



# The Voter

## The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast



**Volume 31: No. 1**

**September, 2010**

Mission: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

### **Amendment 4 – Home Town Democracy Forum Wednesday, September 29, 2010 7 p.m.– 9 p.m.**

The League of Women Voters and the Marine Resources Council will host a public forum on **Wednesday, Sept 29<sup>th</sup>, in Government Building C - Commission Chambers, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera from 7p.m. – 9 p.m.** The moderator will be Ayn Samuelson. The moderator will **field questions from the public and direct them to both sides.** Speaking in support of the amendment will be Leslie Blackner, an environmental attorney from West Palm Beach and the originator of the ballot initiative. Speaking against the amendment on behalf of the Florida Chamber of Commerce will be Ryan Houck, executive director of Citizens for Lower Taxes and a Strong Economy. The forum will be televised live on Space Coast Government TV, Brighthouse channel 199 and re-broadcast thereafter.

### **Amendments 5 & 6 at Timely Topics in October**

Timely Topics in October will be a luncheon meeting on **Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6.** The date is Wednesday, October 20 at Tuscany Grill at 11:30 a.m. Menu and details for reservations will be in the October Voter.

Vote **YES** on Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6. You can stop politicians from drawing districts to preserve their own political power. Redistricting is intended to ensure that every person’s vote counts equally. This is not how things work in Florida now. Legislators now choose their voters rather than the voters choosing their representatives. This is not democracy.

Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6 will create rules to stop politicians from drawing districts to favor themselves or to eliminate their political opponents. **Florida’s major newspaper editorial boards are unanimously in favor of Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6.**

Voting **YES** on Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6 on the November 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot will allow Florida voters to select their representatives rather than the other way around.

Additional information on upcoming Candidate Forums is found on Page 2 in Ayn Samuelson’s Voter Service article.

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## Vice President's Corner

### Carol McDonald

Dear League Members,

As our very own Lewis and Clark (aka Ruth and David Schechter) are spending the summer revisiting their historic trip west, the Space Coast League has ventured forth on its own, registering voters and hosting candidate forums.

Space Coast LWV teamed with Space Coast Tiger Bay Club, Florida Today and Brevard Community College to hold four evenings of televised forums on BCC-TV from the BCC Cocoa Campus. On July 20<sup>th</sup> FL House District 29; July 27<sup>th</sup> FL House District 31 and Brevard County Clerk of Courts; August 3<sup>rd</sup> Brevard Co. Commissions Districts 2 and 4; August 11<sup>th</sup> FL Senate District 24 and School Board Districts 1 and 5.

At the time of this writing two forums have been completed. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Ayn Samuelson not only organized League's participation but moderated the July 20<sup>th</sup> District 29 FL House and July 27<sup>th</sup> Clerk of Court forum. The timing, not a small item in a live televised debate, was impeccable. Not only did each candidate receive equal time, but questions were appropriate, challenging and sometimes caught the candidates by surprise which allowed the voters to see the thought process and reasoning of those seeking office. Our League is fortunate to have the talent and experience of Ayn heading this effort. Her supporting cast included Barbara Jagrowski and Marilyn Collins as timers.

The Florida State League has instituted a new "Members Only Conference Call" to be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at 5 pm. The July 23 topic was an author review of "Government: The Owner's Manuel" by Chris Hand and Senator Bob Graham. Mr. Hand said the book is intended as "a how to participate in government for the lay person." He listed 10 skills of civic engagement:

1. Define issue
2. Research
3. Identify government office to handle the issue, i.e. city council, county commissioners
4. Build public opinion
5. Identify decision maker and best approach
6. Understand deadlines, cycles and history
7. Build coalition and media associations
8. Determine the money needed
9. Organize fundraising
10. Guard against losing momentum in winning and plan to rise from ashes in losing.

Along with each step the book provides stories which illustrate how people used these skills effectively. Mr. Hand was an informative speaker and presented his book, a beginner's guide to government participation,

well. However, as a long-time League member, most was familiar to me as League 101. We called it baptism by fire. Our grandmothers knew it as Women Suffrage in 1920. This new book by Mr. Hand and Senator Graham while promising to be informative and entertaining was a strong reminder to me, yet again, to share my League experiences with my daughters and granddaughters.

Women must never forget the hard won privilege of voting and the responsibility which comes with it. August 26 is the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women Suffrage. Would those suffragettes be pleased to see how we have carried on in their name?



