

HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON

The League of Women Voters of Orange County
Please join us for a lunch presentation at 11:30 a.m.
on Wednesday, March 11, 2009
at Sorosis Club, 501 E. Livingston Street (downtown)

\$20 member with reservation ~ **\$25** all others
Reservations cancelled after March 9 will be invoiced

Florida's Economy: **On the Precipice?**



Ann Hellmuth
Moderator

Ann Hellmuth, Deputy Managing Editor (Retired) at the Orlando Sentinel, began her journalism career in England, worked in South Africa (was declared a prohibited immigrant during apartheid and didn't return for 37 years); and spent a year in Canada with Canadian Press. **Ann** moved to the United States to work for The Associated Press in Cleveland. Her journalism career spanned 50 years and 3 continents.



Dr. Sean Snaith
Economist
UCF

Award-winning economist **Sean Snaith**, Director of the Institute for Economic Competitiveness at the University of Central Florida, is a national expert in economics, forecasting, market sizing and economic analysis. **Dr. Snaith** has served as a consultant for a wide range of clients ranging from local and regional municipalities to multi-national corporations such as Compaq, Dell and IBM. *Blue Chip* named him the most accurate forecaster for California in 2007.



Karen Flood, EDC
Government
Relations

As Associate Director of Government Relations, **Karen Flood** is responsible for managing the Economic Development Commission's government relations and legislative affairs efforts, as well as assisting with various EDC groups. **Ms. Flood** began her career at the EDC as part of the International Team before moving to Corporate Resources, eventually coordinating the EDC's government relations effort. Prior to joining the EDC in 2004 **Karen** studied abroad in Koblenz, Germany.



Andrea Adelson
Sentinel Columnist

Even sports teams, organizations like NASCAR and golf clubs have been hit by the economic tsunami. Orlando Sentinel columnist **Andrea Adelson** recently completed a report on the impact the troubled economy is having on the world of Sports. **Adelson** has covered a wide range of sports from the Florida Gators to the Orlando Magic. While working for The Associated Press in New York, **Andrea** covered the New York Jets and the Olympics.

RSVP by Monday, March 9, 2009 to
leagueorangecounty@gmail.com
or Kaia at 407-894-6586

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CALENDAR

Board Meeting

Monday, March 2, 2009
4:30—6:00 p.m.
Rollins Philanthropy Center

LWVOC Hot Topics
Wednesday, March 11, 2009

**Florida's Economy:
On the Precipice?**
Andrea Adelson,
Sentinel Columnist
Karen Flood

EDC Government Relations
Sean Snaith,
Award Winning UCF Economist
Moderated by Ann Helmuth

Not too late to sign up...

LWVF Legislative Seminar
March 22—March 24, 2009
Doubletree Hotel
Tallahassee, FL

Board Meeting
Monday, April 6, 2009
4:30—6:00 p.m.
Rollins Philanthropy Center

LWVOC Annual Meeting
Thursday, April 30, 2009
11:30—1:30 p.m.
Doc's Restaurant

LWVOC Hot Topics
Wednesday, April 8
The Rising Tide of Hunger
David Krepcho, CEO/President
Second Harvest
Jennifer Porter-Smith, Principal
Nap Ford Charter School
Commissioner Robert Stuart,
Christian Service Center
Moderated by Monica May,
Star 94.5 Radio Host

LWVF Convention
May 15—17
Jacksonville—Hyatt Hotel

www.LWVOC.org



~ President's Message ~

The secret of politics: to fall seven times and get up eight.

~Anonymous

Dear Members,

Have you seen *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Mississippi Burning*, or any number of other movies about the battle for justice?

Justice is the bedrock of organizations like ours. If we don't take time out of our lives, and commit our passion to demanding fairness and justice from government, and processes that are fair, we will end up as so many other civilizations have...one which is remembered in the history books for terror, injustice and a world without light.

