



Aug/Sep 2009

"When I, as a map-maker, have more of an impact on an election than the voters, the system is out of whack."

David H. Winston

Washington DC Political and Policy Consultant

Celebrate the 89th anniversary of Women's suffrage!



See Page 2 sidebar for local events.

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.

Message from the President

Our last Voter featured a special section on the proposed Fair Districts amendments, and this issue's lead quote succinctly illustrates why they are so important. Without Fair Districts, gerrymandering rules – and our cherished "one man, one vote" principle is compromised.

I'm pleased to report that over 1.5 million signatures have already been gathered to ensure Floridians will have the opportunity to vote on Fair Districts in 2010. If you haven't signed the petitions yet, you'll have a chance to do so at next month's general meeting (details below).

We are already gearing up for 2010 elections, beginning on page 3 with the first of a series covering the Pros and Cons of proposed amendments to Florida's Constitution. Each issue will showcase a different amendment to help you make informed decisions.

In the meantime, happy Women's Equality Day! See this issue's special insert to learn all about the day and the history it commemorates. When you vote, remember: it's thanks to the Suffragists!

Mary Blackwell

September "Back to League" Meeting on Fair Districts

Are you confused about the Fair Districts Florida amendments? Well here is your chance to learn all about them and how Okaloosa County is affected by redistricting.

We'll have maps to illustrate the results of partisan redistricting in our county as well as the rest of the state, and guest speaker Dr. Alfred G. Cuzán, Professor and Chairman

of UWF Department of Government, will address the current process and how it would change if Florida voters approve the amendments.

Please join us from 10:00-12:00 on Saturday, September 26th, at Shalimar Town Hall, #2 Cherokee Road, Shalimar. The meeting is free and open to the public. Coffee will be served.

Attention Members: LWV is US!

The September 30th deadline for nominations for the 2010-2012 **LWVUS** Board and Nominating Committee is fast approaching. If someone in our League would be an outstanding candidate, it's up to you to nominate that person – or urge him or her to self-nominate.

Despite what the name implies, the LWVUS Nominating Committee *doesn't nominate anyone*. They rely completely on strong League member participation to provide a large

pool of nominees to build the 2010-2012 slate. No matter how well qualified, a person who isn't nominated won't be in the running. League needs members like **you** tell the committee about the leaders you admire.

Go to the *For Members* area at www.lwv.org and click on the *Call for Nominations* box on the right side of the page. Submit your nominations by September 30th.

Remember: **LWV is US!**

Local Women's Equality Day Events

2009 Women's Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held on August 26th at 6:00 p.m. at the Niceville Community Center.

Eglin Women's Equality Day Expo will take place from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM August 26th at the main BX entrance. Representatives from the Census Bureau, League of Women Voters and local charities will set up booths and provide information to the public. There will be a collection zone for clothing donations to Shelter House, as well as a Blood Drive van on site.

Eglin Equality Day Class will be held from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM August 26th in Bldg. 228, Room 121-classroom. Registration is open to all military and civilian base employees on A-3 at afkm.wpafb.af.mil.

Women's Equality Day 5K run/walk will be held on Hurlburt Field at the Commando Fitness Center August 27th at 7:30 AM. All DoD cardholders and their family members are invited to participate. Contact TSgt Brenneise at 884-6062 for information.

Links for More Info on Women's Equality Day:

The National Women's Party Digital Collection at <http://www.nwpcollection.org>

The National Women's History Project at <http://www.nwhp.org>

Library of Congress Suffrage Photo Archives at <http://memory.loc.gov/amme/vfwhtml/vfwhome.html>

Redistricting Conference Releases "Principles"

On 22-24 July in Pocantico NY, the League joined with the Campaign Legal Center to convene a group of leaders and activists from the reform community and examine possible redistricting strategies and tactics for 2011 and beyond. Palm Beach County member Corinne Miller represented Florida.

Meeting participants approved three Essential Principles for redistricting:

- An accurate and complete count in Census 2010 is an essential building block for all redistricting efforts.
- The process used for redistricting must be transparent to the public.
- The redistricting process, at all levels of government, must provide data, tools and opportuni-

Census 2010: Update

Our Constitution mandates a count of everyone living in the United States every 10 years. Federal law requires participation in this decennial census, because all citizens are affected by the outcome.

At the national level census data are used to distribute Congressional seats to states, make decisions about what community services to provide, and distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year. At the state level census data are used for various economic and political purposes, including state legislative and congressional redistricting and distribution of services.

The Okaloosa League will showcase the 2010 Census in conjunction with the League's 90th anniversary celebration next February. LWVUS believes Local League members can play a crucial leadership role by building awareness of the 2010 Census and its importance.

To help members get involved, LWVUS is offering a training

ties for the public to have direct input into the specific plans under consideration by the redistricting body.

To achieve representative democracy, redistricting plans must be drawn in a manner that allows elected bodies to reflect the diversity of the populace, especially racial and ethnic diversity. LWVUS will be working with state Leagues to develop a plan for forming important partnerships, and strategies to positively impact redistricting efforts in individual states.

