



A nonpartisan organization that encourages informed citizen participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS

November  
2006

# VOTER

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## Your Dallas County *Voters Guide* is here. Read All About It!

Everything you need to know in order to cast an informed ballot for the November 7<sup>th</sup> election is in our *Voters Guide*. Considering that this is the **longest ballot in Dallas County history**, you will definitely want to go online to the Dallas County web-site, [www.dalcoelections.org](http://www.dalcoelections.org), and **take a look at it ahead of time**. DO NOT WAIT TO SEE YOUR BALLOT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE VOTING BOOTH.

A huge number of the races are for judgeships. Do not be deterred. Log on to our **new and improved Online Voters Guide** at [www.lwvdallas.org](http://www.lwvdallas.org) and see the most comprehensive judicial coverage anywhere. Read the responses to such questions as:

- Do you believe that courts should rule strictly in accordance with the letter of the law?
- Do you believe there is a problem with disparities in sentencing?
- What community service have you participated in that has helped prepare you for being a judge?

Best of all, this Online Voters Guide now offers **direct access** from the Table of Contents page to any race that you would like to check on. No scrolling endlessly; just click on and you are there!

## **DART** Out to Vote! Drive A Mega-Success!

The tallies for the 11 participating **DART** transit stations are in regarding our weeklong voter registration and education campaign, *DART Out to Vote!* They show two impressive results and one important finding.

The first and foremost result is that nearly **7,000 voters were served!** The League of Women Voters Community Coalition, composed of the **Dallas, Irving and Plano/Collin County Leagues, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., DFW Asian American Citizens Council, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the Social Action Council of the First Unitarian Church**, recruited and trained close to **400 volunteers**. Almost 2700 were registered, either by green application or white mail-in cards, and 4300 were educated not only about how to cast an informed ballot, but how to vote at a time and place of one's convenience.

Our "Why Don't Texas Women Vote" survey responses were repeatedly validated by voters telling us that they:

- did not even know what the election was for or about. "Are we electing a President?" was a common question.
- did not know about voting anywhere but their assigned polling place, which would be tough for them to do on Election Tuesday, November 7, a work day.

(Lots more on Page 4)

## President's Post

2006-2007

### Board of Directors

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What a breathtaking election season this has been for us "Ladies Who Do Elections!" (Did you notice that front-page reference to the League in the *Dallas Observer*?) Big Bravos and Kudos to your Board of Directors and all the Leaguers who:

- spearheaded the formation of the League of Women Voters Community Coalition in order to conduct a weeklong voter education and registration drive at eleven *DART* transit stations
- compiled and printed a Dallas County edition *Voters Guide* for distribution in the *Dallas Observer* and *Dallas Weekly* newspapers, as well as in all the public libraries
- developed a new and improved online *Voters Guide* with easy and direct access to any of its 50+ pages
- presented a penetrating Issue Forum on "Financing City Government with Bonds," examining the role that bonds play as part of public tax policy
- scheduled and hosted a record-breaking number of Meet the Candidate Forums that were taped by DCTV for broadcasting over community access television.

As my letter below to the Dallas City Council states, DCTV is an important partner for the League because DCTV enables us to reach voters beyond those who can attend our Candidate and Issue Forums in person. With the recent addition to DCTV of member producers, Lifetime Video Productions, DCTV has vastly upgraded the quality of its services in the taping of our programs. Since the City Council ultimately voted to restore its funding to DCTV, I would like to think that maybe our advocacy letter was one of the reasons why!

Dear Mayor Miller and City Council Members,

I am writing to dissuade you about the deep budget cuts that are being considered with respect to DC/TV funding. The League of Women Voters of Dallas has a longstanding relationship with DC/TV, which tapes and broadcasts our Issue and Candidate Forums. In doing so, this volunteer organization performs a public service that is not only material to voter education but also of immeasurable impact to our under-served African-American and Hispanic citizens. Moreover, with DC/TV now beginning to be web-cast, the younger segment of our under-voting population will be able to access DC/TV programming online.

