Majority Question

In March 2006 the League took a position on this issue. At that time it was presented as a 2 part proposal, and included a requirement for a citizen vote on certain Comprehensive Plan changes. When this referendum proposal was re-written with the super majority issue being presented as a single issue, the League reconsidered its position, and concluded it wanted more information before taking any position. In light of the need for further information a forum discussion was held for our membership and for the public with both sides of the issue represented. The LWVSC Board has concluded a neutral position best represents our membership. Therefore, **the LWVSC does NOT have a position on this issue.**

Support the Efforts of Your League

Free and open access to information is as important today as it ever was. Educating people about the issues of the day, the political process, and how to make informed choices is a job the League takes very seriously. In an effort to sustain our voter registration and voter education work your tax deductible donation to the League of Women Voters Sarasota County Education Fund will help us broaden our educational mission and embark upon new ventures as we serve as a careful steward of every contribution that we receive. Funds are needed for:

- Promotional items to increase the visibility of the League, i.e. Signs, brochures, buttons, etc.
- Printing costs for informational/educational literature on issues, Website design and updating, Donations designated for the LWVSC Education Fund are tax deductible.

Donations are also welcomed for the LWVSC operating fund providing direct support for the League's work mobilizing citizens and influencing public policy through advocacy. These donations are not tax deductible.

Evelyn Good Is a League Lifer

Lyn, a former Wisconsin resident, joined the League of Women Voters in 1952 during the Senator Joe McCarthy (who lived 30 miles from her) era. She recalls his listing the League of Women Voters among his "subversives." Since that time she has belonged to several local Leagues, notably Toledo, Ohio, where she worked on many water issues, including those of Lake Erie. She has belonged to the Sarasota League for many years, having joined with long-time friend, Alice Scott, and has served as Secretary and a Unit discussion leader. Lynn is a valued member and generous contributor to our League.

Thank you, Lyn!

Our Other Special League Lifers

Alice Andrews, Alice Scott, Sue Sherman, Jean Slocum, and Joyce Solo.

Did we miss anyone? Let us know if you've reached a "Life Member" status!

Pat Price Receives Sarasota County Bar Association Award

In an effort to educate the citizens of Sarasota about judicial candidates, the SCBA partnered with the LWVSC in 2004 and 2006 to present televised Judicial Forums featuring judicial candidates running for a county or circuit position. Utilizing the services of SNN, a total of four lives forums were offered. Pat Price helped facilitate this effort. She was instrumental in contacting SNN, locking in a time and date for each show, and negotiating the SCBA's ability to moderate the forum, a task that she expertly finessed. Pat also provided SCBA with written instructions and rules



for the forum that were distributed to the candidates. SCBA's partnership with the LWV to present these Judicial Forums are unique and very special. Their success and positive response to this project was due in large part to the willingness of Pat to share her expertise and advice, gleaned through her experience as a moderator of many nonpartisan political forums presented by the Sarasota chapter of the LWV. Today, the SCBA is a leader among other local bar associations in the nation for initiating this educational effort and partnership to better inform the voting public about judicial candidates.

LWVF (Tallahassee) Board Meeting in Sarasota

Local members are invited to attend the LWVF Board meeting which will be held in Sarasota next month.

Lido Inn

Friday, November 16 from 1 - 5 p.m. and Saturday, November 17 from 8:30 - 12:00.

Members are invited to join State Board members for a dinner out Friday night at 6:00. Location to be determined

Contact Kim Noyes at the League office for your reservation:
941-921-9778 or lwwsc@comcast.net

Board Bytes • October Meeting

- Position statements will be written and submitted for publication on the Super Majority Referendum for Sarasota County, Instant Runoff Voting for the City of Sarasota, and global warming.
- More work needs to be done on the website but it is up and running at www.lwv-sarasota-fl.org.
- We were asked to join Greenpeace in a message to Rep. Buchanan regarding global warming. It was decided to send a message on this issue separately under our name.
- We will pursue inviting Janet Snyder Matthews, local historian, to a speaking/book signing event since she has a new edition of her book on Sarasota coming out soon.
- A committee to work on a "Cruise into the 2008 Elections with the League of Women Voters" fundraising event on January 18 at Summer Cove was appointed and a meeting date set.
- We will try to schedule the new Sarasota City Manager for an upcoming Hot Topics event.
- We need a moderator for the immigration study meeting.
- All 3 study committees, health care, education, and immigration need a few more members.

WELCOME !

Liz Klaber
Barbara Gross
Adam Tebrugge
Jane Marcin
Jan Chester
Katherine Neubauer
Charlotte Nunnamaker
Wendy Grassi

THANKS for joining our group



Chapman, Bill Earl, Del Borgsdorg and Tracy Seider at the League sponsored panel on the super majority referendum

Member Help Needed:

- ⇒ Membership Chair – To organize membership effort
- ⇒ Health Care Committee Member – To study health care resources in Sarasota County
- ⇒ Education Committee - To study education issues including the "Next Generation" educational model.

Contact Cindy Guest, 922-0585 or cquest01@yahoo.com

Help Wanted !

lwvsc@comcast.net 941-921-9778

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The League of Women Voters - Nationally Respected, Locally Engaged