



VOTER

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Bay Area Affordable Housing Forum

Four Bay Area Leagues gathered February 24, at the Feather Sound Country Club to study affordable housing. The event was organized by Susan Guise of the Northern Pinellas League. The keynote speaker was Odetta MacLeash-White, Executive Director of the Florida Affordable Housing Study Commission and a member of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters US. She provided an overview and local experts followed up with specifics. The local panel included Anthony Jones, Director of Community Development for Pinellas County; Rev. Glad McCurtain of St John's Episcopal Church, Clearwater; Jerome Ryans, President/CEO, Tampa Housing Authority; and Denise L. Thomas, Housing and Community Development Coordinator, Manatee County.



Hillsborough County Leaguers at the forum included Patricia Moran, Mike McKinney, Cathy Teti and Maryellin Territo, shown here with Anthony Jones, (second from right) Director of Pinellas County Community Development.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Of course "Affordable Housing" means different things to different people. Affordability of housing is tied to income. In the affordable housing arena it means a family or individual finding safe, sanitary housing that's cost, in rent or mortgage payments, does not exceed 30% of the gross household income. Affordable housing is becoming more elusive for the elderly, people with disabilities, families of all sizes, and more and more, low and moderate wage earners.

WHY IS IT AN EMERGENCY NOW?

Escalating housing costs are pricing more and more people out of the housing market. In 2005, the Florida Housing Coalition released their *Priced Out Report*. In 2002 the median family income in Florida was \$51,800 allowing that family to purchase the median priced house of about \$135,000. Between 2002 and 2005 the cost of a median priced house in Florida increased

77% to \$235,550. Household income during the same period increasing only 1.4% to \$52,550. Therefore, fewer can afford to become first time home buyers.

Renters are also being priced out of the market. The fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment in Florida is \$850. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, a household must earn \$34,007 annually. For a wage earner this represents \$16.35 per hour, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year. The estimated hourly wage for a renter in Florida is \$11.64.

Monthly Supplemental Income (SSI) for a recipient in Florida is \$603. If SSI represents the total household income then, under the the affordable housing

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The League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County is a nonpartisan 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.

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Contact the League

Hillsborough Co.

E-mail: LWVHC@yahoo.com

Phone: (813) 831-9774.

Address: P. O. Box 13186
Tampa, FL 33681-3186

Florida

web site lwyfl.org

Address: 540 Beverly Court
Tallahassee, FL
32301

Phone: (850) 224-2545

USA

Web site: lwy.org

Address: 1730 M St., NW
Washington, D.C.
20036-4508

Phone: (202) 429-1965

Fax: (202) 429-0854



President's Message

Time Is Running Out: If you are still planning on attending the Lifetime Achievement Luncheon on March 9th, you had better act now. We are rapidly reaching our quota. To save time, please phone your reservation to Linda D'Aquila at 253-2640 and ask for Heidi. At the last count we had 140 reservations and had collected close to \$6,000 in program ads. This is going to be a great event and hopefully many of our LWV members will attend.

Be A LWVHC Ambassador: As you know, we (the Hillsborough County League) are the official hosts for the 2007 LWV Florida Convention. We're looking for volunteers to assist with registration and serve as room counters and monitors. As a volunteer you can attend the workshops and sessions without paying a dime. Your only expense would be for a meal if you elect to join the group. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer. Optional times include Friday afternoon and evening, May 18th, Saturday morning and afternoon, May 19th and Sunday morning, May 20th. Mayor Pam Iorio and League member Helen Gordon Davis will be on Saturday's agenda. You can find more Convention details on the League's website at <http://www.lwvfla.org>.

It's Party Time: As part of our hosting duties, your LWVHC Board will be planning an evening activity on Saturday evening, May 19th during the Convention. Even if you have no plans on attending or volunteering at the Convention, we urge you to join us for the League Party.

It's Official: Your Hillsborough County League of Women Voters reached a grand total of 146 members for 2006-07. WOW! We're Back!

Congratulations: To League Member Jan Platt for being named Woman of the Year by the Zonta Club of Tampa.

Our Sincere Condolences and Sympathy: to former LWVHC Presidents Mary Figg on the loss of her husband and Annette DeLisle on the loss of her father.