Last year the League conducted a "Why Don't Texas Women Vote" survey, in response to a Women's Policy Institute Study that ranked Texas women 49<sup>th</sup> in the Nation for voter turnout. Our voting survey found that regardless of age, ethnicity or income, the single biggest impediment to voting was lack of information, even lack of awareness that an election is being held.

Armed with this knowledge, the League hopes to raise voting consciousness and readiness during the upcoming election season by broadcasting on DC/TV our Issue forum on the proposed Bond package, as well as almost a dozen Candidate Forums for county and state races. The more ways that voters can be reached and informed, the higher the chances that they will turn out and participate in the electoral process.

Please do everything in your power to let DC/TV help democracy work by adequately funding the priceless public service that it renders our local community.

Thank you for your kind attention in this regard.  
Katherine Homan, President

September 12, 2006

## New State Positions Important for Advocacy

*Judi Stewart, Program VP and  
Lynda Ender, Advocacy VP*

Much of the last program year was devoted to learning the Facts and Issues about two State Studies, one on **Drug Laws and Policies** and another on **Regional Transportation in Texas**. Issue Forums with blue ribbon panelists were held on each of the two topics and subsequently, members were asked to submit answers to consensus questions. Consensus reports from LWV-Dallas were sent to LWV-Texas and considered in conjunction with consensus reports from the other Leagues across the State. LWV-Texas compiled all the reports and determined the **consensus positions** of each of the issues, which were voted on and **officially adopted at the State Convention this past April**.

The **new Drug Laws and Policies position** can be found on page 37 of your Handbook & Directory under Section II, B. It reads: Drug Laws and Policies: **Action to achieve policies for prevention and treatment as an alternative to incarceration.**

The **new Transportation position** can be found on page 38 of our Handbook & Directory, Section IV, C. It reads: Transportation: **Action to achieve a system to move people and goods that includes a variety of modes that is efficient, convenient and cost effective.**

The new State position on Transportation was almost immediately put into service when the **Trans-Texas Corridor Hearings** were held in July by TX-DOT. For information on the **testimony** that we presented, please see our September 2006 **VOTER**.

With elections over, we will be gearing up at **November Unit meetings** for the upcoming 80<sup>th</sup> State Legislative Session, beginning January 9, 2007, with **advocacy training** led by Advocacy VP Lynda Ender. She has valuable knowledge and experience from working in a state senatorial office and at the Senior Source, Senior Citizens of Greater Dallas, as an advocate for older adult **issues**.

## Unit Meetings

Topic: Advocacy training for 2007  
State Legislative session.

### Oak Cliff Unit

**Wednesday, November 8, 10:00 AM**

Co-Leaders: Mildred Pope

214-374-8067

Kristin DeLoach

972-213-8637

Primrose Oaks Community Room  
2999 S. Hampton Road at Perryton Drive

### East Dallas Unit

**Wednesday, November 8, Noon**

Leader Suzanne Wills - 214-324-1594

6121 Worth, bordered by Abrams & La Vista

### Dallas Evening Unit

**Wednesday, November 8, 6:30 PM**

Leader Arline Pitt - 972-243-3966

Central Market (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Community Room)  
5750 E. Lovers Lane at Greenville Ave.

### North Dallas Unit

**Thursday, November 9, 9:30 AM**

Leader Gayle Hurst - 214-348-7112

Churchill Way Recreation Center,  
6906 Churchill Way off Hillcrest

### What's Coming at Unit Meetings

**December 13/14** - Local program planning  
and Holiday Munching

**January 10/11** - Facts and Issues presented  
on Dallas Municipal Bond Study

**February 7/8** - Coming to Consensus on  
Dallas Municipal Bond process

**March 7/8** - How Parkland Hospital is Com-  
pensated for Indigent Care

**April 12** - Noon Combined Unit Meeting on  
How Immigration is Affecting Our Local Com-  
munity

**May 9/10** - "Doing Your Own Thing"

**More DART Out to Vote! Drive Results (Continued from Page 1)**

- appreciated having a listing of the Early Voting times and locations that they could keep and refer to later on when they were planning when and where to go vote.
- did not know that they could see a copy of their Sample Ballot before going to vote. An El Centro student beamed that "It's like seeing the test questions ahead of time!"

