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Letters to the Editor: Nov. 28, 2007

Roles defined

Editor, Daily News:

Re: Jeff Lytle's Opinion column of Nov. 18:

The League of Women Voters of Collier County is, and always has been, a nonpartisan organization devoted to educating the public and encouraging them to vote — regardless of their political affiliation. Our mission is to promote informed and active participation in government.

The league has an important role to play in our community in voter education and getting out the vote.

The league recognizes the role of political parties in our form of government and believes that participation in the activities of the political parties is an important part of citizen responsibility.

But while the league urges its members to be politically active, certain constraints are necessary in order to maintain the fact and appearance of the nonpartisanship of the league. Importantly, only the president may speak for the league; any others claiming to represent the league are unauthorized.

We have a nonpartisan policy that is enforced and specifies the constraints imposed upon our members, and in particular our board members, including:

“During his/her term of office, a board member must not give/sponsor candidate coffees or other fundraising parties or events; permit his/her name to appear in any media endorsement ad; hand out or display campaign literature; act as campaign manager or treasurer for a candidate; or hold office in a political party.”

In addition, board members may not make financial contributions to candidates or political parties in local elections.

Our nonpartisan policy, along with a list of our officers and directors, is at www.lwvcolliercounty.org.

We encourage members of the league to participate in government and the political parties, just as we encourage the general public.

As with many other organizations, the words and actions of our members as private citizens should not be taken as the words and actions of our organization.

Chris Straton/Naples; President, League of Women Voters of Collier County