With the recent Florida Supreme Court decision approving the *Fair Districts* petition, we have an opportunity now in our state—one we cannot afford to lose — to ensure justice in Florida. For years, whichever party was in power has perpetuated an injustice...a state where our elected officials decide who they want in their district. Result? Almost no one knows who their state or congressional representatives are. Years and years of non-competitive races and citizens not knowing who their elected officials are because of the splitting of communities through gerrymandering...(e.g., four representatives and four congressmen for Winter Park alone) **INCUMBENTS RE-ELECTED EVERY TIME!** For instance, did you know that 100% of our incumbents *were re-elected in 2004?*

The moment for change has come. This is our time to move mountains...this is our time to reshape the political landscape of Florida and give our grandchildren elections where there is *real* competition, where incumbents are no longer guaranteed re-election, where we know *WHO* our elected officials are, and can **HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE.**

Will you help? Will you commit to signing your petitions (two, one for the state legislature and one for Congress) and help get more signed at Farmer's Markets, art fairs, dinner parties, and any gathering you think is appropriate?

We need you, we need every member, we need your action!!!!

Please make sure *YOU've* signed the 2 petitions on our website (www.LWVOC.org) and contacted **NANCY RUDNER** to let her know you'll donate two hours to help us progress toward securing our fair share of signed petitions.

Be sure to try and attend our next Hot Topics, and help build our fastest growing League...by bringing your friends and family to learn more about the challenges facing our state and community.

This month we'll hear from OBJECTIVE experts... **Sean Snaith**, renowned economist at UCF, the financial editor at the Sentinel, and the Economic Development Commission...Is Florida on the Precipice?

Finally, I am personally asking you to please make plans to join our delegation in just two short weeks **MARCH 22-24....**(for new members especially). Come to Tallahassee for the Legislative Seminar, and gain a **POLITICAL EDUCATION** on the people behind the decisions, the finances, the education system in our state.

Don't delay...contact **Caroline Emmons-Schramm** at **407-629-4929** now and make your reservation...

this affordable weekend will open your eyes, help you make important contacts and ignite your flame!

In League,

Deirdre Macnab

President
LWVOC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Superintendent Ronald Blocker to be presented Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission's Chairman's Award



The **Metro Orlando EDC** selected **Superintendent Ronald Blocker** as this year's winner of the **EDC Chairman's Award**. The superintendent has been a member of the Board of Directors of the EDC since 2000.

The **EDC** recognizes **Superintendent Blocker** as an individual who has contributed substantially to the work of the **EDC**. Citing his contributions, the **EDC** indicates **Mr. Blocker** contributed to the successful attraction of the **Burnham Institute** to Metro Orlando, as well as championing the development of magnet and technical programs which support the local workforce.

Superintendent Blocker heads the nation's 11th largest public school district employing more than 20,000 people and serving more than 174,000 students. The school district is **rated A by the state Department of Education**.

The 2009 **EDC** Award Dinner is scheduled for March 18, 2009 at 6 p.m. at the Orange County Convention Center.

~ *Legislative Update from the Orange County Supervisor of Elections* ~

Dear League Members,

The 2008 Presidential Election and Post-Election Audit are now history. Florida and Orange County performed well. We appreciate all of the support from League members during the elections -- whether as poll workers in our *Adopt-A-Precinct* Program or serving as observers over the *Post-Election Audit* process.

On Tuesday, March 3, the Florida Legislature begins its annual session in Tallahassee. I serve as the Legislative Chair for the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections. Based on the 2008 election results, we would be very happy with no major changes to the Election Code.

At our Mid-Winter Conference in Jacksonville this past December, we approved our 2009 Legislative Package and it is rather simple.

First, Supervisors of Elections need better options for early voting. It's all about **LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!** This is especially true in Orange County since we have only one Library and no City Halls east of Semoran Blvd.

With paper ballots being used statewide, the Association sees no need to change the Post-Election Audit requirements or the recount laws. The idea was that, with paper ballots, you could recount papers and view voter intent.

Last, in 2007 when the legislature switched the state to all optical scan voting equipment, it allowed counties to continue using the touch screen voting system for voters with disabilities. But by 2012 the

legislation requires all voters to vote on optical scan. Orange County had 286 voters in the Primary and 731 voters in the General Election use the touch screens at the polls or early voting sites. Current estimates are that it will cost the county \$1,825,500 to purchase the newly required equipment by 2012. With today's slumping economy that is a whopping amount. We propose a delay in the implementation of this law.