Personal Note: This is going to be a busy Spring for the League. We urge you to get on board and take part in the many activities and opportunities taking place. An active membership is the best assurance for a strong organization. Thank you for your support and dedication.

**Sincerely,
Mike**

League Makes Positions Known



Patricia Moran
Action Chair

Patricia Moran has sent letters to our state legislative delegation identifying the State League's legislative priorities:

- 1. Election law.** The League supports having the election of the Supervisor of Elections be non-partisan and the automatic restoration of civil rights (including the right to vote) to felons who have paid their debt to society.
- 2. Florida Constitution.** The League supports a bi-partisan independent Commission to determine compact and contiguous voting districts that are equal in population and provide access for minorities. Also the League supports a citizens' statutory initiative process in addition to the existing constitutional amendment process.
- 3. Growth Management.** We support laws that strengthen and maintain growth management such as the 1985 Growth Management Act concurrency requirement that schools, roads and other infrastructure be available at the same time as development occurs.
- 4. Water Resources.** The League of Women Voters supports public policies that promote conservation of freshwater and its availability for environment, public supply, agricultural, industrial and mining uses on a priority basis with the environment and public supply first.

D.C. Voting Rights

Patricia also sent a letter to Congresswoman and former Hillsborough County League of Women Voters president Kathy Castor urging her to support HR 328, the D.C. Fair and Equal Voting Rights Act.

Citizens of the District of Columbia pay federal taxes, fight and die for the U. S. during wartime and are governed by the laws that Congress pass but have no voting representation in Congress. This bill would provide one seat for D C in the U. S. House of Representatives.

Capitol Report Now Available On Line

League members can access *The Capitol Report* on the LWVFL Website: www.lwvfla.org. *The Capitol Report* follows the activity of the Florida Legislature. It is published by the League of Women Voters of Florida during the legislative session and written by League lobbyist Jeanne Zokovitch to keep members up to date on the progress of League issues.

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

OFFICERS

President	<i>Mike McKinney</i>
President Elect	<i>Linda D'Aquila</i>
Vice President	<i>Shirley Arcuri</i>
Secretary	<i>Rich Brown</i>
Treasurer	<i>Mary Mahoney</i>

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Voter Services	<i>Greg Vawter</i>
Membership	<i>Jan Platt</i>
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FYI	<i>Lisa Leslie</i>
Public Relations	<i>Sandy Frye</i>
Action Chair	<i>Patricia Moran</i>

VOTER Editor *Cathy Teti*

Next Board of Directors Meeting:
March 21, 4:00 p.m.
LifeLink Building



City of Tampa Candidate Forums

CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES OPENED

Hillsborough County has two new representatives in the United States Congress. Keep them informed of your positions on the issues.

**Congresswoman Kathy Castor
District 11**

**317 Cannon House Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202)-225-3376**

**4144 North Armenia Avenue
Suite 300
Tampa, FL 33609-6435
(813)-871-2817**

**Congressman Gus Bilirakis
District 9**

**1630 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, D C 20515
(202)-225-5755**

**10941 B, 56 Street
Temple Terrace, FL 33617-3000
(813)-985-8541**

**301 Palm Harbor Professional
Center
35111 US Highway 19 N
Palm Harbor, FL 34684-1934
(727)-773-2871**



Voter Services Chair, Greg Vawter, confers with panelists Bobbie O'Brien reporter producer with WUSF radio; Joe Brown, columnist for the Tampa Tribune; and Joan Pynes, Professor of Public Administration at USF and League member before the taping of city candidate forums.

The forums will appear on Bright House Network and Verizon cable channel 15 (City of Tampa Television) CTTV through March 5.

Mayoral Race

Sundays at 9 p.m., Fridays at 8 a.m. & Saturdays at 4 p.m.

City Council Races

District 1: Sundays at 10 p.m., Mondays at 11 a.m. & Saturdays at 5 p.m.

District 2: Sundays at 3 p.m., Mondays at 8 a.m. & Fridays at 7 p.m.

District 4: Sundays at 3:30 p.m., Mondays at 8:30 a.m. & Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

District 5: Mondays at 3 p.m., Fridays at 9 a.m. & Saturdays at 10 p.m.

District 6: Mondays at 2:30 p.m., Fridays at 9:30 a.m. & Saturdays at 10:30 p.m.

