



VOTER

A monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Polk County, P.O. Box 934, Lakeland, FL 33802

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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.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We do not inherit
the earth from our
ancestors;
We borrow it from
our children."

- Native American
Proverb

Abolish the Electoral College?

New Study: National Popular Vote



Since 1970, the League has supported direct election of the President by popular vote as an essential element of representative government. The League strongly believes that the Electoral College should be abolished and not merely "reformed."

One "reform" which the League specifically rejects is the voting by electors based on proportional representation in lieu of the present "winner-takes-all" method. Such a system would apportion the electoral votes of a state based on the popular vote in that state. Instead of making the Electoral College more representative, such proportional voting would increase the chance that no candidate would receive a majority in the Electoral College, thereby sending the election to the House of Representatives where each state would receive only one vote. This further removes the decision from the people and is contrary to the "one person, one vote" principle.

The League also does not support reform of the Electoral College on a state-by-state basis because the League believes there should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President.

The **National Popular Vote Compact** proposal offers a method of achieving the result of election of the President by popular vote without amending the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College. Instead, this method uses the mechanism of the Electoral College to ensure that the candidate who receives the most popular votes is elected President of the United States.

For more information on this Study, go to www.lwv.org and select *For Members* then *Projects and Programs*.

Information from LWVUS website

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Polk County Election Audit

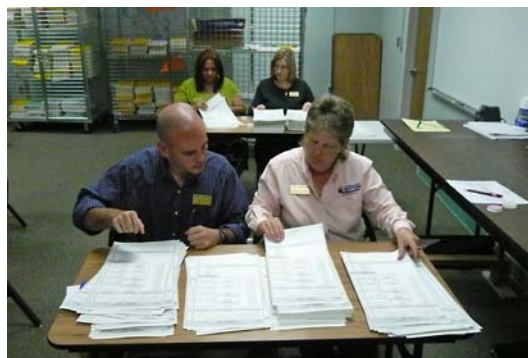
Three volunteers from LWV Polk County served as public observers at the Polk County Post-Election Audit of the General Election. The Audit consisted of two parts: Random Selection (on 11-14) and Ballot Counting (on 11-18). Ann Weeks, Joan Verret and Jerry Weeks attended a training call conducted by the Florida Voters Foundation and completed observation forms to document the process. Their observations will be included in a multi-state, multi-year observation study.



Lori Edwards with the Canvassing Board and her staff



Removing the secured ballots



Separating and counting ballots



Joan Verret observing the ballot counting

LIGHTING THE WAY TO A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

By Eleanor Revelle (LWVIL and LWVUS Climate Change Task Force Member)

It's on every Top Ten list of things-to-do to save energy and help fight global climate change: Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).

The benefits are compelling. CFLs use roughly one-quarter of the electricity of an incandescent bulb to produce the same amount of light. This means savings for consumers through reduced electric bills. And by reducing the demand for electricity, it means less global warming pollution from coal-fired power plants.

About one-third of global warming pollution in the United States is caused by coal plants generating electricity. And lighting accounts for 20 percent of the electricity used. For consumers whose electricity is produced from coal, replacing a single incandescent bulb with a CFL will

keep over half a ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the atmosphere over the life of the bulb.

Is Mercury a Problem?

CFLs do contain a very small amount of mercury—about 5 milligrams, enough to cover the tip of a ballpoint pen. The mercury is safe while the bulb is intact or in use.

Assessing the Impact

Let's compare a 23-watt CFL with an incandescent bulb that produces the same amount of light, namely a 100-watt bulb. Since ENERGY STAR-qualified CFLs last five to ten times longer than incandescent bulbs, this example compares one 23-watt CFL with five 100-watt incandescents, equivalent to the minimum expected lifetime of the one 23-watt CFL.

	1 23-watt CFL	5 100-watt incandescents
Cost of bulbs (Home Depot prices)	\$4.00	\$3.15
Lifespan of bulbs	5,000 hours	5 x 1,000 hours
Electricity used over bulbs' lifetime	115 kWh	500 kWh
Cost of electricity (at 10¢/kWh)	\$11.50	\$50.00
CO ₂ produced	230 lb	1,000 lb
Mercury (electrical generation)	2.6 mg	11.5 mg
Mercury (in the bulb) *	5.0 mg	0

* With proper disposal, the mercury in the CFL will not enter the environment.

Making the Switch

For those who haven't made the switch to CFLs yet or who were unhappy with fluorescent lights in the past, it's time to check out the nearest lighting display.

- CFLs now come in a variety of shapes and sizes—mini-spirals small enough to use in table lamps, sconces and ceiling fixtures; globes for bathroom vanity fixtures; chandelier bulbs; and more.
- CFLs can replace incandescent bulbs in almost any fixture. Some are specifically designed for use with dimmers or in three-way fixtures.
- The amount of light that any bulb will put out is measured in lumens. A 100-watt incandescent bulb will put out

about 1,600 lumens. Replacing that bulb with a 23-watt CFL will also produce 1,600 lumens, but it will require much less power.

- CFLs are available in a range of color temperatures. For a warm (yellowish) light, look for a CFL labeled *soft white*, with a color temperature of 2,700K (degrees Kelvin). CFLs labeled *bright white* and *daylight* will have a cooler (bluish) light and higher Kelvin numbers (e.g., 3,500K or 5,500K).
- Look for ENERGY STAR-qualified bulbs. These have been tested to meet stringent performance criteria; they will use 75 percent less energy than an incandescent bulb and last up to ten times longer.



The League of Women Voters Of Polk County **VOTER**

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***** Happy Holidays ! *****

Next Voter

The next Voter will be published in February 2009.



Redistricting Committee

The Board is looking for members to join a new Committee on Redistricting. The Florida Supreme Court is reviewing two constitutional amendments intended to prevent gerrymandering. If the wording of the amendments is accepted, the next effort is to obtain the necessary signatures to get them on the ballot.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact one of the Board members or, better yet, attend the next Board meeting.

See FairDistrictsFlorida.org for the latest.

Calendar

Monday, December 15: Bill of Rights Day

Thursday, December 25: Christmas

Thursday, January 1: New Year's Day

Monday, January 19: Martin Luther King Jr Day

Tuesday, January 20: Inauguration Day

Tuesday, January 20, noon
LWV Polk County BOARD Meeting
United Way, Highland City
(bag lunch)

February 2009: Youth Voter Month

Saturday, February 14: League Birthday