## Voter Service Report

### Ayn Marie Samuelson - Chair Primary Candidate Debates

The partnership among the League, BCC, Space Coast Tiger Bay, and *Florida Today* began in 2008, and this is the second election cycle for our combined efforts. Candidate debates began July 19<sup>th</sup> and ran through August 11<sup>th</sup> for primary elections that included: State Representative, District 29 - decided at the August 24<sup>th</sup> universal primary; State Representative, District 31; Clerk of the Circuit Court - decided at the August 24<sup>th</sup> universal primary; County Commissioner, District 2; County Commissioner, District 4; State Senator, District 24; School Board, District 1; and School Board, District 5. The District 4 County Commission would have been a universal primary, where all registered voters regardless of party can cast their ballot, however, a write-in candidate limited voting for this race to only those from one political party.

All of the forums have been televised live on WBCC and streamed live on the *Florida Today* website. The live audience had the opportunity to submit written questions to the moderator during the debates. The crew from WBCC has been terrific and very professional. It has been a great deal of work to personally moderate four of these forums, and I would like to thank our trusty League timers who have covered all of the forums: Barbara Jagrowski, Marilyn Collins, and Carol McDonald for their expert help. Unfortunately, few League members have turned out - somewhat of a disappointment. Hopefully, some of you have been watching from home.

### General Election Candidate Forums

The forums will continue in September and October after the primary and in advance of the November 2, 2010 general election. Forum for U.S. Representative, District 15; U.S. Representative, District 24; State Representative, District 30; State Representative, District 31; County Commission, District 2; State Senator, District 24; (*continued on Page 3*)

(continued from Page 2) and depending on the outcome, School Board, District 1 will be held and televised. Of course we would love to include the races for U. S. Senator and Governor, but that may be out of reach.

#### November Ballot Amendments – Know The Facts

To date, there are nine state constitutional amendments and one state referendum that will appear on the November 2, 2010 ballot. When you access the Supervisor of Elections' website, locate "Election Information" on the left hand side and click on it. A drop down list will appear, at which time you can click "2010 Amendments & Referenda" to find the State Constitutional Amendments and Referendum and other City and Town Referenda as you scroll downward. You may also click on the links that will give you the full text and more information on each amendment.

#### State Constitutional Amendments and Referendum

- REPEAL OF CAMPAIGN FINANCING REQUIREMENT
- HOMESTEAD AD VALOREM TAX CREDIT FOR DEPLOYED MILITARY PERSONNEL
- PROPERTY TAX LIMIT FOR NONHOMESTEAD PROPERTY
- REFERENDA REQUIRED FOR ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANS
- STANDARDS FOR LEGISLATURE TO FOLLOW IN LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING
- STANDARDS FOR LEGISLATURE TO FOLLOW IN CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING
- STANDARDS FOR LEGISLATURE TO FOLLOW IN LEGISLATIVE AND CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING
- REVISION OF THE CLASS SIZE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- HEALTH CARE SERVICES

#### State Referendum

- BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET A NONBINDING REFERENDUM CALLING FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

City and Town Referenda are found below the state constitutional amendments and state referendum and are listed according to the specific town or city. Happy reading!

**The League of Women Voters of the Space Coast will promote in all aspects of the League's activities, a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition and issues of the community.**



## International Relations

### Mary Nicolay - Chair

The International Relations Committee will meet to RECONNECT September 14th, 1-3 PM at the home of Mary and Hugh Nicolay.

**Directions to the Nicolay home.** If taking 192 go to West Melbourne Target Store and turn into Melbourne Village at the traffic light. Go to three (3) stop signs and make right turns. At **Acacia Avenue** go to the second house on the left number 582, the Nicolay home. If you come off Wickham Road onto Sheridan use your GPS. These are the only two entrances to the Village. Phone 723-6169 for further assistance.

Please come prepared to share an adventure you had this summer or to review your summer reading. Tell us how you were able to rest and renew for the coming League year. We will share thoughts and plan for the coming months. New members are always welcome and encouraged to join the committee.

From The Los Angeles Times, written by Marilyn Johnson. *Lamenting Spending Cuts for Public Libraries*

"Public officials will tell you they love libraries and are committed to them; they just don't believe they constitute a CORE service.... Sooner or later, we'll all feel the loss as one of the most effective levelers of privilege and avenues of reinvention---one of the great engines of democracy---begins to disappear." 7/6/10

Another quote is from Ken Follett in his book *Pillars of the Earth*. "Politics; the bargaining game of beggars."

The May International Relations Group discussion topic and questions were: "*China looks at the world: the world looks at China. What are China's security concerns and goals, and how do its perceptions affect its neighbors, the U.S. and the world?*" China makes it difficult to see clearly what's going on in their country, but it is clear that, "China is doing what it thinks is best for China."

