



# The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF THE PENSACOLA BAY AREA

Volume 59, Issue 2  
September 2009

## Domestic Violence in Escambia County

by Dr. Paula Montgomery, chair 438-8891

Saturday, September 19, 2009

9:00 am coffee, 9:30 am program

First Presbyterian Noonan Center

**Panel:** Nancy Newland, PJC Police Chief  
David Morgan, Escambia County Sheriff  
Susan Faris, Prosecuting Attorney  
Sadiqa Ali, National Coalition of Black Women

**D**omestic violence will be the topic of discussion at the September general meeting of the League. The Social Policy Committee is continuing its investigation of the problems and impacts of domestic violence and has invited a panel of professionals to provide expertise on the topic.



Police Chief Nancy Newland from Pensacola Junior College, will present the history, statistics and continuing needs associated with domestic violence in Escambia County. Sheriff David Morgan will explain how his department handles domestic violence incidents from the time the call comes in, how it is

recorded, who responds, what training is required of the responders, what records are kept and usual outcomes. Attorney Susan Faris will discuss how she selects cases to prosecute, what happens in court and usual outcomes. Sadiqa Ali, local chapter president of the National Coalition of Black Women, will describe and report on their TRIO Project, a local grassroots prevention program for girls and women.

At the 1985 LWVF Convention, the League, by concurrence, adopted a position in support of governmental efforts to counter intra-family abuse. In 1994, the League adopted its position on violence prevention. It was based on work done by a number of state and local Leagues. That same year the League endorsed the Violence Against Women Act, which passed Congress and was signed by the President as part of a comprehensive crime bill.

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports violence prevention programs in all communities and action to support:

- public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize the primary prevention of violence.
- the active role of government and social institutions in preventing violent behavior.
- the allocation of public monies in government programs to prevent violence.



## Common Cents

"Common Cents", a workshop sponsored by the Coalition for Fair and Comprehensive Tax Reform, will provide information about Florida's Tax Structure.

- ✓ What is the state of our State?
- ✓ Who pays for services in Florida?
- ✓ Is the system fair?
- ✓ Is Florida providing enough funds to provide the quality of life that all Floridians want and deserve?
- ✓ How can we ensure that the federal stimulus dollars actually reach communities, and what must the Florida Legislature do to replace the funds?
- ✓ How does the federal tax structure affect Floridians and the services we receive?
- ✓ How can we be involved in the change we want to see?

Presenters will include: **The Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy** [www.fcfeop.org](http://www.fcfeop.org); Local Service providers; partners from the Coalition

September 24th -- two opportunities to participate

**Morning Session: 9am - 12:30pm**

9 - 9:30 am registration, coffee and Danish

**Seville Quarter, Heritage Hall**

**Evening Session: 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

registration and hors d'oeuvres

from 5:30 - 6 pm

**Seville Quarter, Apple Annies Room**

For more information and reservations, contact Vivian Faircloth, 438-5539 or [vfaircloth@iname.com](mailto:vfaircloth@iname.com)

**Mark your calendar for  
Charter Review  
October 17th**

## President's Journal

Hi All,

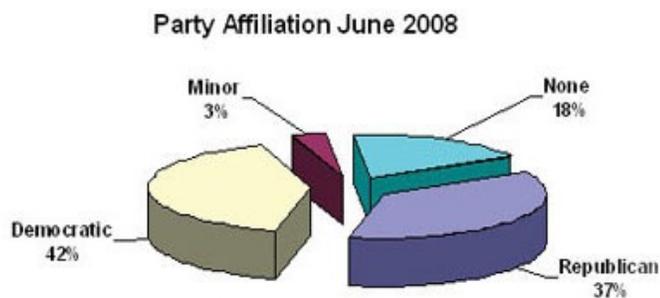
As Summer draws to a (hopefully cooler) close, we're kicking off our Fall meeting season with this month's Domestic Violence presentation. The Social Policy Committee has put together a panel to explore a host of related issues that are of ongoing concern in our local communities. The Committee has been working on this topic for the past year, and it's sure to be a lively and interesting discussion. Please join us for refreshments and the presentation on Saturday, September 19.

We continue to monitor the Charter rewrite process for the City of Pensacola. As you may know, the League has a special interest in Charter review, because it was our concern about the Maritime Park referendum process that spurred the Charter review initiative in the beginning.

It's looking like the Charter may be approved and go to voters by December. There are several concerns the League has expressed regarding the document. To ensure our members and the public are informed before going to the ballot box, we will plan to hold a program meeting on the proposed Charter in coming weeks.

On a broader front, LWVF is actively involved in Fair Districts Florida, the coalition to reform our messy and biased elections districting process. Currently, Florida suffers from an epidemic of gerrymandering that shows no sign of abating. You will recall that after each 10 year census, legislative districts are redrawn for both state and federal elections.

Districts shaped along artificial political lines, rather than geographical and natural population boundaries, often don't reflect legitimate voter distribution patterns. Unfortunately, it seems political parties tend to be most enthusiastic about making sure districts are drawn fairly, when they're not in power. As a result, we've seen little progress from Tallahassee toward reforming the districting



process. Fair Districts Florida has stepped in with a plan to restore fairness and competition to legislative and congressional elections. The organization is working to place amendments on the 2010 ballot to change how Florida allocates political districts.

From their website: "These amendments would establish fairness standards for use in creating legislative and congressional district boundaries. While protecting minority voting rights, the standards would prohibit drawing district lines to favor or disfavor any incumbent or political party. Districts would have to be compact and utilize existing political and geographical boundaries. In other words, natural competitiveness and fairness would be required."

