

League of Women Voters  
of Dallas

# VOTER



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

## Our Second All-Member Meeting on December 12

*Mildred Pope, Program VP*

In keeping with the spirit of the holidays, we will be meeting together to indulge in seasonal goodies and to renew our commitment to the core principles of the League's program process. **Please come with fresh ideas for next year's local programming.**

**LWV-Texas Program VP Janet Imhoff** and our **Advocacy Vice President Lynda Ender** will lead off this forum on the League **principles and guidelines** that govern how we conduct studies and take positions on issues. **Susybel Gosslee, Lou Ann Ligon, and Suzy Wills** will present examples from **their committee experiences as participants in local, national, and state studies.** Then members will join the discussion, ask questions, and evaluate the process.

Newer members can benefit from learning from seasoned members—some of whom have had 50-years-plus experience with League program. Those of us who are now involved in studies and advocacy will have a chance to compare how League program policies and principles can support our efforts.

**Please mark Wednesday, December 12 at 6:00 PM** on your calendar. Be sure to come both to meet and greet and to contribute your League thinking to this endeavor in the **Oakwood Room at the Center for Community Cooperation, 2900 Live Oak, Dallas 75204.** Plan your carpool now!

### Help Us Welcome New Citizens

Our League Voter Registration Service has become an integral part of Dallas' Naturalization ceremonies. They are a great opportunity to see folks from every country imaginable coming together, after five years of hard work, to receive their U.S. citizenship. You can **be an observer** at the ceremony that includes a **flag color guard, local patriotic entertainment,** and often **an outstanding speaker** or video of a federal official. Helping these new citizens fill out their voter registration cards is an exciting, heartwarming, and important job!

The next two Registrations will be held at the Dallas Convention Center on **Tuesday, December 18 at 10AM and 2PM.** All necessary supplies are furnished, and you do not need to be a deputized Voter Registrar to be of assistance. If you would like to attend, **contact Liz Wally at [elizawally@aol.com](mailto:elizawally@aol.com) or 214-821-2237** for further details. Invite a friend to participate and enjoy a trip downtown to the Convention Center.

*On February 15, 2008*

*the Dallas League*

*will present its*

*Susan B. Anthony  
Award*

*to*

*Ginny Whitehill*

*at the Dallas Arboretum  
in Rosine Hall*

*Plan now to attend!*

## We're Off and Running for November 2008! *Brenda Marks, Voter Outreach VP*

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The **2008 Election Season** officially began November 7, 2007 and will dominate the news and public conversation until a new President and Congress are inaugurated on January 20, 2009.

**Statewide voters** will be deciding a new Railroad Commissioner, three places on the Texas Supreme Court, including the Chief Judge, and three places on the Court of Criminal Appeals. On a local level, **voters in Dallas County** will be selecting their Sheriff and Tax Assessor and Collector as well as deciding races in three State Senatorial and 16 State Representative Districts, three places on the 5<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals and six district judgeships, many of which are anticipated to be highly competitive. **Voters in southern Dallas County** will also be electing a Member to the State Board of Education.

The **Dallas League** has begun planting the seeds for the upcoming March 4, 2008 primaries. We will be **publishing Primary and General Election Voters Guides** and holding **candidate forums** in highly contested races that capture the attention of the general public and media. We are also looking forward to expanding our relationship with our **new media partner, PegasusNews.com**, who will be posting our Voters Guides, audio/video of all our candidate forums and important press releases and election-themed articles. These "posts" will not be links, but the actual content, so viewers will easily be able to access the material.

**President Libbie T. Lee and the Board** have been very focused on taking every opportunity we can to use technology to expand our audience to younger voters. **Cherlyn and Karlton Remington** and their talented staff at **Lifetime Video Productions** deserve our collective applause and gratitude for guiding these efforts and for always being willing and available to provide **first-rate video and audio services to our forums and public events**. Without them, we would still be using a VCR in a DVD world.

**Voter registration** will continue to be the cornerstone of our 2008 voter outreach activities. We will focus on the **New Citizen Ceremonies** -- the next will be held December 18<sup>th</sup> -- and we're talking with our community partners about repeating **DART Out to Vote!** or **holding other city-wide events** this spring. We are determined to take every opportunity to reach out to young voters from 18 to 35, and Presidential years are historically the best time to do it. **Liz Wally**, registrar extraordinaire, has guided our voter registration activities for years, but is planning to move on soon to focus her attention on advocacy for clean elections and other important issues. Thank you, Liz, for your dedication, energy and leadership all these years to ensure that voter registration and education remained our top priority.