District 7: Sundays at 5 p.m., Mondays at 9 a.m. & Fridays at 8 p.m.

With six participating candidates, the Council District One forum runs one hour. The others run 30 minutes each. All qualified candidates participated in each race except mayoral candidate Aria Ray Green, who was unavailable

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due to a family emergency, and District 7 candidate Charles "Charlie" Perkins, who did not respond to the League's certified mail and telephone message invitations. There was no forum for Council District 3 as Linda Saul-Sena faces no opposition in the 2007 election.

MORE TO COME

With six candidates vying for a single Council seat (District 1), and four other races (Mayor and Council Districts Four, Five, and Seven) having three candidates each, there is some probability of a runoff election. That runoff date would be Tuesday, March 27.

We have tentatively reserved Wednesday, March 14, with City of Tampa Television (CTTV) for runoff forums. We have also sent an email to the potential runoff candidates to "Save the Date." Now, we are lining up volunteers for duty behind the scenes and on the set. If you want to participate, contact Greg Vawter at LWVHC@tampabay.rr.com. Indicate whether your availability on Wednesday (3/14) is in the morning or the afternoon

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

When Friends of the River, Clean Water Fund, Florida Consumer Action Network Foundation (FCAN), the Sierra Club of Tampa Bay, and the River Roundtable decided they wanted to sponsor a Tampa Candidates Forum, they called the League to run it. Five league volunteers handled this event featuring eleven candidates on Monday, February 19; my thanks to Richard Molay (moderator), Janet Lorezno (timekeeper), plus Rich Brown and Carol Mehlman (audience question takers), and Greg Vawter (coordinator.)

Jan Platt to be Honored



Jan Platt, former county commissioner, Tampa city council person and candidate for mayor and current membership chairman for the Hillsborough County League of Women Voters, will received the "Status of Women" award from the local chapter of Zonta International.

Jan Platt,
Membership
Chair

The award will be presented at a luncheon March 3. For more details check out "www.zontacluboftampa.com."

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March is Women's History Month!
Study History!
Make History!

Early Voting Locations for City of Tampa Elections

College Hill Library
2607 E. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Blvd.

Tampa , Florida 33610
Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

County Center , 26th Floor
601 E. Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa , Florida 33602
Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Jan K. Platt Regional Library
3910 S. Manhattan Avenue
Tampa , Florida 33611
Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

North Tampa Branch Library
8916 North Boulevard
Tampa , Florida 33612
Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

New Tampa Regional Library
10001 Cross Creek Blvd.
Tampa , Florida 33647
Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Robert Gilder Elections Service
Center
2514 N. Falkenburg Road
Tampa , Florida 33619
Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

West Tampa Branch Library
2312 West Union Street
Tampa , Florida 33607
Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

The League Welcomes New Members

Charlotte Anderson

Belinda Dumont

Cecilia Favata

Matilda Martinez
Garcia

Richard Molay

Emily Peacock

Barbara Steidman

Esther Varon

Samantha Ward

Affordable Housing
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formula, that recipient can only afford \$181 for housing. The fair market value of a one bedroom apartment in Florida is \$725.

HOW IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVIDED?

Housing can be made more affordable by providing rental assistance or by lowering the costs of development, allowing a lower sales price or rental point. Numerous programs exist providing programs in support of affordable housing. Each has its own eligibility requirements and target constituency. At the federal level there are low income housing credits, Section 8 rental assistance, and Community Development Block Grants for infrastructure costs.

FUNDING BEING REDUCED

Federal programs are receiving smaller budgets putting more pressure on state and local governments. Funding of state and local programs is being curtailed.

In 1992, the Florida Legislature adopted the William E. Sadowisk Affordable Housing Act which created a trust fund and the local housing SHIP program in all 67 counties. These programs were funded with 20% of the documentary tax (a recording tax on deeds, etc.) being dedicated to the program. Revenue from the tax benefit from the rapid increase in housing costs between 2002 and 2005. In 2005 the Florida Legislature put a cap on the funds going to housing programs from the tax of \$273 million, effective July 1, 2007. Funds above the cap will go into the state general revenue. Without the cap the revenue to the trust fund would be \$450-\$600 million a year. The cap is less than was appropriated in FY02-03, the year before housing prices exploded in Florida.