A second result, as the tally sheet below details, was our success in **finding and reaching our target under-served voting populations – minorities and youths**. By bringing voter services to *DART* train and bus riders, we were able to raise the voting consciousness and readiness of thousands whose busy lives and days do not afford them many, if any, **citizenship education opportunities**.

An important finding was the number of **ex-felons who were "off paper"** but did not know that their voting rights would be restored once they reapplied. One young man at the West End Station told me that he "had been in prison his entire adult life, but was clear now and wanted to stay that way." He feared that registering to vote would just get him "back into trouble." Considering the unprecedented numbers of citizens that the State of Texas has imprisoned during the last 40 years, this is a sizeable portion of the voting population that is not only unaware of its voting rights, but also believing themselves prohibited from resuming their participation as citizens. **Once felons have served their time and are eligible to reclaim their voting rights, shouldn't part of their release be the issuance of a voter registration application card?** Is this perhaps a voting rights cause for the League to take on?

Even though this was a first-of-its-kind event, if you participated I am sure you will agree that all the volunteers performed like polished professionals and the entire campaign was well organized and executed.

**Should there be the barest hint of an increase in voter turnout this election cycle, the League's Community Coalition is taking credit for it!**

**DART Out to Vote! Drive Tally Sheet**

Station	Green cards	White Cards	Voting flyers	Volunteers
West End	150	300+	1,000	41
Hampton	132	150	700	105
Illinois	99	75	unreported	
Westmoreland	98	22	180	10
Ledbetter	181	26	600	64
So. Irving	63	76+	560	19
Garland	64	100	200+	16
Mockingbird	108	114	350	20
Park Lane	135	75	500	37
Spring Valley	35	250	200	13
Parker Road (Collin Co.)	25	400	n/a	35
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>4,290</b>	<b>360</b>

## ***DART Out To Vote! Press Conference at Dallas County Commissioners Court***



League of Women Voters Community Coalition Partners with County Judge Margaret Keliher, Dallas County Elections Administrator Bruce Sherbet, *DART* Board VP Joyce Foreman, & Dallas City Council member Dr. Maxine Thornton-Reese

## **International Visitors from Africa Learning About Grassroots Democracy from LWV-Dallas**



Guests from the participant countries of Benin, Berkina Faso, Chad, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, and Togo with League Board members. Seated: Barbara Downey and Katherine Homan; Standing: Suzanne Wills, Judy Stewart, and Mildred Pope.

We were honored to be the organization selected by the World Affairs Council to meet on September 25, 2006 with participants in an International Leadership Program on Grassroots Democracy. This 21-day program was designed to introduce them to democracy as it is practiced in the U.S. and to underscore the critical role that an active and engaged citizenry plays in a democratic society. They were heartened to learn that voter readiness and turnout is a never-ending challenge--even in our own established democracy!

## Study - Consensus - Advocacy A Look Back at League Successes *Eleanor Sutherland, League Historian*

The League chose important issues for study from its very beginning in 1920. Within a year of its founding in 1938, Dallas League members took up a comparative study of compulsory education laws in various states.

I bet you thought Catherine Perrine was just our water maven, but in 1958 she chaired the committee that prepared *Know Your Schools*, a comparative study of school districts in Dallas, Richardson, and the Park Cities. The impact of the *Know Your Schools* survey led to requests for copies and for speakers from the League to lead discussions with local PTAs. Ultimately, the general meeting held in April that year – “What’s the Future of Dallas Schools?” - featured a panel discussion, with LWV board members asking questions of DISD Superintendent Dr. W. T. White and other administration staff. Education has been a front burner issue ever since.

