



May 2009
Volume 09, Issue 2

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WORDS OF WISDOM

"The foundation of every state is the education of its youth."

- Diogenes Laertius

VOTER

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.

ANNUAL MEETING ----- THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF POLK COUNTY



Date: **May 20, 2009**
Speaker: **Lori Edwards**
Supervisor of Elections
Topic: **"Voter participation:
How we compare"**
Time: **11:30 am - Social**
12 noon - Lunch
12:30 pm - Speaker
Place: **My Cottage Garden Tea Room**
325 N. Kentucky Avenue, Lakeland
(Tea Room Reserved for the League)
Cost: **\$25.00** includes tax and tip

Invitations sent out separately: 📞 **RSVP by May 11**

Please call (863) 648-4127 with any questions or for assistance in traveling to the meeting.

Guests and prospective members welcome.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
POLK COUNTY
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LWVUS Urges Congress to Support Strong Health Care Legislation

The League has pointed out to both Senators and Members of the House that the current health care system is endangering both our economy and our health, and voters have made it clear that they want change.

As Congress begins to consider health care reform legislation, the League of Women Voters urges consideration of the following issues.

First, health care reform legislation must guarantee quality, affordable health care to all U.S. residents. The League of Women Voters believes that it is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system. The legislation must include a benefits package that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care, acute care, long-term care, and mental health care. In addition, any health care package must include prescription drug coverage and allow for pre-existing conditions.

Second, it is critical to establish a system-wide program to coordinate information, establish best practices and provide consumers the information they need to protect themselves and their families. It is essential that comparative data on treatments, benefits packages and medical outcomes be made publicly available so that individuals can make informed health decisions and so costs can be controlled.

Third, the federal government needs to take additional strong action to reduce the costs of health care. We must reduce or eliminate the cost-shifting that currently exists in health care financing and work to streamline the system. Legislation must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care.

According to The Washington Post, a recent study reported in The New England Journal of Medicine found that 70 percent of Americans surveyed believe the health care system in this country needs major changes, if not a complete overhaul. The League of Women Voters wants to ensure that the concerns of these citizens are heard.

From LWVUS Website

NOTE: See page 5 for a Report {by Physicians for a National Health Program} on single-payer health reform legislation.

Annual Meeting Materials

Your Annual Meeting materials are included on this page and page 4. **Please bring these materials with you to the Annual Meeting.**

Program

The LWV Polk County Board of Directors recommends retaining all existing local positions and not starting any new studies.

Bylaws

The LWV Polk County Board of Directors recommends one change to the current Bylaws. Please see the next column.

Policy

The LWV Polk County Board of Directors recommends no changes in current Policy.

Proposed Slate of Officers

President	Mary Jo Jarrett
Vice President	Ann Weeks
Secretary	Susan Lee
Treasurer	Paula Mims
Director 2009-10	Sue Schultz
Director 2009-10	Martha Wesley
Director 2009-11	Joan Verret
Director 2009-11	Jerry Weeks

Nominating Committee for 2010: TBD

Pete Wesley, Nominating Chair



Proposed Change To Bylaws

Below is the proposed amendment to Article V, Section 5, of the League of Women Voters of Polk County Bylaws approved by the Board.

~~Strikethroughs~~ are deletions;
Underlines are additions:

ARTICLE V, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Section 5. Meetings. There shall be at least six regular meetings of the board of directors annually. An executive committee consisting of the officers of the board shall meet as necessary to conduct interim business of the board. These meetings may be ~~on-line~~ held in person or by electronic means including but not limited to telephonic conferencing, video conferencing and E-Mail. The president may call special meetings of the board of directors and executive committee and shall call a special meeting upon the request of five members of the board.

Proposed Budget

Fiscal Year: April, 2009 - March 31, 2010

INCOME:	FY 09-10	FY 08-09
1. Dues	2500	2500
2. Contributions	1500	1557
3. Annual Meeting	600	625
4. Voter Sponsor	600	600
5. Website	0	0
6. Education Grant	600	600
Total Income	5,800	5,882



EXPENSES:	FY 09-10	FY 08-09
1. Telephone	625	600
2. Postage	325	350
3. Supplies		
a. Administration	0	0
b. Membership Comm.	25	50
c. Program Comm.	0	0
d. Fund Raising	0	0
e. Tokens of Apprec.	25	25
4. Conferences/Meetings		
a. FL Council	250	250
b. Leg. Seminar	150	280
c. Annual Meeting	385	500
d. Topics Meetings	25	25
5. Printing and Publications		
a. Voter	500	500
b. Elect Guides.	1000	600
c. Membership Dir.	80	35
d. Pub. Purchases	0	0
e. Annual Meet Prog.	120	40
f. Website	100	100
6. Dues		
a. LWVUS PMP	1200	1340
b. LWVF PMP	500	650
c. LWVF Donation	200	250
7. Fees and Licenses		
a. Solicitation License	10	10
b. Bulk Rate Permit	180	175
c. P.O. Box Fee	70	72
d. Miscellaneous	30	30
Total Expenses	5,800	5,882

Mary Thomas, Treasurer

“PHYSICIANS FOR A NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM” REPORT



Challenging head-on the powerful private insurance and pharmaceutical industries, Vermont’s Sen. Bernie Sanders introduced a single-payer health reform bill, the American Health Security Act of 2009, S. 703, in the U.S. Senate Wednesday. The bill is the first to directly take on the powerful lobbies blocking universal health reform in the Senate since Sen. Paul Wellstone’s tragic death.