THE FUTURE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing needs continue to increase as funds dry up. Public housing developments of the fifties and sixties are being phased out as the federal government failed to maintain them at safe and sanitary levels. Mixed income developments are seen as the future. Subsidized rental housing and conditions placed upon development are tools to achieve affordable housing goals. Meeting housing needs must be part of a larger program that addresses transportation, education and employment.

Daylight Savings Dates Change in 2007

On August 8, 2005, President George W. Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005. This Act changed the time change dates for Daylight Saving Time in the U.S. Beginning in 2007, DST will begin on the second Sunday in March (March 11, 2007) and end the first Sunday in November. The Secretary of Energy will report the impact of this change to Congress. Congress retains the right to resume the 2005 Daylight Saving Time schedule once the Department of Energy study is complete.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day (8 March) is an occasion marked by women's groups around the world. This date is also commemorated at the United Nations and is designated in many countries as a national holiday.

The idea of an International Women's Day first arose at the turn of the twentieth century, which in the industrialized world was a period of expansion and turbulence, booming population growth and radical ideologies. Following is a brief chronology of the most important events:

1909: In accordance with a declaration by the Socialist Party of America, the first National Woman's Day was observed across the United States on 28 February.

1910: The Socialist International, meeting in Copenhagen, established a Women's Day, international in character, to honor the movement for women's rights.. No fixed date was selected for the observance.

1911: As a result of the decision taken at Copenhagen the previous year, International Women's Day was marked for the first time (19 March) in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, where more than one million women and men attended rallies. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded the right to work, to vocational training and to an end to discrimination on the job.

Less than a week later, on 25 March, the tragic Triangle Fire in New York City took the lives of more than 140 working girls, most of them Italian and Jewish immigrants. This event had a significant impact on labor legislation in the United States.

1913-1917: As part of the peace movement brewing on the eve of World War I, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on the last Sunday in February 1913. Elsewhere in Europe, on or around 8 March of the following year, women held rallies either to protest the war or to express solidarity with their sisters. In 1917, with 2 million Russian soldiers dead in the war, Russian women again chose the last Sunday in February to strike for "bread and peace". Political leaders opposed the timing of the strike, but the women went on anyway. The rest is history: Four days later the Czar was forced to abdicate and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote.

Increasingly, International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of women's rights.

For more information, contact:
Development Section
Department of Public Information
Room S-1040, United Nations, New York, NY 10017
Email: mediainfo@un.org



League Calendar

2007

March

- 3: Florida Admission Day
Florida became the 27th state on March 3, 1845.
- 6: City of Tampa Elections
- 8 International Women's Day
- 9: 11:45 Lifetime Achievement Luncheon, Centre Club**
- 11: Daylight Savings Time Starts
- 18-20: 47th Annual Legislative Seminar, Tallahassee**
- 21: 4:00 Board Meeting Lifelink**
- 28 : Tampa Run-off Election (if needed)

April

- 3: Plant City Elections
- 24: 4 p.m. Board Meeting LifeLink**

May

- 18-20: Annual Meeting Florida LWV, Tampa**

June

- 2: LWV of Hillsborough Annual Meeting**

The League of Women
Voters of Hillsborough
County
PO Box 13186
Tampa FL 33681-3186
Phone: 813-831-9774
Email: lwv@lyhoo.com



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILLSBOROUGH CO.
2007 Lifetime Achievement & Community Support Award Luncheon**

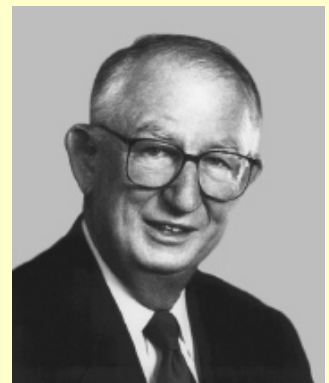
There is still time to get in your reservation for the
2nd Annual Lifetime Achievement Award Luncheon Honoring
Congressman Sam Gibbons.

March 9, 2007, 11:45 a. m.

Centre Club of Tampa
123 S. Westshore Blvd.

Cost: \$35.00, reservations
must be received by March 5

For reservations call Heidi at 253-2640
No shows will be billed.



Sam Gibbon
104th Congress