Our dedication to better education was not limited to the DISD. A 1964 comprehensive study chaired by Rosemary Henderson led to the formation of the Dallas County Community College District, which has made higher education available and affordable to thousands of students. The *Dallas Times Herald* awarded its Club of the Year to the League for its valuable contribution.

Rosemary and Barbara Bubis were invited to serve on the Dallas Junior College Steering Committee. League members circulated petitions authorizing the college and helped the steering committee campaign for passage of a bond election to finance it.

Excerpted from “55 Years of Making a Difference: An Informal History of the League of Women Voters of Dallas, 1938 - 1993” by Ellen Key.

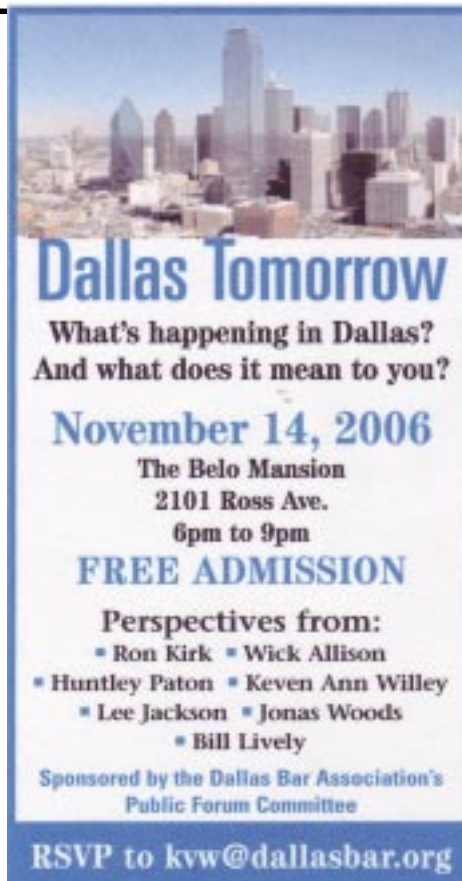
## Volunteers Needed on Election Day

Join a group of volunteers at the League Office to answer phones and questions on Election Day. There will be experienced folks there with their cell phones and lap tops to increase our services.

Voters call in with very simple questions about where to vote that we can answer quickly. Others have more complicated problems, but we do our best and may refer them to the Election Headquarters.

You may find it a very satisfying experience helping out voters. You may also have a good time. One new member told us recently that she came to work, but didn't know that we also had fun!

Call **Eleanor Sutherland** at 214-368-8215 and discuss a 2- or 3-hour shift that is convenient for you.



**Dallas Tomorrow**  
What's happening in Dallas?  
And what does it mean to you?

**November 14, 2006**  
The Belo Mansion  
2101 Ross Ave.  
6pm to 9pm  
**FREE ADMISSION**

**Perspectives from:**  
• Ron Kirk • Wick Allison  
• Huntley Paton • Keven Ann Willey  
• Lee Jackson • Jonas Woods  
• Bill Lively

Sponsored by the Dallas Bar Association's  
Public Forum Committee

RSVP to [kw@dallasbar.org](mailto:kw@dallasbar.org)

## SAVE THE DATE!

**The Friends of the Library Fall Fundraiser is coming on Thursday, November 16th. We will be having Dinner at the Library Featuring Lawrence Wright.**

Lawrence Wright is the author of *The Looming Tower Al-Qaeda's Journey to America*. He is a staff writer for The New Yorker, a novelist and screenwriter. He also is a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School and now lives in Austin.

We will start with a Cocktail Party at 6:00, dinner at 7:00 and Mr. Wright will speak at 8:00 pm, all on the first floor of the library. We will have a Silent Auction of rare books, fine art, prints and other assorted goodies. Contact me [mkf943@swbell.net](mailto:mkf943@swbell.net) if you have questions.

Marsha K. Fogarty, Immediate Past President, Friends of the Library