The single-payer approach embodied in Sanders’ new bill stands in sharp contrast to the reform models being offered by the White House and by key lawmakers like Senators Max Baucus (D) and Edward Kennedy (D). Their plans would preserve a central role for the private insurance industry, sacrificing both universal coverage and cost containment during the worst economic crisis since the Depression.

In contrast, Sanders’ new legislation would cover all of the 46 million Americans who currently lack coverage and improve benefits for all Americans by eliminating co-pays and deductibles and restoring free choice of physician. The most fiscally conservative option for reform, single payer slashes private insurance overhead and bureaucracy in medical settings, saving over \$400 billion annually that can be redirected into clinical care.

“This is excellent news for the nation’s health,” said Dr. Quentin Young, national coordinator of Physicians for a National Health Program and a past president of the American Public Health Association. “There is now an affordable cure for our dysfunctional health care system. In the face of our present economic calamity, this is an urgent necessity.”

Highlights of the bill include the following:

- ◆ Patients go to any doctor or hospital of their choice.
- ◆ The program is paid for by combining current sources of government health spending into a single fund with modest new taxes amounting to less than what people now pay for insurance premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.
- ◆ Comprehensive benefits, including for dental, mental health and prescription drugs.

- ◆ While federally funded, the program is to be administered by the states.
- ◆ By eliminating the high overhead and profits of the private, investor-owned insurance industry, along with the burdensome paperwork imposed on physicians, hospitals and other providers, the plan saves at least \$400 billion annually - enough money to provide comprehensive, quality care to all.
- ◆ Community health centers are fully funded, giving the 60 million Americans now living in rural and underserved areas access to care.
- ◆ To address the critical shortage of primary care physicians and dentists, the bill provides resources for the National Health Service Corps to train an additional 24,000 health professionals.

“We are confident that Sen. Sanders’ bill will accelerate the national drive for the only reform that we know will work,” Young said. “A majority of physicians endorse such an approach. Fifty-nine percent of US physicians support national health insurance. Two-thirds of the public also supports such a remedy. We remember well that President Obama once acknowledged that single-payer national health insurance was the best way to go. It still is.”

Sanders, who serves on the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, is a longtime advocate of fundamental health care reform. His new bill draws heavily upon the single-payer legislation introduced by the late Sen. Paul Wellstone (D) in 1993, S. 491, and closely parallels similar legislation pending before the House, H.R. 1200, introduced by Rep. Jim McDermott (D).

A single-payer bill introduced by Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D), H.R. 676, obtained 93 co-sponsors in the House during the last session. It has been reintroduced in the new Congress as the U.S. National Health Care Act.

PNHP, a membership organization of over 16,000 physicians, supports a single-payer national health insurance program. See www.pnhp.com.

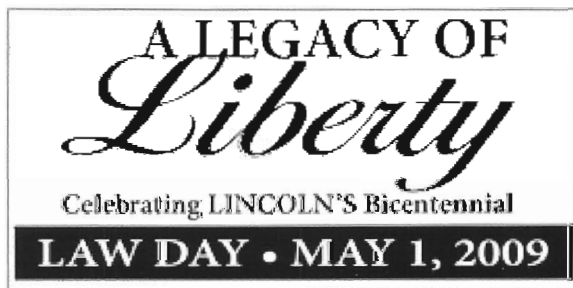
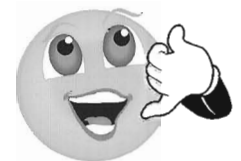


The League of Women Voters Of Polk County **VOTER**

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***** LWV Polk County Annual Meeting - May 20 *****



2009 marks the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, regarded by many as our nation's greatest and most eloquent president. Lincoln, who devoted much of his adult life to the practice of law, was the quintessential American lawyer-president. His background in the law informed both his actions and his oratory.

For Law Day 2009, we encourage efforts nationwide to commemorate Lincoln by exploring this rich and resonant theme - **A Legacy of Liberty.**

For more information: www.lawday.org

Calendar

Friday, May 1: Legislative Session ends
National **Law Day**

Sunday, May 10: **Mother's Day**

Monday, May 11: Reservation deadline for
Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 20, 11:30 am
Annual Membership Meeting
My Cottage Garden, 325 N Kentucky Ave,
Lakeland (see page 1)

LWV Polk County BOARD Meeting
Immediately after Annual Meeting

Monday, May 25: **Memorial Day**

Sunday, June 21: **Father's Day**