



VOTER

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Annual Meeting Sets Goals for 2007-2008

The Alfano Center on McKinley Drive just south of Fowler Avenue served as the site of the 2007 League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County annual meeting. First stop was Mary Mahoney and photographs for the proposed new member directory/handbook. Second stop for most sleepy Leaguers was the coffee pot as business was getting underway early for a Saturday.

The program was *"The Price of Liberty...Personal Freedom vs. Homeland Security."* The guest speaker was Elizabeth Ross Withnell. Ms. Withnell is Assistant General Counsel in the Privacy and Civil Liberties Unit of the Office of General Counsel, FBI Headquarters in Washington, D. C. Her job is to provide advice to FBI Offices and Divisions concerning compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements associated with collection, use, and disclosure of personally identifiable information. She stressed that the FBI took seriously limitations placed on it by Congress with regard to privacy issues and also takes seriously its obligation to share and connect the dots on all available information to avoid any future attacks on the country in the post September 11 world.

Following Ms. Withnell's presentation, Dena Leavengood, former LWVHC president presented the League of Women Voters position on privacy issues. Two LWVUS Positions are pertinent. In 1982 the National Board adopted a Statement of Position on Individual Liberties:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes in individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The League is convinced that individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged.

The League also has a Position on the Citizen's

Right to Know/Citizen Participation adopted in 1984:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government, The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

Based upon these adopted positions, the League with a number of other organizations has taken positions in opposition to some of the more extreme elements of the Patriot Act.

BUSINESS MEETING

Outgoing president, Mike McKinney, gave his State of The League message and announced that the Hillsborough League was named the most Innovative League in the State at the Convention in May.

Committee reports were available:

* Voter Services, Greg Vawter, Chair, staged 44 televised candidate forms.

* Action, Patricia Moran and Dena Leavengood, chairs, presented League positions to local, state and national legislatures.



Elizabeth Ross Withnell
Assistant General Counsel,
Privacy and Civil Liberties Unit,
Office of the General Counsel, FBI,
Washington, D. C.



Dena Leavengood, former LWVHC president and League spokesperson on Civil Liberties.

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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.



President's Message . . .

I just have to start out by thanking our Past President, Mike McKinney, for his constant encouragement, support and friendship throughout the past two years. Mike was instrumental in my decision to take a deep breath and offer my service to the League. As we all know, over the past two years Mike has been the steady hand that guided our efforts to reflect, recover, and rebuild the strength of our League. And for that, we are all grateful. Along with Mike, Shirley Arcuri, Greg Vawter, and Barbara Steidman, I recently attended the Florida League State Convention. It was quite an eye opener and reminded me:

- * To be determined to remain inclusive rather than exclusive,*
- * To recognize the wisdom of experienced leaders - - Kay Allen, Nancy Granda, Susie Guise, Sharon Barnett, and Fay Law - - to name just a few.*
- * To catch the enthusiasm of new leaders stepping forward with exciting ideas - - Deirdre McNab from Orange County, and Chris Staton and Sandy Parker from Collier County really stood out! And*
- * To remain committed to the belief that the Board serves the League - - the League does not serve the Board.*

That said, I admit I was somewhat overwhelmed by the brilliance of those in attendance at our Annual Meeting! Honored Past Presidents, members of longstanding dedication, elected officials, revered former legislators; for such a politically astute group they have taken a great leap of faith in casting their ballots for me. I will do everything in my power to live up to the League's expectations and ensure that the our role in providing quality, nonpartisan voter education and participation in the political process is expanded, enhanced, and recognized throughout the community for its value.

In the coming year the Board will continue to strengthen our League's infrastructure by:

- * Orienting and mentoring our newest members to Board and Off Board positions by partnering them with more experienced members.*
- * Targeting League membership retention and growth through consistent communication, new recruitment materials, a new Membership Directory, and dare I say it . . . our own website!*

** Increasing our community exposure by establishing an Advocacy Council made up of League members to ensure that the League's positions on local issues are publicly presented before governmental and regulatory agencies.*

** Enhancing the financial stability of our League by inviting thoughtful and provocative speakers to conduct our workshops and Hot Topic FYIs, and by building upon the success of our first two Lifetime Achievement Award Luncheons.*

I have been twice blessed to hear Senator Gordon Davis' presentation on "Leadership Lessons in League Membership" reflecting upon the historic impact of our League on the citizens of Hillsborough County, the State of Florida, and the Nation. Once, when she received the League's very first Lifetime Achievement Award, and again last month when she was invited to address the State Convention. Our League's history is such an inspiration! We are challenged to build upon that tradition and ensure that the League and its mission are not minimalized.

