



VOTER

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The League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County

is a non partisan political organization of men and women that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. The League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy at the local, state and national levels. The League does not endorse or support political candidates or parties. For more information about the League of Women Voters see www.lwv.org or call (813)831-9774.

The League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County Presents:

FYI HOT TOPIC LUNCHEON **Did Your VOTE Count?**

Discussion: An Analysis of Election Day Results

Speaker: Dr. Robert Kerstein,
Professor of Government & World Affairs
University of Tampa

Date: Thursday, November 30, 2006

Place: LifeLink Boardroom
409 Bayshore Blvd
Tampa, FL 33606,

Time: 11:30-11:45, registration. Program starts promptly at noon.

Reservations: Call 813-831-9774 and leave your name, telephone number & date of event. Indicate your choice of Beef, Turkey, Ham or Vegetarian box lunch. Please RSVP no later than Nov. 27. Seating is limited. ("No-shows" will be invoiced.)

Cost: \$12.00 Members / \$15.00 Non Members

Parking: Free parking in LifeLink's parking garage / Request directions by emailing: LWVNEWS@MSN.COM

The Hillsborough County VOTER is a publication of the League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County, Florida.

OFFICERS

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VOTER Editor *Cathy Teti*

Next Board of Directors Meeting:
December 12, 4:00 p.m.
LifeLink Building



President's Message

The 2006 Election . . . One Man's Perspective

It's over! Whoopee. The hardest part of being League President during an election year is remaining nonpartisan. And what about those negative ads? Had I not personally known Jim Davis and Phyllis Busansky, I could have even seen some humor in the empty chair and rich socialite TV ads.

But, what about those races in Tennessee and eastern Pasco County? If the race implication in Tennessee wasn't bad enough, how about that state Rep. race in eastern Pasco County where the victor campaigned on his opponents mental health problems. The campaign was so egregious that the Tampa Tribune called for a public apology. Fortunately the voters rebelled against much of the negative campaigning and said, "enough is enough."

Another issue I find equally disturbing are the ever growing number of "stealth" candidates who refuse to appear in debates and forums with their opponents. This may be good political strategy, but it's a cowardly way of avoiding the public's scrutiny. Shame on those candidates who robbed the electorate of this opportunity, and yet, they would be the first to boast about their own patriotism.

With all the negativism in this year's election, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize two candidates who ran positive, issue driven campaigns, and they both happen to be League members too. Hats off to Ed Homan and Karen Perez. Candidates like these, who appeared in the televised forums and the Pretzels & Politics event, should be complimented on their positive message and respect for both their opponent and the public. Bravo!

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FROM page 1

A New Year Ahead!

I wish I could give each of you one of my special Holiday "Hugs", but just know how tremendously honored I am to be serving as your President. I have been blessed with an incredible Board of Directors and a membership that is committed to being the voice of reason in the political arena. As you each celebrate your own personal holiday traditions, please remember to share with those who are less fortunate and let's all be thankful for our freedoms and liberty. Sincere Greetings and Best Wishes for the coming Year!

Sincerely,



Michael McKinney
LWVHC President

The comments are those of Mike McKinney and not those of the League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County.



In addition to taping 35 forums, one for each contested local race in the primary and general election, Hillsborough County Leaguers joined with the Northern Pinellas League to served as timekeepers for statewide forums taped by WEDU. Pictured are Greg Vawter, Voter Service Chair; Rob Lorei, WEDU moderator, Cathy Teti, Voter Editor and Lisa Leslie, FYI Chair backstage at the Attorney General Candidate Debate.

Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Consensus Meeting On Alternative Voting Systems:

Cinderella declares herself winner but Pinocchio demands recount

The Saint Petersburg League of Women Voters hosted the Northern Pinellas and Hillsborough County Leagues for a joint consensus meeting on the State League's Alternative Voting Study. The presentation began with three mock elections. The candidates were the same but the voting methods were different. Cinderella, Mickey Mouse, and Pinocchio were in a tight race for mayor.

In 1952, Kenneth Arrow won the Nobel Prize, in part, for proving mathematically that there is no such thing as a perfect voting system. No system is consistently fair when the number of voters is large, when their preferences are varied, or when more than two candidates are in the race. The consensus meeting pretty much supported his observations.

