



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

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS

VOTER

January
2007

Office 214-688-4125

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www.lwvdallas.org

Unit Meetings January 10 – 11

Oak Cliff Unit – Wed. at 10 AM

Co- Leaders:

Mildred Pope 214-374-8067

Kristin DeLoach 972-213-8637

Primrose Oaks Community Room
2999 S. Hampton Rd at Perryton

East Dallas Unit – Wed. at Noon

Leader Suzanne Wills - 214-324-1594
Lakewood Branch Library
6121 Worth near Abrams & La Vista

Evening Unit – Wed. at 6:30 PM

Leader Arline Pitt - 972-243-3966
Central Market (2nd Floor)
5750 E. Lovers Lane at Greenville

Mockingbird Unit – Thurs. at 10AM

Home of Pauli Barr - 214-368-0542
2845 University Blvd. 75205

North Dallas Unit - Thurs. at 10AM

Leader Gayle Hurst - 214-348-7112
Churchill Way Recreation Center
6906 Churchill Way off Hillcrest

In League

General Meeting Wed. January 24

on Trinity River Corridor
Project Bond Process
Infomart – at Noon
1950 North Stemmons Freeway

Municipal Bond Study Programs In January *Susybelle Gosslee, Chair, Municipal Bond Study*

The Dallas Municipal Bond Study Fact and Issues will be presented at our **January unit meetings and at a General Meeting** for members on January 24th at noon at the InfoMart. The bond process for road and bridges and the library will be discussed at each regularly scheduled unit meeting. The Trinity River Corridor Project bond process will be the topic of an In League meeting two weeks later. Attending both programs is recommended so that members can be better informed and can come to **consensus at February Unit Meetings.**

Study Committee members **Theresa Daniel, Susybelle Gosslee, Michelle Manners, Kathleen Matsumura, Linda Sharp and Mary Vogelson** will be the presenters. The Municipal Bond Study is about the bond decision-making *process*, not the individual merits of the specific bond programs, although the study compares library, street and the Trinity River Corridor Project bonds from 1972 to 2006 to illustrate that process.

When the Dallas Municipal Bonds Facts & Issues document is completed, it will be delivered in two ways. Members with web access will have it emailed to them; for all other members the document will be mailed.

If you wish to order a box lunch, please mail your check for \$10, made out to LWV-D, to the office **before Monday, January 22.**

League Lobby Day is January 30th

The **League of Women Voters of Texas** invites you to League Lobby Day in Austin--the 2007 Statewide Conference in conjunction with Texas Women's Legislative Days (TWLD). **See your LWVTX VOTER for details and a registration form.**

All League members are encouraged to come to TWLD on January 29th and attend League Lobby Day the next day. Don't miss this opportunity for members from across the state to join together and show League presence at the Capitol.

President's Post

2006-2007

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As our Dallas League embarks upon the 2007 year, let us take a moment's pleasure and gratification in all our 2006 accomplishments!

- **WE provided** voter service to over 5,000 new citizens.
- **WE developed** the "Why Don't Texas Women Vote" survey in response to a report ranking Texas women 49th in the US for voter turnout. From over 2,000 responses, we found that regardless of ethnicity, age or income, the preponderant impediment to higher turnout was lack of information about candidates and issues.
- **We registered** voters at the Mega-March; at Head Start programs and on El Centro, Mountain View, Richland and SMU campuses; at VIVA Dallas!, Women's Expo, and Exitos weekend fairs; in Half Price Books stores and the VA Medical Center; and at senior citizen residences.
- **WE spearheaded** the LWV Community Coalition that registered and educated nearly 7,000 voters at eleven DART rail and bus stations. Coalition partners included League of United Latin American Citizens, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, American Association of University Women, DFW Asian American Citizens Council and the Social Action Council of the First Unitarian Church.
- **WE hosted** a record breaking number of "Meet the Candidates" forums taped and broadcast by DCTV.
- **WE presented** issue forums on "Electronic Voting Security" and "Financing City Government with Bonds."
- **WE printed** and distributed a *Dallas County Voters Guide* with nonpartisan voting and candidate information. Between our print and online versions, our *Voters Guide* reached over a quarter of a million people.