In terms of seniority I am very new to the League. However, I am enthusiastic, energetic, a quick study, and not ashamed to admit when I am "clueless." The success of our League rests upon the willingness of each of us to share some precious commodities: our time, talent, resources, and expertise. And I will look to each of you for your guidance and help.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank some of the many people who encouraged me to throw my name in the ring.

** To our newly elected Board of Directors. Even though they have all worked with me in the past, they looked beyond that and agreed to serve anyway.*

** To Dr. Shires and Dennis Heinrichs, CEO and COO of LifeLink who strongly believe in the League's mission and have generously encouraged my participation.*

** To my colleagues Heidi Grogan and Lana Powell - - they should be named honorary League members for all of the hours and effort they have volunteered on the League's behalf.*

** And of course, to a personal favorite League member, my husband Tony who has encouraged and supported me every step of the way.*

Thank you all for your confidence; I promise you my very best!

Linda D'Aquila

*President
LWV
Hillsborough County*

VOTER

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

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June 17

State Convention Report

By
Greg Vawter

State Convention Speakers



Rosemary Goudreau, Tampa Tribune Editorial Page Editor, spoke Saturday morning.



Helen Gordon Davis, former State Senator and 2006 LWFHC Lifetime Achievement Award honoree spoke at the Sunday's lunch meeting.

The 31st Biennial State Convention of the League of Women Voters of Florida & 18th Joint Convention of the LWV Education Fund was held May 18-20, 2007, at the Tampa Marriott Westshore. Along with LWFHC president Michael McKinney, president-elect Linda D'Aquila and vice president Shirley Arcuri, I was honored to represent you as a local delegate. Barbara Steideman also attended as a non-voting delegate at her own expense. During the business meetings, the League took three significant actions: (1) electing the proposed slate for the 2007-2009 Board of Directors, (2) approving two of the four proposed by-law changes and (3) adopting (with several minor amendments) the 2007-2009 LWVF Program.

Membership meetings of statewide groups of activists seldom run smoothly 100% of the time. But, my first-time experience of the LWVF convention was quite positive for three reasons: (1) recognition of League leadership throughout the state-including here in Hillsborough County, (2) well-planned activities beyond the convention business, and (3) opportunities to meet committed and capable participants at all levels of the organization.



Mayor Pam Iorio (left) greeted delegates at the Saturday meeting. She is shown here with Linda D'Aquila, LWFHC president 2007-2008; Mike McKinney, LWFHC president 2005-2007; and LWVF president Dianne Wheatley Giliotti.

LWVF president Dianne Wheatley Giliotti (Palm Harbor) acknowledged the work of her board and other leaders around the state in the opening hour of the convention. She awarded several hand-made cloisonné butterflies, which she had brought back from China, to local Leagues and individuals for good works. Mike accepted two, one of which was for our hosting LWVUS president Mary Wilson during her trip to Florida last year. At the end of the three-day event, Mike also accepted a “Thinking Outside the Box” award for innovation, recognizing the success of our 2006 and 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award luncheons.

Several League leaders noted the outstanding job that Shirley Arcuri did organizing our local plans for the convention. She was recognized at least twice on the convention floor for her many efforts-ranging from booking the terrific (Friday dinner) jazz band (free from the Patel Conservatory) to recruiting local Leaguers to help administer the conference. In her typically humble way, Shirley shifted the focus to her volunteers and asked for them to be thanked in this issue of the Voter.

As local hosts, we had opportunities to mingle with those leaders from around the state, and beyond. Some of us got a head start at dinner with the state board Thursday evening in south Tampa's Byblos Café. One of the more interesting guests was LWVUS board member Judith Davis, who serves as the LWVUS Development Committee chair. In addition to her activities through the years as a League member in six different states, Ms. Davis has spent many years traveling internationally for the League. She provided democratic process training to groups in several countries of the former Soviet Union. (See article page 9)

Other important speakers came from right here in Hillsborough County. Tampa mayor Pam Iorio and Tampa Tribune editorial page editor Rosemary Goudreau presented opposing views about the Florida property tax crisis at our Saturday morning breakfast meeting. Pam also welcomed the convention to town and Rosemary challenged Leaguers to work with media companies who are now seeking viable community partners. Senator Helen Gordon Davis kept the convention's full attention at Sunday's luncheon telling her story of ground-breaking League work before and during her years in the legislature.