Work we do now to encourage an accurate and complete Census 2010 count will be a key element in our advocacy for Fair Districts Florida amendment approval. (See next article.)

conference call for all those interested in doing this important work. The training will be held at 2:30 PM on September 10th, and will feature speakers from the National Census Bureau.

For more information on how to join the conference call, contact Sergio España (SEspana@lwv.org). Get more Census 2010 info at:

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>

<http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/fgils/census.html>

Attention Members: It's Time to Renew!

Your membership renewal invoice will arrive in the mail soon. *Please don't put it aside!* We are counting on you to renew promptly so we can continue League operations.

Remember: Okaloosa still has the lowest Per Member Payment in Florida, despite increases at state and national level.

Celebrate Women's Equality Day August 26th

At the behest of Representative Bella Abzug (DNY), in 1971 the U.S. Congress designated August 26th as "Women's Equality Day."

The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 signing of the **19th Amendment** to the **Constitution**, which granted women the right to vote.

This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

The Woman Suffrage Movement 1848 - 1920

August 26, 2009, marks the 89th anniversary of the Woman Suffrage Movement's great victory, ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This courageous political campaign, which spanned 72 years, was carried out by tens of thousands of persistent women and men. The significance of the woman suffrage campaign and its enormous political and social impact has been largely ignored in the telling of American history. It is a story that needs to be told. It is a story of women creating one of the most remarkable and successful nonviolent civil rights efforts the world has ever seen. It is all the more remarkable when one considers the barriers the suffragists had to overcome.

With little financial, legal or political power of their own, and working against a well financed and entrenched opposition, women fought for their rights of citizenship, the right to vote. When they first organized to gain political power, women were a virtually powerless, disenfranchised class. Yet without firing a shot, throwing a rock, or issuing a personal threat, women won for themselves the kind of political power that revolutionaries elsewhere have launched violent rebellions to achieve.

To win the right to vote, women circulated countless suffrage petitions and gave speeches in churches, convention halls, meetinghouses and on street corners. They published newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines. They were frequently harassed and sometimes attacked by mobs and police. Some women were thrown in jail, and when they protested the injustice they were treated brutally. Still they persevered. Finally, on August 26, 1920, their goal was achieved. Women had won the right to vote and to hold elective office.



Carrie Chapman Catt, the last president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, reported that suffragists had undertaken:

"Fifty-six campaigns of referenda to mail voters; 480 campaigns to get Legislatures to submit suffrage amendments to voters; 47 campaigns to get state constitutional conventions to write woman suffrage into state constitutions; 277 campaigns to get state party conventions to include woman suffrage planks; 30 campaigns to get presidential party conventions to adopt woman suffrage planks in party platforms; and 19 campaigns with 19 successive Congresses...It was a continuous, seemingly endless, chain of activity."

Young suffragists who helped forge the last links of that chain were not born when it began. Old suffragists who forged the first links were dead when it ended."

The American Woman Suffrage Movement stands as a lasting affirmation of our country's democratic promise for it re-emphasizes the importance of the most fundamental democratic values: the right to vote, and the possibility of peaceful yet revolutionary political change.

Suffragists You Should Know

Lucy Stone (1818-1893) An eloquent speaker, founder of the American woman Suffrage Association and leading spirit in New England, Stone published and edited the influential weekly, *The Woman's Journal*, for 21 years.

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) Symbol of the suffrage movement, Anthony was a strategist with sharp political instincts, the driving force behind the National Woman Suffrage Association, and single minded champion of a federal amendment.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) Brilliant women's rights leader and forceful writer, Stanton authored the 1848 "Declaration of Sentiments" declaring "all men and women are created equal." She and Anthony were political partners for 50 years.

Sojourner Truth (c.1797-1883) born into slavery, Isabella Van Wagener changed her name in 1843 and began preaching against slavery and for women's rights. She is best remembered for her dramatic "Ain't I a Woman?" speech at the 1851 Woman's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio

Carrie Chapman Catt (1859-1947) With Anthony, Catt reorganized the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1890, and then unified the movement in 1916 with her secret "Winning Plan." Catt called for the formation of a League of Women Voters in 1919.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862-1931) Wells-Barnett founded the first suffrage club of African-American women, the Alpha Suffrage Club of Chicago. She marched in the 1913 Washington, D.C. parade and led a contingent of Black suffragists in the famous 1916 Chicago parade.

Alice Paul (1885-1977) Chief strategist of the militant wing, Paul founded the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage and the National Woman's Party. Organizer of the White House pickets in 1917, she was jailed three times and force-fed. Paul authored the Equal Rights Amendment.

Nina Otero-Warren (1881-1965) Her fluency in Spanish and English persuaded women in New Mexico to become suffrage activists through the militant Congressional Union, of which she was the advisory council's vice president.