We are always monitoring election bills and looking for opportunities to make minor clean up changes to the election code.

As I work the halls of Tallahassee, I see and speak with the League representatives doing the same. Hopefully we will be able to work together on this and other issues that may arise during the 2009 Legislative Session.

Bill Cowles
Orange County Supervisor of Elections



Bill Cowles
Orange County
Supervisor of
Elections

~ YOUR OPINION ~

LWVOC invites interested readers to share their views, comments and observations in **The VOTER**.
All letters should be limited to 75 words or less and emailed to our editor, Lynda Van Scoyoc at
lvanscoyoc@cfl.rr.com
The LWVOC reserves the right to edit all submissions.

New LWVOC Program Item: What do You Think?



Marc Lovett

*We have excerpted comments from **Shera Dalin's** recent article in **Youth Today** titled "**Taxing Your Way to Financial Security**" to help League Members Learn More.*

Florida's youth councils find (some) success by asking voters for money.

When voters in Miami overwhelmingly renewed a tax on themselves last summer to fund youth services, they illuminated a rarely used path to financial security for youth programs in tough economic times.

In August, 86 percent of voters approved a referendum to reauthorize and make permanent the Miami-Dade Children's Trust, which each year delivers about \$100 million in tax money to such youth services as after-school programs, day care, school nurses and help for disabled youth.

The vote put Miami-Dade in the lead among 8 Florida counties that fund youth services through tax districts – an approach that is getting noticed elsewhere. "***This could be done in any community in the nation,***" said **Trust Chairman David Lawrence**.

Building the network of councils has been a slow process. The first children's services council started in 1946, through the creation of a special taxing district to raise funds that were allocated by the **Juvenile Welfare Board** of Pinellas County (St. Petersburg). Forty years later, the state Legislature approved the **Juvenile Welfare Services Act**, which allowed Florida counties to hold referenda to create special districts that could impose property tax levies. The funds are channeled to local youth programs, both public and private.

"We have had a long, hard road of 40 years from the first [council] to the second, with spurts and halting progress since," said **Jim Mills**, who served for 23 years as executive director of the Juvenile Welfare Board in Pinellas County.

How to Win

In Miami-Dade, voters actually rejected a **Children's Trust** referendum by a 2-1 margin in 1998. In 2003, voters were asked again to support a referendum establishing a trust, and it passed with the proviso that they would vote again on making it permanent in 2008.

The work on this year's referendum began about two years ago. Money was raised to build grassroots support for youth issues among the various agencies and community groups. Funds were appropriated for public advertising, field offices, bumper stickers, yard signs, palm cards in three languages and other campaign paraphernalia.

Obstacles

What often kills such referenda, however, is anti-tax sentiment, particularly in more conservative counties, said **Kristin Vallese**, spokeswoman for the **Florida Children's Services Council** in Tallahassee.

Nevertheless, some county leaders around the country see Florida's children's services councils as an intriguing idea for funding youth services, said **Don Murray**, senior legislative director of the **National Association of Counties** in Washington.

Murray noted that there are other innovative funding models, such as the public-private, nonprofit **Smart Start** and its regulator, the **North Carolina Partnership for Children**. **Smart Start** uses \$300 million in state general fund revenue and foundation grants to fund children's programs in North Carolina's 100 counties. "***It's one of the most exciting partnerships in the country,***" he said. Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the councils now is that Florida's dire financial straits – a situation shared by most states.

Despite the budget issues, **Mills** is more optimistic than ever about the good the councils can do, saying the culture in Florida is changing.

Mills said, "In the 23 years I've been here, this is about as positive I've felt about the state pulling together on children and family policy,"

For more information about **Florida's Children's Councils** go to their website at:

http://www.floridacsc.org/about_csc/creating.php

~ Edited by Marc Lovett, LWVOC Member & Children's Advocate

At the January 31 Annual Program Planning Meeting, there was wide interest in adding a new program item for our work in 2009-2010.

The Proposal is to study the need for a Child Services Council and the likely impact on revenue sources for Orange County.