Our local League's Saturday evening event was a social highlight for many. With help from executive director Cynthia Gandee, we were able to offer a one-hour private tour of the Henry B. Plant Museum. Then, LWVHC volunteers ferried visiting Leaguers to the LifeLink building, where they could enjoy flamenco stylings by guitarist Nathan Herrera along with a tasty Spanish dinner catered by Latam at the Centro. The event more than paid for itself and I heard many positive comments from our guests.

There were also a few workshops for our League education. Shirley, Linda and Mike will have differing perspectives because we split up to cover them all. I attended a good one on developing web pages and a better one on building membership and some of the ideas discussed may come out in our LWVHC 2008 planning.

THANKS to HC Volunteers at State Convention

Lora Benard

Denise Fischbach

Sandy Frye

Nancy Granda

Heidi Grogan

Patricia Moran

Tim Moran

Lana Powell

Anne Ross

Maryellin Territo

Sally Thompson

Doris Weatherford.

and

Shirley Arcuri

who organized it all.

Presidential Citations

Presidential Citations are awarded at the discretion of the President for exemplary service and dedication.

Outstanding Service to the Board:
Greg Vawter for Voter Services

Outstanding Service to the Board in a Retiring Position: **Mary Mahoney**, Treasurer

Outstanding Service to the Board in a Retiring Position: **Lisa Leslie**, FYI Outreach Chair

Outstanding New Board Member:
Lora Benard

Inspirational Leadership: **Helen Gordon Davis**

Continued Leadership: **Linda D'Aquila**

Regional Leadership Award: **Susie Guise**, North Pinellas LWV

Campaign Civility & Ethics: **Representative Ed Homan**

50 Years of LWV Membership:
Carol Mehlmane

Volunteer Coordinator for the 2007 LWVF State Convention: **Shirley Arcuri**

Administrative Service: **Heidi Grogan and Lana Powell**

Outstanding new member: **Barbara Steidemann**



PAST PRESIDENTS REMEMBERED FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP

Outgoing President Mike McKinney called them the foundation and inspiration of the League. Eight out of the 42 past presidents were honored during a special tribute and memorial service at this year's Annual Meeting. Our LWV presidents have gone on to serve as State Senators and Representatives, United States Congresswomen, County Commissioners, Educators, Businesswomen, Executives, and Volunteers. Pictured are: L-R Front: Katholeen Kampfe (1994-95), Dena Leavengood (2000-01), Maryellen Territo (1978), Betty Castor (1969-71). Back Row L-R) Cathy Teti (1999-2000), Mike McKinney (2005-07), Elaine College (1989-90), Patricia Hall (1988-89) and Nancy Maggiacomo Granda (1984-86). Marvin Martin (LWV Member) represented the late Janett Martin (2001-02).

[Annual Meeting Cont.](#)

* Membership, Jan Platt, chair, reported an increase in membership of 20% since January 31, 2006.

* VOTER, Cathy Teti, editor, reported 9 issues in 2006-2007, up from 5 the previous year.

*Public Relations, Sandy Frye, chair, reported notable media coverage during 2006-2007, especially re: candidate forums and FYIs.

*Drug Funding Study, Lora Bernard, chair, reported on information gathered so far and plans for continuation of the study in 2007-2008.

* FYI, Lisa Leslie, chair, recounted the four hot topic luncheons and the evening candidate meet and greet at Yuengling Brewery.

The slate of officers was approved and inducted by Susie Guise of the North Pinellas LWV.

A budget of \$11,280 was also adopted.

May FYI Looks at Funding for Drug Programs

Board members of the Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance met with members of the League of Women Voters over box-luncheons in the Life-Link Conference room at the League's May 10 FYI to discuss local drug enforcement and treatment programs, their funding sources and future in light of budget uncertainties.

Panelists included Elvin Martinez, Community Relations Administrator for the State Attorney's Office; Bob Holm, Regional Director Substance Abuse Services, DCF; Billy Lee, Court Program Specialist, Drug Court Systems; Richard Brown, Chief Operating Officer, Acts; Jack Feinberg, Director Operations, Phoenix House; Major Paul Davis, Commander Special Investigations Division, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office; and Norman Campbell, Circuit Manager, Chief Probation Officer.

Leaguers learned that one in four families has a member who is addicted. This substance abuse is linked to crime and poverty and undermines the foundation of families. Each \$1 spent on treatment and prevention results in a \$7 savings later down the line on enforcement and incarceration. Drug Court has the authority to order drug offenders into treatment but waiting lists exist for all drug treatment programs.

The various drug programs receive funding from the federal, state and local governments and from private donations. The state budget left most state funding in place. However, Florida is among a minority of states that require a local "match" to receive federal block grant funds.