Florida uses a plurality voting method, the candidate with the most votes, even if not a majority wins. In the mock plurality election, Cinderella (the only woman candidate) tied with Pinocchio (at least you know when he is lying.) In Florida that means that they would draw lots to determine the winner. Another objection to plurality voting is that with 10 can-

didates the one with 11% of the vote could be the winner. The group could not support this system.

Next the assembly looked at the Approval Voting System, where voters vote for all candidates that they find acceptable. This is the method used to select the Secretary General of the United Nations. (A reverse method, vote your disapproval and the candidate with the fewest votes wins, is used in some eastern European countries.) While this method would probably identify the candidate acceptable to the

most people, it does not distinguish between intense and weak support and could lead to the defeat of the candidate that was the first choice of a majority of voters. In the Approval Voting System, Cinderella was the clear winner. This method did not gain the support of the group.

Two French mathematicians have developed voting systems which claim to more exactly reflect voter sentiment. In the Borda Count Voting System, voters rank the candidates (first choice, second, etc.) and a predeter-

mined number of points is assigned to each ranked choice with the first choice receiving the most points, a second choice less, and so on. The Candidate with the most points wins. This system is used in choosing the most valuable player and Associated Press sports rankings. The second French mathematician, Condorcet, declares the winner the candidate who can top each of the others in a "pair-wise comparison." While Cinderella won in each of these systems, neither system won the hearts of the participants.



Hillsborough County League of Women Voters, Patricia Moran, Action Chair, Maryellin Territo, and Janet Kovach pose at the November 18 joint Alternative Voting Systems meeting hosted by the St. Petersburg League at Feather Sound Country Club.

League Calendar

2006 November

30: 12 noon, FYI Luncheon
LifeLink Building (see page 1)

December

12: 4:00 p. m. Board Meeting
LifeLink Building

2007

March

6: Legislative Session begins

6: City of Tampa Election

18-20: 47th Annual Legislative Seminar
Tallassee

May

18, - 20: Annual Meeting, LWVFL
Tampa, Florida

June

2: League of Women Voters of
Hillsborough Annual Meeting

FROM Page 4

However mathematically sound, we would know who got the most first choice votes and then wait for the computer to tell us who won. It did not seem that either system would win wide voter acceptance.

Last the group looked at Instant Runoff Voting defined in the material as when voters rank the candidates, if no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and the votes cast for the eliminated candidate are transferred to the second choice listed on each ballot. This process of elimination is continued until a majority winner is declared.

This method was criticized because in a multiple candidate race, say with six candidates, the supporters of the most marginal candidate would get two bites at the apple. People who voted for Mickey Mouse, not just in the mock election but in the real world would wield the power. Florida had had a somewhat similar voting method between 1917 and 1924. It differed in that all the candidates but the top two vote getters were eliminated and the second choices of the eliminated candidates voted. This method was eliminated because with a growing population and paper ballots it too long to determine the winners.

Time came for the meeting to end and no consensus was reached to support any of the voting methods studied. After additional discussion it was determined that a consensus could be reached to support the Instant Runoff Voting if it were modified to eliminate all but the top two candidates for the second round and the Plurality

Voting, if the winner had to achieve a minimum of 40% of the vote.

The participants felt that they had received a wonderful education regarding alternative voting systems through the St. Petersburg Leagues presentation and look forward to learn the statewide consensus

POST ELECTION SURVEY

WVUS is surveying voters, LWV and non-LWV, to identify voting experiences that need to be addressed in future elections. Tell them your

experiences, good or bad at www.LVV.org, click "Election Follow-up Alert." The survey is also available at www.Vote411.org.

Email: lwvh@yahoo.com

Phone: 813-831-9774

Tampa FL 33681-3186

PO Box 13186

County

The League of Women
Voters of Hillsborough



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILLSBOROUGH CO.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2006-2007

Name: _____

Address _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

I enclose: ___\$60 Individual ___ \$85 Household ___\$40 student

Please consider an additional amount
for the League Revitalization Effort ___\$60, ___ Other amount \$___

Your contact information may appear in our directory.

___ Check here to prevent publication.

Make checks payable to the LWVHC and mail to:

League of Women Voters

P.O. Box 13186

Tampa, FL 33681-3186