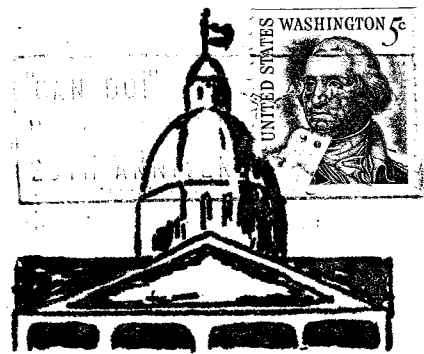




# Tallahassee VOTER



League of Women Voters of Tallahassee, Florida

PURPOSE: To Promote Political Responsibility Through Informed and Active Participation of Citizens in Government

President - Mrs. Charles K. Mann  
1511 Hasosaw Nene

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1705 Sunset Lane

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October 5 ---- General Meeting - 8 p.m., Leon Federal, Monroe St.  
Education - Mr. William Arnold of Florida State will discuss the recent School Plant Survey for Leon County

No morning unit.

October 9 ---- Board Meeting - - 8 p.m., Leon Federal, University Branch

October 19 --- Schedule not definite - watch your newspaper.

## EDUCATION

In April 1965 the membership voted to adopt as a local current agenda item the following: Education--Study and support of measures which would promote improved quality of public education in Leon County. The intensive study of financial support of the Leon County schools was begun in May and in October 1965 presented its findings to the membership. For the sake of review and for those of you who are new to Leon County the following are a few of the facts which the League found during the first year of this study:

Since 1947, the Minimum Foundation Program has been the core of financial support for public schools in Florida. The total cost is determined by the number of students in average daily attendance. Each county is required to supply funds in the basis of its ability to pay and the remainder needed to provide the minimum program is provided by the state. The only constitutional source for the county's contribution to education is ad valorem taxes. The percentage of school revenue derived from local ad valorem taxes varies greatly among the counties. Leon county's contribution has been close to 30% for the last several years. In 1963 the state average was 44.02%.

How is the local tax support for schools determined? Each county is required by the constitution to assess annually not less than 3 nor more than 10 mills on the dollar of all taxable property. This millage is set by the County Commission upon recommendation of the School Board. In

addition the constitution provides for additional millage to be levied whenever a majority of the qualified electors that pay tax on real or personal property shall vote in favor of such levy. This additional millage is constitutionally limited to 10 mills.

The League reviewed the school tax resources, county ability to pay, local facilities, student academic achievements, accreditation, staff structure, teacher salary schedules and other areas. We found that in 1964-65 only two counties in the state had lower beginning teacher salaries. In 1964, Leon averaged \$323.00 per pupil compared with the state average of \$403 (U.S. average \$483). Also in 1964, Leon County ranked 17th in estimated assessed valuation of non-exempt property supporting each classroom, but 57th in millage levied. All of this in spite of the fact that Leon County then ranked 11th among the 67 counties in effective buying income per capita, 3rd in effective buying income per household, and 19th in per capita income. A situation which has improved since that time--we are now number one in per capita income in the state.

Because of the above facts and others uncovered during our study the League on October 7, 1965 reached consensus favoring the support of an increase in the freeholders millage to 10 mills. This was defeated at the polls in November, 1965. The voted millage at this time was 6 mills. During the 1966-67 school year the school board levied 5.239 mills of its constitutional 10 mills and 5.030 of the voted 6 mills belonging to the freeholders. This is a total of 11.269 since there is a one mill debt service on a special bond issue.

During the next year the League continued its study of the conditions in the Leon County schools by team visitations to the junior high schools in the system. While we did indeed find some outstanding teachers and a few outstanding programs it was apparent that much was lacking to qualify Leon County as a county providing quality education. Among the things we found were a lack of textbooks at some of the schools, deplorable maintenance condition in all the schools, and a general lack of uniformity in the programs and quality of curriculum at various schools. Overcrowding was present at some of the schools but not all. The result of the study simply reaffirmed our original consensus that more support for education was needed at the local level in Leon County. We are now awaiting the action of the school board with regard to a possible bond issue which could help relieve many of the unsatisfactory conditions which we observed last year. I am certain that all of you are aware of the efforts of the FEA to get a special session of the legislature in November to deal with what is termed the "education crisis in Florida." Education is a timely and important topic! See all of you on the night of October 5th.

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#### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS A SUCCESS ! !

About 40 members and guests turned out for our morning and evening coffee last Thursday. There was lots of good conversation, and interesting displays prepared by committee chairmen. (Incidentally the posters are being used this week by Anna Qualls at the Gulf Mart Fair. If you missed the coffee's maybe you saw them at the fair.) Marge Meeter and her committee did a wonderful job to make the coffees a success. We especially thank Bobbie Baker and Juanita Forbes for extending us the use of their homes for these meetings. Keep in mind that membership is an every member

and continuous responsibility. Bring a friend or neighbor to meetings throughout the year.

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#### WELCOME ABOARD

We are pleased to have as new members:

Mrs. E. M. Thorpe	214 Lincoln St.
Mrs. J. C. Awkard	1108 Tanner Drive
Mrs. Phillip Pitts	1523 Argonne Rd.
Mrs. Sally Brooks	682 Gamble St.
Mrs. Susan Flaum	325 Mayo St.

Associate member

Mrs. Mararetha Miller 321 Mayo St.

Transfer member:

Mrs. Georgia Royster 1452 S. Bronough St.  
Hampton, Virginia

Be sure to add these names to the new membership list.

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#### LAST CALL FOR DUES!

As of October 15th the membership list will be revised and all those who have not paid their 1967-68 dues will be dropped from the mailing list. Stay in the know--be sure your dues are paid.

Mrs. Jack Hokanson, P.O.Box 508, Lloyd,  
Florida

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#### LEAGUE RESPONDS TO TIME FOR ACTION

The following telegram was sent to our senators Spessard L. Holland and George A. Smathers in response to a Time for Action on the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1967.

"We urge your support of the Senate Bill #1545 (now S 2388) unamended as reported by the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee.

We feel that as a result of the riots this summer, more assistance to slum areas is essential, and the time to move forward in solving poverty problems is now."

We received acknowledgements from both Senators indicating their "careful consideration and attention prior to action on the Senate floor with our views in mind--" Senator Smathers included a copy of the Committee report.

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#### REPORT ON URBAN EXPLORATION WORKSHOP

On September 22, 23 Leaguers Margaret Menzel, Dorothy Mann, Bea Olson, Doris Partridge, Ginnie Pankaskie, Inez Weaver, Fran Schneider and Ora Kromhout took part in an Urban Exploration Workshop led by Dr. Don Sessler, a sociologist from VPI. This was the first in a series of workshops

designed to demonstrate an effective group approach to community problems, others will be held in several Florida cities during the coming year. The project is directed by Louis Schneider of the FSU department of Urban and Regional Planning (also Fran's husband). Participants represented a wide range of Tallahassee Organizations and were divided into small groups when the time came to use ideas presented by Dr. Sessler in order to tackle a sample problem by listing goals, identifying barriers, and recommending a course of action.

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#### LEAGUERS IN THE LIMELIGHT

Mrs. Walter Churchill, State President, was chosen as a member of the Governor's Commission on Education.

Dr. Evelyn Martin, of the Florida A & M University, was selected as a member of the "Braintrust session" in Tampa.

Ora Kromhout is on the steering committee for the Urban Exploration Workshops.

Dorothy Dodd has returned to the Board of Directors of the Tallahassee League as resource chairman for water resources. Glad you're back, Dorothy.

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