



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

PO Box 934, Lakeland, FL 33802  
863-683-2328  
www.lwvpolk.org

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The League of Women Voters of Polk County



# VOTER

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\*\*\* Attend Events - October 3 & 26 \*\*\*

October 2009  
Volume 09, Issue 7

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

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.

## October Big Events !!

PANEL DISCUSSION ON HEALTH CARE: VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES	THE STATUS OF EDUCATION IN THE POLK SCHOOL SYSTEM
Day: Sat, October 3	Mon, October 26
Time: 10 am - Noon	5:30 - 7:30 pm
Place: Lake Morton Library, 100 Lake Morton Dr, Lakeland	Bartow Library, 2150 South Broadway, Bartow

## President's Message

We have a month of great programs planned to increase your understanding of major public policy issues.

I am excited about the individuals who have chosen to share their experiences and perspectives on **health care** as it affects their professional area of expertise. What a great slate of speakers has been put together for this panel. We appreciate and want to thank Joan Verret for her tireless persistence on assembling this fine panel...and a special thanks to our four volunteer speakers: Libby Devlin, Marilyn Wood, Paul Hines, and Dr. Gregory White. We appreciate your service to the community.

If you haven't had an opportunity before to hear Superintendent Dr. Gail McKinzie talk about the Polk County District Schools--their challenges and successes--please be sure to mark your calendar to attend. There is always something new developing in education. I am looking forward to this opportunity and don't intend to miss it.

I want to ask you to bring a friend with you to the events. It's a good way for them to get to know our membership and get involved in our non-partisan activities.. and learn that the League is for both men and women.

Remember the deadline for signing petitions for the Fair Districts Florida is Nov. 1, 2009 for the fall 2010 election.

Mary Jo Jarrett

## Redistricting Update

Fair Districts Florida reports that over 1.4 million signatures have been collected out of the 1.6 million goal.

With the State of Florida requiring a \$0.10 processing fee for each signature, Fair Districts Florida has been raising donations.

On September 9, Floridians from all over the state - **802 of them** - answered the call to donate for fair districts and raised **\$61,850.11!** This was one of the largest online fundraisers in Florida history.

Beyond the newspaper endorsements and the 1.4 million signatures collected, this outpouring of support truly represents the enormous grassroots support [FairDistrictsFlorida.org](http://FairDistrictsFlorida.org) has enjoyed so far.

## Calendar

Saturday, October 3, 10:00 am  
Panel Discussion on Health Care:  
Various Perspectives  
Lake Morton Library, Lakeland

Tuesday, October 6, 1:00 pm  
LWV Polk County BOARD Meeting  
United Way, Highland City  
(bag lunch)

Monday, October 12: Columbus Day

Monday, October 26, 5:30 pm  
Superintendent of Schools:  
Status of Education in Polk County  
Bartow Public Library, Bartow

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Wednesday, November 11: Veterans Day

Thursday, November 26: Thanksgiving

### This Issue

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## Wellness Quote For the Day

"It is a wise man's part, rather to avoid sickness, than to wish for medicines."

~Thomas More, *Utopia*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
POLK COUNTY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Mary Jo Jarrett, President  
644-8527  
[president@lwvpolk.org](mailto:president@lwvpolk.org)

Ann Weeks, Vice President  
648-4127  
[vice-resident@lwvpolk.org](mailto:vice-resident@lwvpolk.org)

Susan Lee, Secretary  
324-4517  
[secretary@lwvpolk.org](mailto:secretary@lwvpolk.org)

Mary Thomas, Treasurer  
859-7560  
[treasurer@lwvpolk.org](mailto:treasurer@lwvpolk.org)

Sue Schultz, Voter Service—  
Elections  
646-4634  
[voterservice@lwvpolk.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvpolk.org)

Paula Mims  
686-0356  
[pmmims@aol.com](mailto:pmmims@aol.com)

Joan Verret  
682-7724  
[JoanClaireV@aol.com](mailto:JoanClaireV@aol.com)

Jerry Weeks  
648-4127  
[2weeks@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:2weeks@tampabay.rr.com)

Pete Wesley  
682-2578  
[mjohndandpete@aol.com](mailto:mjohndandpete@aol.com)