On a personal note, many thanks to every member who volunteered for voter outreach events and activities in 2007. I hope that you will set aside some time to help us ensure that the 2008 Election Year will be our most successful yet. **Please send an email or call the office if you would like to be part of the "production staff" for the Voters Guide or with planning candidate forums.**

**Libbie, Katherine, Mildred, Lynda and the Board** join with me in wishing everyone **a peaceful and joyful Holiday Season**. Rest up, because the Dallas League will need your spirit and energy in 2008!



Clockwise: Liz Wally, Cody Meador, Donna Stroud and Kyrsten Sinema

## Clean Elections Texas - Dallas

Brand new Leaguer **Cody Meador** and voter registrar extraordinaire **Liz Wally** are the driving forces behind local efforts for public funding of elections. A new sophomore at SMU, Cody has already started the first Texas chapter of *Democracy Matters* (a national campus-based organization to promote public funding of elections) and set up the Town Hall meeting described below, as well as a weekly radio program on an SMU station about public funding of elections.

On November 7, she organized a Town Hall meeting at SMU's Student Center, featuring North Carolina Appellate Court Judge Donna Stroud (R) and Arizona State Representative Kyrsten Sinema (D), who told a full house of their experience as Clean Election candidates in their respective states. This event was well-attended both by students and other guests, including many Leaguers. **LWV-Dallas** co-sponsored this event and **Lifetime Video Productions** taped it for use in making training videos to show at house parties gathering grass-roots support.

Clean Elections, or public funding of political campaigns, is not a partisan issue and is championed by all parties in the states where it is offered. The intent is to take big money out of elections and put power back in the hands of the voters. **LWVUS** has a campaign finance reform position supporting this, and **LWV-Texas** is a coalition partner with the recently formed statewide *Clean Election Texas* group. There is a **Clean Elections Texas-Dallas chapter**, which offers house parties, Meetups, and training sessions for hosts and speakers.

If you are interested in getting involved or learning more, contact Liz at [elizawally@aol.com](mailto:elizawally@aol.com) or 214.821.2237. For more information on Clean Elections, here are some useful web-sites to explore: [publiccampaign.org](http://publiccampaign.org); [fairelectionsnow.org](http://fairelectionsnow.org); [democracymatters.org](http://democracymatters.org); [democracy-nc.org/index.shtml](http://democracy-nc.org/index.shtml); [azclean.org](http://azclean.org); [mainecleanelections.org](http://mainecleanelections.org); and [just6dollars.org](http://just6dollars.org).

## Visit from Panamanian Delegation!

As participants in the International Visitor Leadership Program, Mrs. Catibel Arias and Mr. Adolfo Valderrama met with **Sarah Hauser**, **Mildred Pope** and **Katherine Homan** at the League Office to learn about young leaders and grassroots activism. Mrs. Arias is with the Patriotic Union Party and Mr. Valderrama with the Panamanian Party, two out of nearly a dozen political parties in Panama.

We engaged in a lively discussion about immigration reform, which was noted as a welcome departure for them from the other more formal meetings that they had already attended. Viva LWV-Dallas!



Mildred Pope (seated), Sarah Hauser, Catibel Arias, Adolfo Valderrama, Katherine Homan

**The League of Women Voters of Dallas**

proudly announces

the selection of

**Virginia Bulkley Whitehill**

as the **2008 recipient**

of the

**Susan B. Anthony Award**



In response to the statement that landing on the moon was "one giant step for mankind," Virginia Bulkley Whitehill says, "I am here to declare that winning the vote was a monumental giant step for womankind!" Ginny heard first-hand stories of that achievement from her mother Myrtle Bales Bulkley, a suffragist and charter member of the League of Women Voters. Well inspired, Ginny has exercised her right to vote and led an extraordinary life of civic activism.

From trailblazing as a Girl Scout to mentoring young women today, Ginny has been an iconic volunteer leader. Best known as a champion of women's rights, she co-founded the Dallas Women's Coalition, Women's Issues Network, Dallas Women's Foundation, The Family Place (the first Dallas shelter for battered women), Women's Southwest Credit Union, Dallas Women's Political Caucus, Texans for Motherhood by Choice (later TARAL), and the Women's Equity Action League.

In addition, she has served on numerous boards including the League of Women Voters of Dallas, Women's Council of Dallas County, Friends of SMU Libraries (DeGolyer Library Archives of Women of the Southwest), Planned Parenthood of Dallas, National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), and National Network of Women's Funds. She is an avid supporter of The Women's Museum at Fair Park and a sustaining member of the Junior League of Dallas. This year she celebrates 50 years of devoted membership and service to the League of Women Voters.