Fair Districts Florida needed nearly 676,811 petition signatures to qualify for the ballot, and has collected more than 1 million. The coalition is currently seeking donations to pay for the 10-cent fee per signature required to verify the petitions. Fair Districts Florida will hold a one-day website drive on September 9 to solicit donations from members and the public. As a local League, let's make a concerted effort to donate as much money as we can in our ongoing efforts to make state government fair for all of us.

For more information, contact Vivian Faircloth, 438-5539, [vfaircloth@iname.com](mailto:vfaircloth@iname.com), or to make a donation, visit their website at [www.fairdistrictsflorida.org](http://www.fairdistrictsflorida.org).

If you wish to donate, but do not wish to do so on line, please mail donations to:

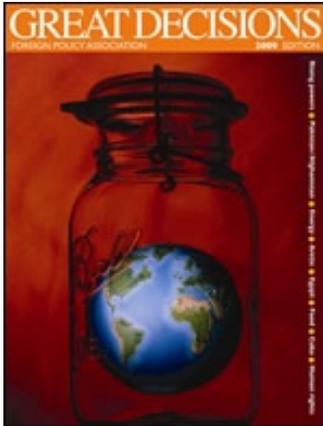
FairDistrictsFlorida.org  
2665 South Bayshore Drive  
Suite M-103  
Miami, FL 33133

Deborah, 449-1746



**Sharon Barnett has been appointed as the League representative to the Escambia County Consolidation Study Commission.**

The group of appointees is studying the pros and cons of unifying the governments of Escambia County, including the City of Pensacola, Century and the County. The next meeting of the commission is Tuesday, September 8 at 5:30 p.m. at the J.E. Hall Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola. The Commission is expected to continue discussions of major questions of consolidation, including the possible drafting of preliminary legislation as well as consideration of reports of sub-committees and special advisory committees. The group plans to conduct a public forum on consolidation. Visit the commission website, <http://eccsc.org/> to keep informed of their progress.



## Great Decisions 2009 Kickoff

by Gene Feicht, 479-3352

The kickoff of Great Decisions 2009 will begin on Tuesday, September 15, at 10:00 am, in the Azalea Trace auditorium. Once again, the International Relations Committee of our League is coordinating this program.

Published annually by the Foreign Policy Association, the Great Decisions briefing book features impartial, thought-provoking analyses on eight issues of concern to U.S. policymakers today. The 2009 edition features articles on U.S. and rising powers, Afghanistan/Pakistan, Energy & the global economy, The Arctic, Egypt in the 21st Century, Global food supply, Cuba after Castro, and Universal human rights.

Great Decisions, the centerpiece of the longest-running civic education program in the United States devoted to foreign affairs, empowers readers to discuss global issues shaping U.S. foreign policy and the world. The briefing book provides historical background, current U.S. policy and alternative policy options, informative maps and detailed graphs, suggested readings and resources, as well as opinion ballots for each topic.

The focus of the September program will be Egypt in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Egypt has long played an important role in the Arab world, while maintaining a strategic relationship with the U.S.. With elections scheduled for 2009, how will Egypt deal with serious domestic issues, ranging from Islamic radicalism to food shortages? What factors will influence the path of this regional heavyweight? Gene Feicht will lead the discussion of these and other questions. For more information contact her at 479-3352 or [gfl@students.wf.edu](mailto:gfl@students.wf.edu).

## LWVUS Issues Statement of Essential Principles on Redistricting

Supported by a diverse set of community leaders and activists at the Pocantico Redistricting Conference late last month, the League explored ways that the public can best participate in the redistricting process in 2011 and beyond, and issued [Four Essential Principles on Redistricting](#).

1. An accurate and complete count in Census 2010 is an essential building block for all redistricting efforts.

2. The process used for redistricting must be transparent to the public.

3. The redistricting process, at all levels of government, must provide data, tools and opportunities for the public to have direct input into the specific plans under consideration by the redistricting body.

4. In order 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.

## Calendar

### September

- 1 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at Vickery Center. Members are welcome.
- 9 Wednesday, **Donate to FairDistricts Day**, (See President's Journal for details.)
- 15 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace in the auditorium, Gene Feicht will lead the **Great Decisions** discussion on "Egypt: key ally in the middle east." Contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 for information.
- 15 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Natural Resources Committee**, location TBA. Contact Mary Gutierrez, 458-7944.
- 16 Wednesday, 11:00 am, **Port Study Committee**, Panera Bread Company, 5100 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Contact Dian Parsley, 492-6004 for information.
- 17 Thursday, Celebrate Constitution Day

### General Meeting

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First Presbyterian Noonan Center

### Domestic Violence in Escambia County

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### Workshop: Common Cents

Presenter: *The Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy*

Thursday, September 24th

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9 - 9:30 am registration, coffee and Danish

**Seville Quarter, Heritage Hall**

Evening Session: 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

registration and hors d'oeuvres

from 5:30 - 6 pm

**Seville Quarter, Apple Annies Room**

### October

- 1 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at Tryon Branch Library, 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Members are welcome.
- 20 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace in the auditorium, Dr. Charles Rogers will lead the **Great Decisions** discussion of The U.S. and Rising Powers.



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For your contributions to the mission of the League

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**It's easy! Just send your check to:**

League of Women Voters, P O Box 2023,  
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(Tax deductible contributions require a separate check written to LWVF Ed Fund which is sent to the treasurer.)

**The Voter**, Volume 59 Issue 2

President: Deborah Nelson, Editor: Vivian Faircloth  
Proofreader: Miriam Jennings, Distribution: Doris Lea

Published by the League of Women Voters of  
Pensacola Bay Area approximately 9 times a year.

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