***The National Women's History Project:
Our mission is to recognize and celebrate the diverse
and historic accomplishments of women.***

This information is provided courtesy of the National Women's History Project. Visit the website at www.nwhp.org for information about a vast array of topics related to women's history. For specific information related to the Women's Rights Movement, visit the Information section of the website, where you will find detailed information about the Women's Rights Movement and other fascinating subjects.

The NWHP publishes a Women's History Resource Catalog filled with engaging, multicultural posters, books, videos and classroom materials for all ages. You'll find information about hundreds of women from all walks of life who have helped shape our nation.

National Women's History Project

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Proposed Constitutional Amendments for 2010

To date, four proposed amendments to the state Constitution have been approved for the 2010 ballot. These include: Repeal of public financing requirement; Tax break for deployed military personnel; Property tax limit for non-homestead property and added exemption for new homestead owners; and Florida Hometown Democracy. To help you make an informed decision, this is the first in a series of articles outlining the Pros and Cons of each proposed amendment.

Amendment 4 Title: Referenda Required For Adoption And Amendment Of Local Government Comprehensive Land Use Plans (aka "Florida Hometown Democracy")

Ballot Summary: Establishes that before a local government may adopt a new comprehensive land use plan, or amend a comprehensive land use plan, the proposed plan or amendment shall be subject to vote of the electors of the local government by referendum, following preparation by the local planning agency, consideration by the governing body and notice. Provides definitions.

PRO

FHD requires a citizen referendum on all Comprehensive Land Use Plans changes approved by local governments. This increased voter oversight will:

- Eliminate loopholes to Florida's Growth Management Act and protect communities from sprawl and over-development.
- Reduce the number of proposed plan amendments, because developers will be more conservative and careful about proposing changes.
- Increase citizen involvement by giving Florida voters the right to decide whether and how to amend their Comprehensive Plans.

- Preserve communities by ensuring Comprehensive Plan changes truly reflect the concerns of the voters.

HRB proponents claim no special elections and no extra costs would be incurred, because each comprehensive plan amendment would be listed as a referendum item in the next regular election.

CON:

- Disruption & Cost. The referendum required for every proposed comprehensive plan change would strangle the amendment process and burden communities with the time and expense of holding additional elections.

- High-Priced Media Campaigns. Debates on controversial comprehensive plan amendments would favor deep pocket large developers over homeowner associations and grassroots groups.

- Unintended Consequences. FHD will not eliminate development, but will make well-planned, smarter growth impossible, instead encouraging piecemeal decisions – driven by popularity rather than necessity – as well as developmental sprawl.

- NIMBYism. Local governments would find it much more difficult to adopt amendments related to often controversial but much needed community projects, resulting in more costly or less desirable alternatives.

- Legislative Backlash. To avoid legal challenges, the Florida Legislature could change the plan amendment process, reduce the ability of citizens to challenge plan amendments, or undertake other alternatives that would render Florida Hometown Democracy – and Florida's growth management process – moot.

For the latest developments, go to <http://www.flamendments.com/>.

Make Your Voice Heard

The League has been on the front lines on these issues. Join in to make your voice heard.

Health Care: Let your representatives know your views. Visit the League's main health care page at http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Health_Care1 to learn more.

Climate Change: LWVUS recently sent a letter to members of both houses urging reform. To learn more, click on the "Take Action" dropdown menu at <http://www.lwv.org>.

Campaign Finance: The League filed an *amicus* brief with the Supreme Court for *Citizens United v. the FEC*, a case concerning the role of corporate wealth in candidate elections. The League brief puts the case in historical context and calls attention to the potential corrupting effects on American democracy if the Court were to overturn existing federal and state limits on corporate expenditures in candidate elections.

To contact your Senators and Representative by phone or mail, go to <http://capwiz.com/lwv/directory/congdir.tt> and enter your zip code to get their contact info, including locations of their offices.

You can receive Action Alerts or the League's e-Voice directly. Sign up at <https://member.lwv.org/Subscribe.asp>. Don't miss an opportunity to take action and get educated on the issues! It's easy to sign up and the League will never share your email address.



The Okaloosa Voter
*League of Women Voters of Okaloosa
 County*
 P.O. Box 4546
 Fort Walton Beach FL 32549

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 37
Ft Walton Beach FL 32548

☆☆Return Service Requested☆☆

☆☆☆☆ Back to League on September 26th in Shalimar ☆☆☆☆



**Members: Your
 renewal notice is
 coming soon!**

Yes, sign me up for League!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

[League will never share your contact information with anyone else.]

- \$100.00 \$44.90 \$22.45 Add'l \$22.45
 Susan B. Anthony Individual Family Member Student

Please make your check payable to LWVOC and mail to Carol Davis, Treasurer,
 524 Dorado Drive, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548.

Please check activities of interest to you:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Voter Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Action | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Observe Gov't Meetings |

**Make
 Democracy
 Work!**

**Join the League.
 Be a Voice
 for Citizens and
 a Force for
 Progress!**



**Men can join
 League, too!**