The domestic and international goals of China's national security strategy interact and reinforce each other via the four modernizations program which stresses economic self-reliance and was launched in 1978 by Deng Xiaoping. Stability is essential for the success of all components of their strategy.

China's domestic agenda includes: 1) Survival of Chinese Communist Party; 2) Maintaining internal solidarity; 3) Continuing economic development; 4) Exerting territorial control and regional influence.

Achievement of these domestic goals is necessary to maintain legitimacy with the Chinese people. (continued on Page 5)



## Children's Committee

### Marilza Novaes Card – Chair

I hope you had a great summer! My committee met a couple of times during the summer to work on children's issues and sometimes just for fun.

On June 3<sup>rd</sup> we attended a community meeting sponsored by the Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF): Circuit 18- Brevard & Seminole County. About 140 attendees worked, in groups, to examine the strengths and gaps in the current system. We were asked to provide input into the DCF's Five Year Strategic Plan in order to help Circuit 18 to provide needed services to the community at a time when resources are limited. The groups worked on DCF's top ten objectives:

- Develop and adopt family-centered practices;
- Provide critical economic assistance to families;
- Integrate substance abuse and mental health services into the child welfare system;
- Confront the root causes of substance abuse and mental illness and improve the system of care;
- Provide safe environments for children while in child care facilities/homes;
- Expand domestic violence prevention and training;
- Preserve the dignity and comfort of adults who are unable to fully care for themselves;
- Provide solutions to the issues of homelessness;
- Partner with State agencies, stakeholders and providers;
- Advocate for necessary funding.

DCF's goals:

- To make sure that children and adults are free from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation;
- To meet the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, and health for children and adults;
- To make sure that children and adults are active self-sufficient participants;
- DCF to be integrated, efficient, timely, accurate, effective and transparent.

This committee will keep you informed when we receive the report with the results from this working session.

The following are some of the bills concerning children's issues that passed during the 2010 Legislative Session. Unfortunately, due to space limitations, I am only able to identify some of the bills and provide a very brief explanation of them. Please contact me if you would like further information (321) 779-4650.

**CS/HB 105- Civics Education** – Requires that the language arts curriculum include civics education content for all grade levels; provides requirements for civics, an education course that students must

successfully complete for middle grades promotions; requires administration of an end-of-course assessment in civics education as a field test at middle school level; requires inclusion of a civics education end-of-course assessment data in determining school grades. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/HB 315 – Adoption** – Prohibits an adoption agency or entity from making suitability determinations based on, requiring disclosure relating to, or restricting lawful possession, storage, or use of firearms or ammunition. Effective Date: 04/16/2010.

**CS/SB 140 - School/Food Service Program** – Creates the Florida Farm Fresh Schools Program within the Department of Education to encourage school districts to buy fresh and local food with maximum nutritional content. Effective Date: 07/01/2010

**CS/CS/HB 31 – Public Education** – Prohibits district school boards, administrative personnel, and instructional personnel from taking affirmative action that infringes or waives rights or freedoms afforded by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution in the absence of certain consent. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/CS/SB 434 – Suicide Prevention Education** – Deletes references to inactive organizations represented by members of the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council and replaces them with active organizations. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/HB 407 – Public K-12 Education** – Provides that comprehensive health education taught in public schools shall include a component on teen dating violence and abuse for students in grades 7 through 12. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/SB 1012 – Juvenile Justice Facilities and Programs** – Defines the term "ordinary medical care"; requires that the DJJ adopt rules to ensure the effective delivery of services to children in the care and custody of the DJJ. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/CS/SB 1058 – Cooperation Between Schools & Juvenile Authorities** – Requires that specified school personnel be notified when a child of any age is formally charged by a state attorney with a felony or a delinquent act that would be a felony if committed by an adult and the disposition of the charges. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

**CS/CS/HB 1073 – Persons with Disabilities** – Provides requirements for the use of seclusion and restraint on public school students with disabilities; requires the Commissioner of Education to develop recommendations to incorporate instruction relating to developmental disabilities into continuing education or inservice training requirements for instructional personnel. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.

*(continued on Page 5)*

(Children's Report continued from Page 4)

**CS/HB 1291 – Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams** – Deletes requirement that the Governor's Task Force on Domestic Violence provide information and technical assistance to local domestic violence fatality review teams; provides that information and records acquired by team are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in criminal or administrative proceedings in certain circumstances. Effective Date: 07/01/2010.