February 12, 2009

Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida
PL 01 the Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Lennon Moore,
Co-Chair LWVOC
Transportation
Committee



Dear Governor Crist:

I read the letter that **Senator Paula Dockery** wrote February 3, 2009, to **Governor Crist** regarding **SunRail** and the deal between **CSX** and the state. I have made it a priority to stay informed about this project. With all due respect to **Senator Dockery**, there are inaccuracies throughout her letter. For example:

1. The Senator claims that **CSX** and **FDOT** are creating a "*freight super-railway*" through several cities in the Central Florida Region. I am not sure there is a technical definition of a freight super-railway, but if so, I doubt that making improvements to an existing corridor that will add 11 freight trains by 2030, would qualify. The claim that the **CSX** deal "*could send as many as 54 trains a day through downtown Lakeland*" borders on the absurd. The most active rail hub in the country is just outside Chicago and it does not currently run 54 trains per day.
2. **Senator Dockery** implies the project development process has not been transparent and that "**the facts are difficult to find**". That has not been my experience. I have seen and discussed with many officials and fellow citizens the terms and conditions of the **CSX** agreement, interlocal agreements, resolutions and letters of support. I have received numerous communications, factoids, talking points, and I have attended dozens of public meetings and workshops. I have collected a large amount of literature on this project and heard the points made by some who support the project and others who oppose the project because there has been free and open debate about potential impacts. Additionally, such information and varied points of view are well represented on the internet and through other media.
3. The **Senator's** statement that at \$10.5 million a mile, "*Florida is paying the highest rail-sale price in US history*" is wrong. The Weber County to Salt Lake City commuter rail project cost \$14 million a mile, the North San Diego County Oceanside Escondido commuter rail system cost \$22 million a mile, also, the proposed Monmouth-Ocean-Middlesex (MOM) commuter rail system is estimated to cost \$22 million per mile. And, these projects are less expensive than the light rail and subway projects now underway in Northern Virginia and New York.
4. The **Senator's** contention that no federal money has been set aside for the project is inaccurate. **SunRail** is listed in the Federal Transit Administration's 2008 Annual Report on Funding Recommendations which is an appendix to the President's budget.

There are numerous other misstatements in the **Senator's** letter, but to rebut them all is likely more than you will care to read. However, I have to express concern about the contents and tone of her letter. It is particularly disturbing to read in **Senator Dockery's** letter, "*On a personal level, I've been briefing my colleagues on the CSX deal, one by one. My packet includes documents they've never seen before.*" I can only wonder at the errors that packet of information may contain if her letter is an indicator. I am also frustrated with the "*personal level*" and "*my*" attitude it expresses. The state-wide importance of **SunRail** goes way beyond such thinking. Hopefully, **Senator Dockery** will make "*her*" packet available to us all.

I applaud your leadership in moving this project forward. The benefits this project will bring to Florida were beautifully described in your recent press conference with **Mayor Dyer** and **Secretary Kopelousos**. It is clear that **SunRail** makes sense and cents for Florida at a time in our history when both are sorely needed. Thank you, Governor.

Sincerely,
Lennon Moore
Winter Park Citizen

Cc: *FDOT Secretary, Stephanie C. Kopelousos*
Members, Florida House and Senate

REDISTRICTING WITH FAIRNESS JUST MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE

Tallahassee Democrat Editorial -- February 1, 2009

By Mary Ann Lindley, Editorial Page Editor

The Supremes have done something quite brave, giving the go-forward nod to an organization that wants to help take the politics out of redistricting our legislative and Congressional seats.

This occurred on Thursday, when Florida Supreme Court justices ruled favorably on two proposed constitutional amendments aimed at preventing — though probably not bringing to a dead stop — gerrymandering.

Gerrymandering isn't anything new, and it's beloved by incumbents because it keeps possible challengers with their noses pressed against almost unbreakable glass.

It was brave for the high court to rule as it did, given that it is effectively going against the wishes of leaders in the Legislature, from which it needs more operating funds. The court did order a more specific dollar estimate of what additional costs the amendments might incur, if any, which the GOP controlled Legislature did argue for.

What happens next is that the amendment's sponsors, a bipartisan organization called **FairDistrictsFlorida.org**, must now begin collecting enough signatures to get two amendments on the ballot — 676,811 signatures each.

If that's achieved, then the task will be to get 60 percent of voters on Nov. 2, 2010 elections to agree to clean up this menacing map-drawing system that we tolerate, but shouldn't.