Our program focus for the remainder of this League year will be presenting the Facts and Issues about the **Dallas Municipal Bond Study**, as well as an introduction to the Facts and Myths about the Impact of Immigration on Dallas County. Everyone put your thinking caps on, in order to come prepared to be informed and then examine the implications of that information!

More immediately, however, we are gearing up for the **Susan B. Anthony Award Luncheon**, our only fundraising event of the year. Our honoree **Laura Estrada** was nominated by Leaguer **Becky Sykes**, Executive Director of the Women's Foundation. After reading Becky's enclosed nomination statement, I think you will agree that Laura is not only supremely qualified, but especially worthy of recognition for all her efforts above and beyond being the President and Owner of Garza Business Services, Inc. a consulting firm specializing in corporate, legal and financial printing.

Here's to a New Year of helping Make Democracy Work by practicing Susan B. Anthony's virtues of persistence, determination and dedication in ensuring equal rights for all in our community!

Local League Program Planning



Judi

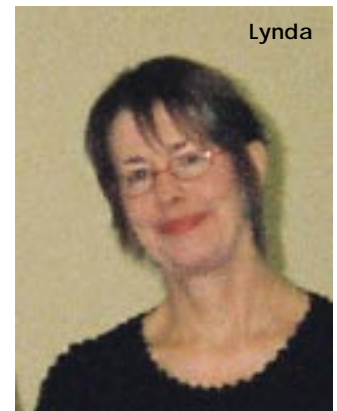
Program planning sessions in December yielded lively discussions of future program and study topics. Now representatives from each unit will meet with **Program Vice President Judi Stewart** to make recommendations to the Board for adoption by the membership at the Annual meeting in April.

Ellen Key, Arline Pitt, Mildred Pope, and Susy Wills are members of the Local Program Exploratory and Planning Committee. A non-board member will be appointed as its chair. Each of them was a participant in unit planning sessions.

Our bylaws provide that voting members may make suggestions to the Board at least two months before the annual meeting. **If you have further suggestions or were not able to attend a unit meeting**, please contact **Judi Stewart** (214-520-8207) as soon possible to have your ideas considered by the Committee.

Let Us Know!

Please e-mail us **ALL your interest areas**, so that Advocacy VP **Lynda Ender** can notify you **only** when alerts arise on issues of importance to you. For example, air & water quality, city planning, civil liberties, education, election reform, healthcare, open space preservation, etc. Let us know at lvvdallas@sbcglobal.net or lender@theseniorsource.org



Lynda



Michelle

The Story Bank Project

We are collecting stories about Leaguers who have been active members for a number of years to learn ***why your membership in the League has been important.*** Share with us your League experience and become part of our "Story Bank!"

If you have a story or you know of someone whose story should be submitted, please contact Membership Director **Michelle Manners** at 214-750-2197.

Becky and Jane say,
"Don't forget that we need your silent auction items for the Susan B. Anthony Luncheon before February 10!"



War on the Environment Suzanne Wills, Drug Policy Observer

Growers of coca and opium cleared 2.3 million hectares of rainforest to create new fields for cultivation between 1982 and 2002 according to Rand Beers, Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. **One quarter of all Amazonian deforestation in the 20th century was a result of the illegal drug trade.** Remote, biodiverse spots make ideal bases for narcotics production and trafficking.

To destroy these coca and opium crops the U.S. government has **sprayed vast quantities of high-potency glyphosate** over hundreds of thousands of acres in Colombia's remote forests, one of the most delicate and biodiverse ecosystems in the world. **Ecologists are very worried about the effects of the herbicide**, especially the surfactant chemicals that are added to help penetrate foliage.