(Article for International Relations on *China* continued from Page 3)

A primary objective is to keep people employed and raise living standards, and simultaneously reduce the many income and social inequities that exist between rural and urban areas. This is no easy task – China is a governing entity larger than any other administration on earth. It has four times as many people as the US. One third of the land area is occupied by minority peoples (the Uyghurs, Tibetans, and others) who want as much autonomy from China as they can get.

China's main international goals are: 1) Resumption of a position of power and influence in the world; 2) Balance in US-China Relations; 3) Provision of military security on the conventional and nuclear levels; 4) Management of global concerns such as, currency issues, intellectual property rights, and climate change.

Chinese leaders believe that China rightly belongs to the "great power" club by virtue of its size, population, civilization, history, and its growing wealth. They want to make China a great power again without causing the international system to crumble. China understands that the Sino-US relationship will always have its ups and downs and realizes that with 15 countries bordering it, an aggressive posture is not in China's interest; aggression would lead to a counterbalancing alliance of China's neighbors and the US. Stability would be threatened. China wants to reassure neighbors and other world powers that China's military will not threaten the prevailing global order or the core interests of other powers. Problems in other areas are exacerbated because China lacks the legal infrastructure needed to enforce policies and laws. Oversight capacity is weak; media and on-the-ground watchdogs are not permitted to investigate and warn the general public. The need for political and social stability also prevent the central government from taking major action on issues.

Is it in our interest to have the Chinese Communist Party continue making progress on their agenda? According to David Lampton, the author of the *Great Decisions* article, it is. In his book, *Three Faces of Chinese Power*, he says, "Beyond humanitarian considerations

and opportunity costs, the answer is simple – the consequences of failure in China will not remain confined within its borders. If China's leaders cannot effectively deal with their problems, a toxic combination of popular nationalism, domestic frustration, and elite desperation to divert attention from domestic failing, will spill into the international system."

Uncertainty arises when Chinese leadership changes. Deng Xiaoping was adamant about his "peace and development" doctrine and the need for stability, but will future leaders adhere to that belief? The new leaders arriving in 2012 may be less inclined to cooperate with the US; their ranks are filled with younger officials who are suspicious of America. We cannot dismiss the idea of a charismatic figure arising from the ruling elite who could stoke nationalist fires especially in a time of economic or political distress.

Since our meeting in May, China signed a landmark trade agreement with Taiwan, encountered labor unrest at home, and currency challenges abroad. The historic pact, Economic Co-operation Framework Agreement (ECFA), removes tariffs on hundreds of products, and will allow Taiwanese companies to gain access to a number of mainland service sectors, including banking and insurance. Labor unrest in the auto and electronics industries led to strikes and walk-outs at Honda, Foxconn, and other factories. The unpegging of the renminbi (Chinese currency) to the US dollar along with a gradual revaluation was announced in mid-June. This could make Chinese exports less competitive abroad and encourage local officials and mainland companies to ignore laws in order to ensure that labor costs stay low. Workers are becoming aware of their rights and the laws protecting them through information in the media, the Internet and social networks. This new awareness makes it difficult for an authoritarian regime to manage by fiat. Chinese leadership knows that it cannot manage in the old way. "Everything changes, nothing remains without change" (*Heart of a Buddha*).

The world and China will continue to look very carefully at each other. – JoDee Wilfong



## Recycling Awards

### 2009-2010 School Year

**Melbourne High School Students** under direction of Mr. Ethan Hall.

**Hoover Middle School Students** under direction of Mrs. Frisbee

**St. Teresa's School Elementary School Students** under direction of Mrs. Hartos.

**Honorable Mention to Pinewood Elementary-**  
Mrs. Snyder & Lockmar Elementary – Mrs. Dinger



Our featured members for September are Barbara and Jerry Jagrowski. They met when Jerry was at West Point. He served in the Air Force for 30 years which meant that they found home in many locations through those years. The family lived in Denmark and Spain along with several locations in the United States. After leaving the Air Force, Jerry accepted a job with Harris and the Jagrowskis became Florida residents.

Barbara joined Space Coast League of Women Voters in 1989 and soon after becoming a member she was asked to join the board where she served as membership chairman. She served as president from 1995 to 1999 and then became a board member of Florida League of Women Voters in membership helping to develop and implement ideas for growth of Leagues in the state. She also served as Vice President at the state level for four years.

While serving at the state level she continued to be active in the local League as Finance Chairman from 1995 to 2010. She served a second term as President from 2007-2009 for the Space Coast League. She has also been active on other committees.

Through the years, Jerry has been very supportive of Barbara's work but at the same time he was very involved. He started a program in the schools for recycling that still exists today. This program is in partnership with Brevard County School District and Brevard County solid Waste Management Department.