Jessie Thrasher  
868-5870  
[Jt331@aol.com](mailto:Jt331@aol.com)

**Off-Board Specialists:**

Membership, Joan Verret, retaining  
682-7724, [JoanClaireV@aol.com](mailto:JoanClaireV@aol.com)  
and Ann Weeks, recording  
[membership@lwvpolk.org](mailto:membership@lwvpolk.org)

Judy Walker, Voter Service—Guide  
299-9285  
[judywalker@polkelections.com](mailto:judywalker@polkelections.com)

Fundraising and Government, Lisa  
Parks  
686-6482  
[lparksaicp@aol.com](mailto:lparksaicp@aol.com)

Library, Barbara Stampfl  
687-2787  
[stampfls@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:stampfls@tampabay.rr.com)

VOTER Editor and Webmaster,  
Jerry Weeks  
[webmaster@lwvpolk.org](mailto:webmaster@lwvpolk.org)

**Website:**

[www.lwvpolk.org](http://www.lwvpolk.org)

## The Status Of Education In The Polk District School System



Dr. Gail F. McKinzie, Superintendent of Polk County Public Schools

We have invited Dr. Gail McKinzie to speak to the Polk League of Women Voters about the status of education in the Polk District School System.

Dr. McKinzie became Superintendent of Polk District Schools in 2004. She is the first appointed (non-elected) and the first woman to hold that position in Polk County. She has over 22 years of experience as a superintendent of public schools, having served previously in Lee's Summit District #7 in Missouri and Indian Prairie District #204 in Illinois. Both of these Districts were suburbs of large metropolitan areas.

The public school system of Polk County is the eighth largest in Florida and among the largest 40 nationally. More than 90,000 students are enrolled. It is the largest employer in Polk County with nearly 13,000 employees.

The Budget for 2008 was almost \$760 million dollars. The majority of operating revenue sources comes from the state (67%) and local sources (33%).

The present economic situation has produced funding challenges and is being met by a variety of options.

Plan to attend and learn more about the status of education in the Polk District School System from Dr. Gail McKinzie.



## Panel Discussion on Health Care: Various Perspectives

The League of Women Voters of Polk County in our continuing effort to increase understanding of major public policy issues is presenting a Panel Discussion on Health Care.

We have invited four individuals representing various aspects of the health care industry to present a 10-15 minute overview of the problems and proposed solutions in providing care to those in need of their services.

The invited guests will be sharing their unique perspectives from their personal experiences gleaned from more than 25 years in their respective health care fields in Florida and other states.

**Libby Devlin** is the Coordinator for the National Nurses Organizing Committee in Florida. The organization represents 86,000 RN's in all 50 states. NNOC has been active in Florida since 2008, building organization among direct care RN's and working to achieve a single standard of care for all Americans and sufficient RN-to-patient ratios to provide adequate care and improve patient safety.

**Pharmacist, Paul Hines** has worked at many levels of management in the pharmacy industry. He has also had some experience in a hospital and with nursing homes. He has experience negotiating with managed care companies, drug procurement, and various technologies used in pharmacy.

**Gregory White, M.D.** currently is the Medical Director of Polk County Emergency Medical Services. He also serves as an emergency room physician in select Central Florida hospitals. He is active on Boards of various organizations in the community and has been engaged in support of successful health care legislative. He has a long list of recognitions and involvement that included chairing the Annual Convention and Board of Directors of the North American Ambulatory and Urgent Care Association for 9 years. Dr. White has been Board Certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine since 1981.

As an active member of the Florida Health Care Association, **Marilyn Wood** serves on the FHCA Board of Directors. Since 1954 the FHCA (which is a federation of nearly 1,000 members and represents over 500 long term care facilities) has worked to provide quality of care and quality of life for the state's growing elder care population. Marilyn has over 30 years of experience in the nursing home industry in 15 states with various levels of responsibility. She is President and CEO of Opis Management Resources.

Check out LWV Arizona's booklet found on the web, [Health Care Issues Behind Health Care Reform](#), which provides the facts and figures on the American Health System without advocating for a certain plan or reform.