Local funding remains up in the air pending the Florida Legislature's June Special Session on property tax relief. Property tax has traditionally been the source of those matching funds for Florida Counties.



Major Paul Davis of the HCSO outlines law enforcement efforts with regard to enforcing drug laws and the prevalence of drug abuse as contributing to the cause of other crimes.

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Drug Study Ongoing

The drug study will continue for a second year to review funding in light of anticipated local budget cuts and to identify the cost of providing treatment for the current waiting lists and identified needs in the community.

To get involved contact Lora Bernard at: lora@fasttrackprofessional.com



Lora Bernard
Drug Funding Study
Chair

Action Committee to Stress Advocacy

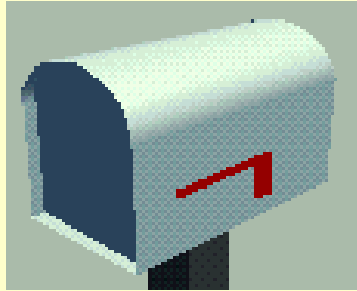
The League is taking steps to advocate for its position on issues in a personal way. The action committee took on several new members at the last board meeting, and the call is going out to all interested League members to join in.

When a governmental body--such as the County Commission--is considering whether to continue or drop its support of various groups (some within the aegis of the government itself, like the Planning Commission), there is time given to public comment. When the League has developed a position regarding the issues, it becomes important that our stand is personally stated at these meetings.

Nothing is more effective than the personal presentation of arguments in support of matters that affect all of us. And that goes for objection to initiatives which the League has decided do not have the public interest at heart.

So the board is putting out a call for advocates. If you have a keen interest in some area of government--tax and budget, social services, environmental protection, etc--join the committee. It doesn't mean you have to take time off work every time an issue comes up. With enough people on the committee, advocates can rotate. People with a background of specific skills in the areas mentioned are particularly helpful partners in this endeavor.

At the moment, Jan Platt has volunteered to act as point person, Betsey McFarland as a spokesperson, Patricia Morna chairs the existing action committee, Sandy Frye and Linda D'Aquila will help with information and support. This effort needs YOU. The Hillsborough County League of Women Voters was recognized as the most innovative League in the state at the annual convention. Lets add the most effective and persuasive League in the state for the next convention!



New Address

The Hillsborough County League of Women Voters has a new mailing address:

**League of Women Voters
of Hillsborough County**

P. O. Box 1801

Tampa, FL 33605-1801



Doris Weatherford, Lora Bernard, and Rich Brown model LWV Hillsborough buttons authorized by the Board of Directors to identify members when advocating League positions. Buttons are available to members at meetings. Be sure and pick yours up.

League Works with Developing Democracies

by Sandy Frye

At the LWVF annual meeting, attendees had the opportunity to hear from a national League officer whose initiative has made a difference for many people in the former Soviet Union and in central Asia.

Judy Davis has been an LWV member for thirty years and in six states, coast to coast. She has held numerous leadership positions at both the state and local levels. In 1996, she began to concentrate on development. Most recently, Ms. Davis was vice president of the LWV of New York State Education Foundation. Prior to that, she was chair of the LWV of California Education Fund where her work opened the door to new foundation grants.

In 1991, a trip to Russia during its period of transition to more representative government led her and a League colleague to create a workshop that taught the basics of grassroots civic activism to citizens who had never had an opportunity to present their ideas, challenges and expectations to their government. As a result more than 200 Russian women were themselves trained to become trainers.

That initial experience led to an invitation to conduct similar workshops in central Asia. Judy traveled to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to train NGO workers, business and union leaders, party representatives, election officials and media candidates. One key to effectiveness, she told WUSF-FM news reporter Bobbie O'Brien, was being sensitive to the culture of the country she was in, and in adjusting the approach to the individuality of that culture.

After discussing the major positions the national League has adopted-which included election reform, campaign financing, and the health system (the entire rundown can be found on the national League website), she added that all League representatives are urged to speak with a more assertive voice. "We are not used to tooting our own horns," she said, adding that we all should.

Dues are due!

The League fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30

2007-2008 dues are due on July 1, 2007

Membership Form is on Back Page of the VOTER

Scholarships are available, contact lwhvc@yahoo.com

VOTER

League Calendar

2007

June



14th National Flag Day

Commemorates the adoption of the American Flag by the Second Continental Congress in 1777.

July



4th Independence Day

Commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The colonies officially achieved independence with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783.

The League of Women Voters
Of Hillsborough County
P. O. Box 1801
Tampa, FL 33601-1801



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILLSBOROUGH CO.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2007-2008

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

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 1801
Tampa, FL 33601-1801