



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

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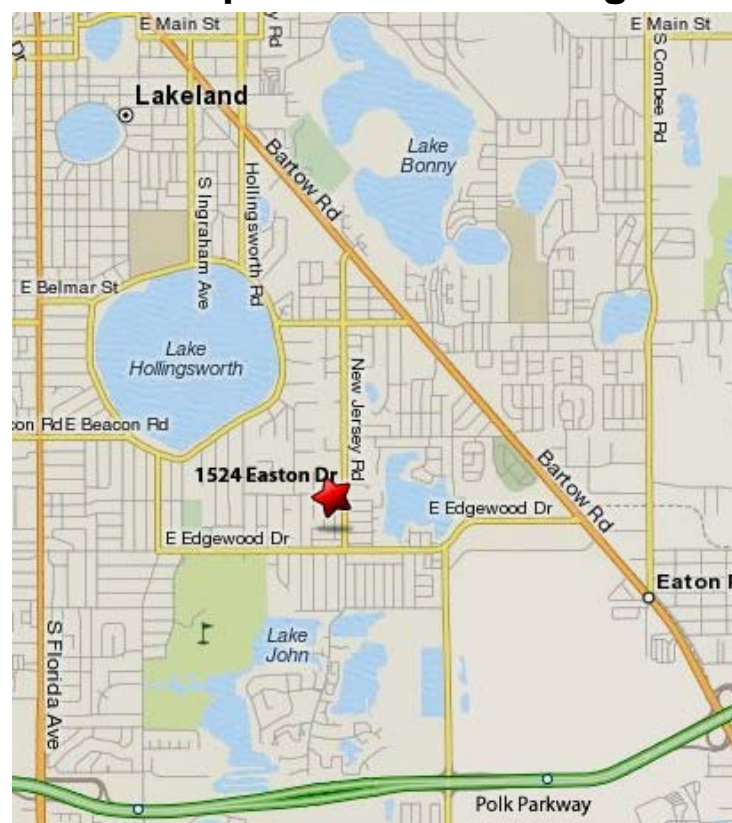
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**\*\*\* Annual Meeting May 5 \*\*\***



### Map to Annual Meeting



### Calendar

Saturday, May 1: Law Day  
Wednesday, May 5: Annual Meeting/Luncheon  
Monday, May 31: Memorial Day  
\*\*\*  
August 2, 3, 10, 11: Candidate Forums  
(tentative dates)  
\*\*\*  
Tuesday, August 24: Primary Election Day  
\*\*\*  
October 5, 7, 12, 13: Candidate Forums  
(tentative dates)  
Tuesday, November 2: General Election Day

The League of Women Voters of Polk County



May 2010  
Volume 10, Issue 4

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### Today's Quote

Education is a  
better safeguard of  
liberty than a  
standing army.

~ Edward Everett

# VOTER

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.

## Annual Meeting & Luncheon LWV Polk County



Date: Wednesday, May 5  
Speaker: Richard M. Weiss, Clerk of Courts  
Place: 1524 Easton Drive, Lakeland  
(see map on page 4)  
Time: 11:30 am - Registration  
11:40 am - Commemoration:  
Ruth Weitzenkorn  
12:00 pm - Lunch  
12:30 pm - Speaker  
1:00 pm - Business Meeting

Cost: \$25.00

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



**Guests and prospective members welcome.**

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## President's Message:

I wish to thank each of you who got involved contacting your legislators and Governor Crist and letting them know your position on the issues during the 2010 Legislative Session. I hope the call to action e-mails and LWVFLA capital reports were helpful to you.

The Annual Membership Meeting is May 5th, 2010. Our Guest Speaker will be Richard Weiss, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Polk County. The legislative session should be over and it will be interesting to learn some of the outcomes.

The Board wishes to thank all of the presenters who spoke at our programs throughout the year. We appreciate their civic participation. The programs, open to the public, have been timely and diverse topics on Natural Resource-Water, Public Transportation, Health Care, Polk District Education and Constitutional Amendments. The programs were well received by those attending.

The Board and I look forward to the activities ahead. As an election year, forums are solidly in our plans. There will also be other programs of interest.

If your membership has lapsed, now would be a good time to think about renewing your involvement with the League...I further invite those of you who want to become more involved to let me or any board members know of your areas of interest.

We treasure our membership.  
At the luncheon we will be  
absent one long time member -

### Ruth Weitzenkorn.

Ruth passed away on April 1.  
We will be remembering her  
in a special way at our  
luncheon.



I am looking forward to seeing you at the annual membership meeting. Please come renew friendships, develop new ones and celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters.

In League, Mary Jo

## Transportation Meetings

### PBS Community Forum

On April 13, members of the LWV Polk County attended the PBS Newshour's Community Forum on "High Speed Rail and Regional Transportation" that was held at the University of Tampa.

There was very little discussion about high speed rail. Discussion of regional transportation centered on Tampa. The discussion was a microcosm of what is happening in Polk.

Hillsborough County Commissioners need to approve Tampa's request for a sales tax to be placed on the November ballot. The increased sales tax will be used for bus and rail systems for Tampa and surrounding Hillsborough County areas. (The request is for an increase of 1% in the sales tax.) In the past Tampa had requested a gas sales tax be placed on the ballot and the County Commissioners turned down the request. Just like in Polk County the Polk Transportation Authority (PTA) needs the County Commissioner's approval for a ½% sales tax for November's ballot.

Supporters of the improved transportation systems say it will bring jobs. For every dollar spent there is a return of \$5.-\$6. Concern about serving the minority community was expressed. The objection to a bus system is that bus routes get changed and bypass the community. Rail systems would be permanent service for the community.



### Polk Transit Authority Meeting

On April 21, League members attended a Community Stakeholders Public Transportation Plan meeting. The meeting was hosted by Polk Transit Authority (PTA).

There were two presenters. Paul Fallon of Fallon Research and Communications Inc. reported on studies performed by his company. On March 9<sup>th</sup> a focus group meeting on public transportation was held. Between March 27 and 31 five hundred and eight people were contacted using a telephone survey. The analysis, from both surveys, showed members fairly evenly divided about county wide transportation. In both formats there was an even divide in all classification of participants. There was some positive change once the issue was discussed. Before the survey 40% favored and after 53% favored. The margin of error was +/- 4%. (A copy of the study was asked for but: not provided.)

The second presentation was on a Public Education Campaign. A consultant talked about plans to inform the Polk County residents on the need of a one half cent sales tax. Funds for promoting the one half cent sales tax need to come from public donations (PAC). Public funds can not be used to advocate for or against the sales tax.

There was more information about federal funding and changing from a small urban area to a large urban area. Currently federal funding can be used for operational expenses. If Polk becomes a large urban area, federal funding can only be used for capital expenses. Per PTA on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. there will be a public hearing in the Board of County Commissioners chambers. (At this time, April 27, the agenda for the meeting has not been finalized.)

The PTA web site is [www.polktransitauthority.com](http://www.polktransitauthority.com)

Ann Weeks, Coordinator