Each school is invited to participate in this program and schools receive \$25 for participating and then awards for results of recycling are given at the end of the school year. The monetary awards are for each school to spend as they choose. Awards for the past school year are found on Page 5.

Barbara has been very active in "We The People." A more detailed article on this program will be in the October Voter.

Thanks to the Jagrowskis for all of their involvement in League of Women Voter's activities.



## Information

1. 2010-2011 new membership books are being mailed the last part of August.
2. The newest members in our Membership Book are Joanne Corby, Patricia Huggins, Alison White and Andra Zahm.

3. Thanks to Smitty Hooper for her donation to our 2010 fund raiser.

### Leaders Council 2010

Marilynn Collins, Ruth Schechter, Brigitte Sinton, and Lucia Watson represented Space Coast League at the 2010 Council of Leaders on May 21-22 at Rollins College in Winter Park.

Council is held in alternate years with the Florida League convention. It is an opportunity to meet members of other State Leagues and learn about what they are doing in their communities.

A top priority of the Florida League at this time is to educate the public on the importance of voting "YES" on Amendments 5 and 6 on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. These amendments are citizen initiated amendments with real mandatory and enforceable standards for redistricting at the legislative and congressional level.



### Book Review by Ruth E., Almeida

Toobin, Jeffrey. THE NINE: INSIDE THE SECRET WORLD OF THE SUPREME COURT. 2007, 369 pages.

The Supreme Court's role as guarantor of constitutional rights and liberties has been defined more by continuity than by change. Is that philosophy of judicial precedent (*stare decises*) still relevant?

This is a key issue addressed by Toobin's book profiling the Rehnquist Court (1986-2005). The author focuses on the eleven year period from 1994-2005 which was the longest serving Supreme Court (11 years) with the SAME NINE justices.

Toobin chronicles the personalities of the court, their legal philosophies and the politics that often shaped their judgments and their votes. He traces the development of conservative legal activism back to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980.

After Reagan's election, "right-minded factions" in elite law schools and conservative legal groups such as the Federalist Society began to build a majority. They were aided by Evangelical churches and the White House. This shift from liberal to conservative social and legal philosophies began to infect government and society as a whole.

Toobin identifies five goals of the conservative agenda:

1. Reverse Roe v. Wade thus allowing states to ban abortions.
2. End racial preference (affirmative action)
3. Expand power in the Executive Branch.
4. Speed executions.
5. Welcome religion into the public sphere.

(continued on Page 7)

*(Book Review continued from page 6)*

To achieve these goals, conservatives pledged to elect a president who would advance their agenda. With the active participation of the Supreme Court in 2000, they did just that. Toobin devotes 36 pages to the Bush v. Gore decision and the ramifications on the Court and the Nation.

The conservative revolution on the Court reached its peak with the exit of the “swing” justice, Sandra Day O’Connor and the nomination of Roberts and Alito to the Court. In the Robert’s Court in 2006 and 2007, 33% of the cases were determined by 5 to 4 decisions. In 2007, only 25% of the decisions were unanimous – the lowest in the Court’s recent history.

Toobin best expresses the future for the Court in his own words...“What matters is not the quality of the arguments but the identity of the justices...one fact only – will determine the future of the Supreme Court: the outcome of presidential elections...The court is a product of democracy and represents the best and worst of people...We can expect nothing less than the court we deserve.”

Postscript: For those who enjoy reading about the Supreme Court, you may want to try THE BRETHREN (1979, 467 p.) by Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong. This covers the Berger Court from 1969-1986. It is a “spicier” tale of the inner workings of the Court, the “horse-trading” for votes and the strengths and weaknesses of the Justices. He, too, covers the politics behind the selection of the justices, their personal and political philosophies and the ramifications on the Court’s decisions. The outcome is reflected in the laws which govern us all.

**Photos of League Members**



Molly & Richard Tasker



Fern Patton & Smitty Hooper



Katherine Kowalski & Mary Nicolay



JoDee Wilfong



Connie Hogerty & Barbara Conkle

**Calendar for September 2010**

**~Members Welcome at All Meetings~**

- Sept. 2, Thursday Board meeting at home of Ruth Schechter – Satellite Beach – 10:00 a.m.
- Sept. 13, Monday Children’s Committee Suntree Library at 1:30 p.m.
- Sept. 14, Tuesday International Relations Meeting at Home of Mary Nicolay, Melbourne Village - directions to her home on Page 3
- Sept. 29, Wednesday Forum on Amendment 4 in Commission Chambers, Viera 7 – 9 p.m.

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