The petition drive has a lot of high-powered organizations and people behind it and they're not all from the same party, either. The chairman is **Thom Rumberger**, who practices law in Tallahassee now, but has been a force statewide for many years, working years ago for the inscrutable former **Republican Governor Claude Kirk** and more recently championing Everglades protection and restoration.

"Not being cocky," Rumberger told the Associated Press last week, "it's just that the people are fed up."

Everyone acknowledges that the leaders and elected officials of whichever party is in power is fond of the current apportionment system, which makes districts so utterly in line with voting patterns that an interloper from the out-of-power party can almost never get elected.

Anecdotally it's been said that map-drawing is so technologically refined these days that you can almost draw a district line down the middle of someone's living room in a house where the wife is known to vote Democratic and the husband goes for the GOP.

They can also pack a large number of voters they don't want to have any real power into just a few districts. These minorities win seats in the Legislature, and keep getting re-elected, but there aren't enough of them to have any real power once they have that seat at the table.

It's a form of legal segregation that also has the effect of keeping everyone's interests narrow. If you don't have to please a broad array of people with varying interests to get elected, you become narrow of mind, which isn't good for the state as a whole.

Right now the Legislature does the redistricting work itself every ten years, but these constitutional amendments would change the way it's done, *setting out standards for redistricting that would help stop favoritism for any party or incumbent and would prevent denying equal opportunity for racial or language minorities.*

"the people are fed up."

Thom Rumberger

Though there are many tricks in the book of redistricting, with this change districts would have to follow existing political and natural geographic boundaries when feasible.

So it's good news that these amendments are now going to be moving forward. You will likely have an opportunity to sign one of the petitions and get involved in the money-raising needed just to get the petition drive big enough to do its job.

When the mapmakers, with their sophisticated computing skills, have more effect on the way the Legislature is elected than the voters do, something's wrong. And wrong it has been. A bipartisan effort to make what **Rumberger** calls this *"necessary sea change"* would be more honorable.

We have a lot of serious problems with the way Florida is governed — term limits, no run-off primary, toothless campaign financing rules, and presiding officers who have too much power and can't help but use it ruthlessly. But this is a step in the other direction, towards good government, not more of the same.

For more information visit online at
www.fairdistrictsflorida.com

*This is a top priority for the LWVF
and the state League is part of the
Fair District Coalition.*

*We need your help! Contact
Nancy Rudner to learn more...
nancy.rudner@gmail.com
321-282-3762*



Member Profile ~ Mary Hamill



Interview conducted by 1st Vice President Charley Williams

How long have you served as our LWVOC Host for Orange TV's Hot Topics?

Almost two years. I think our first shows were May of 2007.

If you could pull together a dream panel to interview, who would be on it?

I think curiosity is what leads us to great information and I'm curious about almost everything. The Hot Topics program deals with public affairs issues like ethics, taxation, immigration reform, transportation, smart growth, sustainability. All very important topics. But on a personal level I like to learn about what motivates people to do what they do and that usually deals with emotions. Discussions about emotional intelligence, social intelligence, conceptual thinking and primal leadership could be great shows. Leadership in government and business and communities and families is really what drives everything.

How often do you hear from viewers?

People are always very nice. It's usually when I'm out shopping or doing errands and a woman my age will usually say, "I like your new hair." or "I hadn't seen you for awhile and then you were back. I missed your voice." It's nice, it feels like home for them and for me.

You are CEO for Global-5 Communications: what projects are you working on?

Transportation communications is our focus and that is a very big field. We work with the Florida Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the City of Los Angeles real time travel information system. I serve on the Board of Directors and as the Outreach Committee Chair for the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida. Transportation technology only helps people if they know how to use it, so our educational and outreach efforts are essential to make the technology useful. It's very satisfying.

You have been a high profile anchor for WKMG, Local 6-TV. How has the industry changed over the past 10 years?

24/7 news cycles changed things first, and now the Web has taken news and information in a completely new direction. I am concerned about accuracy. Journalists are trained to be accurate, fair and objective. Assimilating a great deal of information and ensuring it is accurate, clear and concise and ready for quick distribution is difficult. It's a process that should have many safeguards in place and should be overseen by a well trained, experienced team.