Over 8,000 complaints have been filed over **erroneous fumigation** of food crops in Colombia. A resolution presented to the American Medical Association's 2004 convention said the spraying is causing "widespread illnesses, destroying pastures, destroying food crops, poisoning livestock, displacing thousands of small farmers, and killing birds, mammals, aquatic life, and natural plants."

The U.S. government's 2006 survey showed that Colombia had 144,000 acres (556 square miles) of coca being cultivated-- more than when Plan Colombia began.

Even more disturbing, some scientists believe the use of **glyphosate may accelerate the growth of Fusarium**, a genus of **very toxic moulds** that occurs naturally in soils and occasionally invades crops, but is usually held in check by other microbes. The manufacturer of glyphosate, **Monsanto, says there is no danger.**

During 2000, the U.S. Congress planned to use *Fusarium* as a biological control agent to kill coca crops in Colombia and another fungus to kill opium poppies in Afghanistan. These plans were dropped after intense criticism from scientists.

Mexican growers produce about 30 percent of the heroin on the U.S. market. **Mexican "superlabs"** have become the major source of methamphetamine. The Sierra Madre highlands are a center for marijuana and opium cultivation. The fragile Sonoran desert near the U.S. border is a major drug route. Little is known about the environmental damage from these activities because areas controlled by drug gangs have become too dangerous for environmental groups to enter.

In the U. S., drug prohibition, emphasizing forfeiture laws, leads illegal drug cultivators and manufacturers to locate in remote, environmentally pristine areas, often deserts and national forests. A cost/bene-fit analysis of

the drug war, which includes the cost of environmental destruction, is long overdue.

Monsanto's popular product Roundup, which contains a chemical called glyphosate is alleged to increase the size of colonies of the fungus *Fusarium*, a genus of often very toxic moulds that occurs naturally in soils and occasionally invades crops, but usually held in check by other microbes. If true, these allegations not only call into question the world's number one weed killer, but they also jeopardize the world's acceptance of Monsanto's flagship line of genetically-engineered "Roundup Ready" crops.

Maybe, but, over the last two decades, several scientists from New Zealand to Africa investigated the **glyphosate-fusarium relationship** through small-scale experiments in the relative obscurity of their labs and reporting the results of their work through the hidden world of academic journals. The result of all of this work, is "just under 50 scientific papers," says Robert Kremer PhD., a soil scientist at the University of Missouri. This body work shows an increase in *Fusarium* or other microbes after the application of glyphosate.

Monsanto's Dr. Harvey Glick disagrees: "Roundup is almost 30 years old and scientists have been looking at all aspects of its use for at least that long. So there is a tremendous amount of information available. And that is why there is such a high level of confidence that the use of Roundup, based on all of this earlier work, does not have any negative impacts on soil microbes."

During 2000, the U.S. Congress planned to use the fungus ***Fusarium*** as a biological control agent to kill coca crops in Colombia and another fungus to kill opium poppies in Afghanistan, but these plans were **dropped by then-president Clinton** who was concerned that the unilateral use of a biological agent would be perceived by the rest of the world as **biological warfare**. The Andean nations, including Colombia where it was to be used in the drug war against coca cultivation, banned its use throughout the region.

Sanho Tree, Director of the Institute for Policy Studies Drug Policy Project, commented on using a banned micro-organism-producing chemical: "The U.S. has supplied tens of thousands of gallons of Roundup to the Colombian government for use in aerial fumigation of coca crops. We have been using a fleet of crop dusters to dump unprecedented amounts of high-potency glyphosate over hundreds of thousands of acres in one of the most delicate and bio-diverse ecosystems in the world. This futile effort has done little to reduce the availability of cocaine on our streets, but now we are learning that a possible side-effect of this campaign could be the **unleashing of a *Fusarium* epidemic in Amazon basin.** The drug war has tried in vain to keep cocaine out of people's noses, but could result instead in scorching the lungs of the earth."