Her endless contributions to the advancement of women are represented by a stellar array of awards. They include the *Texas Trailblazer Award*, *Leadership America Alum Award*, *Woman of Courage Award*, *Women Helping Women Maura Award*, *Champion of Choice Award*, *Profiles in Leadership Award*, *Women of Excellence Award*, *Woman of Spirit Award*, *Distinguished Service Award* of the Dallas Women's Council Good Gal award from the Texas Women's Political Caucus, and last but not least, the League of Women Voters of Dallas *Myrtle Bulkley Award for Outstanding Service*.

A *Distinguished Alumna* of Mount Holyoke College, Ginny became a transplanted New York Yankee in 1960 when she moved to Dallas with her husband, the late James Whitehill, an enthusiastic supporter of her work. Having grown up in the quiescent '50s, Ginny wasn't sure that one little woman could do much to improve the human condition outside her family arena. Yet, she started asking herself, "If not me... who?" And, gradually, through affiliations large and small, she began to act, deciding to "bloom where you are planted" in Dallas' wonderfully rich soil.

Ginny is the mother of two daughters, Patricia and Margaret, and the grandmother of Jillian Whitehill Abbey, who just turned 18 and, of course, became a registered voter!

**Friday, February 15, 2008**  
**Save the Date to Celebrate!**

**The League of Women Voters of Dallas'**

selection of the

**2008 Susan B. Anthony Award recipient**

**Virginia Bulkley Whitehill**

who exemplifies the characteristics of Susan B. Anthony:  
independence, persistence, determination, and  
dedication to obtaining equal rights for all citizens  
of the United States of America.

Dallas Arboretum  
Rosine Hall  
8525 Garland Road

## Voting Matters

**Doug Taylor, League Member and Contributing Columnist**

I have been discussing the issue of **voter verified paper trails** and direct recording electronic (DRE) voting stations, such as the iVotronic that we use for early voting in Dallas County which does not offer a paper trail. **Bruce Sherbet** feels that he would probably get rid of the DRE's entirely, rather than run the risk of problems with attaching unreliable printers. This is critical if the printed trail becomes the only valid record for a recount. Printer failures could easily wipe out the records of hundreds of votes.

Since **early voting is the primary use for the iVotronic DRE's**, replacing them with paper ballots would be inconvenient, but not impossible. It would involve stocking the most commonly used ballot styles at each early voting location and printing the others on demand. I think we should encourage the Elections Department to test this out in one of the early voting locations as proof of concept. This would give us a good idea of the cost and mechanics of early voting using only paper ballots.

One other concept we discussed involves continuing to use DRE's, **but requiring a more robust audit capability**. Obviously this would require standards set at the national level. Since electronic fund transfer systems are entirely automated and have high reliability and strong audit capabilities, I think they should be the model.

**Here's how it can be done:** Write the audit trail to a write-only medium. This is done with write-only CD drives that essentially "burn" a record of every activity on the DRE or computer. The CD is then the official audit log and can be compared to the actual vote tallies in the memory card which could be erased. Screen "shots" or screen captures can also be used to capture the vote summary screen as the voter presses the vote button. If they are written to a write-only medium, they have recount validity. Today the screen is not really "captured" as we do with screen shot software. It's actually just the data the voter entered which can be manipulated. Screen shot software actually creates a graphical image which can then be written to another location. Images are much more difficult to manipulate than data in tables and are thus more likely to be accurate.

Either way, a write-only **electronic medium is needed to provide an electronic trail** that can be compared to the count on the memory card. Since voters are not confident that their vote is being counted when they use DREs to vote, it will take major changes to make them feel confident.

## Members of the League of Women Voters at a City Hall Press Conference



Prior to the November 6 election, Leaguers from Dallas, Irving, and Richardson gathered with **Representative Dan Branch, author of Proposition 11**, to promote its passage at a press conference at City Hall. Texas now has a constitutional amendment to record all votes on final passage and make the results easily accessible to the public.

**Front row: Eleanor Sutherland (Dallas), Lou Ann Ligon (Dallas), Katherine Homan (Dallas), Texas Representative Dan Branch (Dallas), Linda Camin (Dallas), Nancy Wilson (Richardson), Genie Mitchell (Irving), Mona Wyatt (Irving). Back row: Doug Taylor (Dallas), Lyn Hurt (Richardson).**