What can we learn from our younger citizens on the various tools they are using to get information? Are adult consumers catching up?

Constant streams of information are useful only if you absolutely trust the source of the information. Everybody likes to feel like an "insider", that they know something other people don't. But you have to trust your sources. As a reporter, you learn with difficulty who is credible and who isn't. You are constantly searching for the truth. I think younger people instinctively have that trait. I know I learn a lot from my three college age kids as I watch them search for information. But we all need to keep in mind, we tend to believe the sources that say what we agree with, and disbelieve the ones that disagree with our opinions. Keeping an open mind and seeking a variety of sources for news and information is what we all need to do.

Florida will soon become the 3rd largest state in the Union (we are currently ranked 4th). What future challenges do you foresee that are currently below the radar?

Floridians are so blessed with clean air and blue skies that we don't focus on the environment the way other states do. We need to pay much more attention to shrinking water supplies, disappearing wildlife habitats, energy use, alternative fuels, recycling, and we need to get serious about keeping our beautiful state "green" forever.

What factoid would people be surprised to learn about Mary Hamill?

I am very proud to be a farm girl from Missouri and the first person in my family to graduate from college. I sold my horse to pay for tuition my freshman year. I decided to become a journalist when I was 12, after years of reading the National Geographic Magazine from cover to cover. I learned so much more from that magazine than I did from school, and I knew I wanted to tell stories with great photos one day. In my case, it ended up being video, a better fit. I had a small newspaper job at 16 and started my first TV anchor job on my 21st birthday, 30 years ago. I have interviewed **Presidents Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton** and the first **President Bush**. I've researched, written and produced 2,000 TV news stories. And through all of this, I can tell you one thing with certainty: *groups don't make things happen*. One person with supreme passion and commitment is behind every great thing that happens. There is always, always that one person... usually somebody who does not want the credit. Search for that person. They are great in countless ways and they will make you feel that you are great, too.



Members: Read and Evaluate...you will be asked to vote on it at the Annual Meeting!

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ORANGE COUNTY
PROGRAM 2009-2010**

TRANSPORTATION

- 1. Support and take action on current transportation positions:
 - Support dedicated funding and a community based vision for a regional, multimodal public transportation system, including adequate funding for LYNX
 - Provide public education on transportation/transit issues.
 - Support development of a transit system based on a plan designed by the grassroots community.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- 1. Support and take action on current LWVF positions with a focus on WATER.
 - Monitor current Orange County Land Acquisition program and support dedicated funding for acquisition of endangered lands.

EDUCATION

- 1. Support and take action on current positions.
- 2. Monitor planned cuts and the impact they will have on school services.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 1. Support and take action on current positions.
 - Continue to monitor & support ethics reform in County Government
 - Continue to urge continued review of consolidation possibilities following recommendations of the Consolidation of Services Commission
 - Monitor & support citizen access to Board of County Commissioners and the utilization of citizen input process
 - Continue to monitor Citizens Review Board
- 2. Review current positions of the structure of Orange County Government with emphasis on the role of Constitutional Officers and members of the Board of County Commissioners.

SOCIAL POLICY

- Support and take action on current positions.
- Study need for Child Services Council and impact on revenue sources for Orange County

JUSTICE/JUVENILE JUSTICE

- Support and take action on current position.

FAIR DISTRICTS

- Support **FairDistrictsFlorida** campaign

CIVICS

- Expand **Teach In Day**: Provide League Members trained in Class on citizenship and democracy for a Speakers Bureau
- Support Law Day activities

ELECTION LAW REFORM

- Support expansion of Early Voting sites

_____ = <i>New</i>

VOTERS SERVICES

- 1. Increase voter education and participation.
- 2. Continue and expand the use of new technologies in voter service efforts.
- 3. Expand community partnerships, use of media and outreach.
- 4. Initiate Speakers Bureau on voting related issues.

Central Florida's Dynamic Crime Fighting Duo

This Hot Topics session on January 14, 2009 was moderated by **Scott Harris, News 13 Anchor**, and the panelists were **Val Demings, Orlando Police Department Chief** and **Jerry Demings, Orange County Sheriff**.



Prior to the program, **Jerry** and **Val** took time to personally greet every attendee. The **Demings'** joint appearance was the first since **Jerry** became **Orange County Sheriff**.

The **Demings'** top priority is reducing violent crime. focusing on the Pine Hills community. During 2008, almost 20 people were killed there. **Jerry** mentioned that his transition team developed recommendations regarding Pine Hills. *"The Sheriff's office will target drugs, illegal guns, and getting repeat offenders off the street."*

Jerry stated that the best way to reduce crime is by getting young people involved in organizations such as the *Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts of America*, and the *YMCA*. His department also plans to work with community leaders to find more employment opportunities.

Another priority is agency cooperation. The **Demings** plan to target illegal guns and drugs. *"Deputies and officers can collaborate on projects in high crime areas," Val Demings* said. *"I have the support of the Orlando Police Chief and she has mine,"* responded **Jerry**.

Community involvement is crucial; their offices need citizens to be their eyes and ears and notify the appropriate agency when they see a problem. *"Public safety in Orange County and Orlando has to be a top priority for all citizens," Val Demings* said. *"Well-trained officers and citizen involvement is key to successfully stopping violent crime."* The **Demings** value the citizens of this community and realize that we all must work together for the best outcome.

Val and **Jerry Demings** are the only known husband and wife crime fighting duo in the country. **Val** explained that the way they find personal time is to schedule it. **Jerry** added that they went on a motorcycle ride over the past weekend and had a great time.

~submitted by Loretta Lott

Frank Rudo
LWVOC President Deirdre Macnab
Mary Evangelista



LWVOC Presents to **Association of Fundraising Professionals** at their **MONTHLY MEETING on Fundraising in the Political and Non Profit Arena**. Participants were (l-r) **Sherry Paramore**, Area Coordinator/United Negro College Fund (*moderator*), **Gary Brewer**, President of Association of Fund Raising Professionals, (*Boy Scouts of America*) **Deirdre Macnab**, LWVOC President and **Senator Lee Constantine**.

Orange County Municipal Elections

Saturday, March 7—Town of Eatonville
Tuesday, March 10—City of Winter Park
City of Winter Garden City of Ocoee
Town of Windermere
Tuesday, April 14—Municipal Run-off
(Winter Garden)

You can order a mail-in ballot . Go to our award-winning website:
www.voteanywhere.org

Thanks to **Barbara** and **Jim Knapp** and **Laura Turner**, LWVOC will be tracking most races with a continuation of our **On-Line Voter Guide**.

Simply go to www.LWVOC.org and look for the Guide posted on the Homepage.



Susan Clary
Peggy Cox
Lynn Paredes-Manfredi

Hot Topics Luncheon
February 11, 2009

Feet to the Fire:
Florida's Political Parties
View the Future!



Kimberly Webb
Barbara Eagan



"If You Don't Vote, You Deserve Anybody You Get!"

LWVOC President

Deirdre Macnab presents signed League Poster to Supervisor of Elections

Bill Cowles



Entertainers Perform!



HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON

February 11, 2009

FEET TO THE FIRE!

Florida's Political Parties View the Future....

Lew Oliver, Chair, Orange County Republican Executive Committee

Jane Healy, Moderator Orlando Sentinel

Bill Robinson, Chair, Orange County Democrat Executive Committee



l-r: Fern Hurt, Ele Kenyon Rosalee Serros



9th Judicial Circuit Court Robert Egan & Tim Shea County Court—Steve Jewett

New Members Troy & Suzette Boyette



Faye Allen County Court Judge

Lew Oliver, OCREC Chair



Susannah Lindberg-Randolph Bill Robinson, OCDEC Chair



Katheryn Meagher Barbara Reems Jane Gross



Nancy Peed, Jane Healy, Moderator Andrea Kobrin, LWVOC Director Lydia Gardner, Clerk of the Court



Mary Evangelista Deirdre Macnab, LWVOC President Jamie Hyman Sarah Goodwin, Membership Chair

Bill Robinson OCDEC Chair Dr. Joyce Henry ACLU



Maritza Martinez Andrea Kobrin, LWVOC Director



Janelle Middents Anne Buechner Greg Kurth