



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

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS

# VOTER

March  
2007

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### Unit Locations

**Oak Cliff Unit - Wed. at 10:00AM**

Mildred Pope 214-374-8067

Kristin DeLoach 972-213-8637

Primrose Oaks Community Room  
2999 S. Hampton Rd at Perryton Rd

**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 6:30PM**

Leader **Arline Pitt** - 972-243-3966

Central Market (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

5750 E. Lovers Lane at Greenville

**Mockingbird Unit - Thurs. 9:30AM**

Eleanor Sutherland 214-368-8215

Pat Vaughan 214-350-2623

St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church  
6525 Inwood at Mockingbird

**North Dallas Unit - Thurs. at 9:30AM**

Leader **Gayle Hurst** - 214-348-7112

Churchill Way Recreation Center

6906 Churchill Way off Hillcrest

**Don't forget New Citizens** ceremonies at the Dallas Convention Center on **March 20** at **10:00 AM** and **2:00 PM**.

Time to use your new Deputy Registrar ID Card to help register new citizens to become new voters.

Contact Liz Wally at 214-821-2237 or [elizawally@gmail.com](mailto:elizawally@gmail.com)

### From Study to Action:

## Consensus is the Next Step at Unit Meetings, March 7 & 8

The **Municipal Bond Study Committee** has completed its work, and the **Consensus Questions** are ready for **member action at March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Unit Meetings**.

The **Facts and Issues** paper is being distributed by email to as many members as possible and will be mailed to all others. With these two items in hand each member will be able to contribute to the discussion.

After the Study was adopted at the 2003 Annual Meeting, the units had sessions on municipal bonds in November and dealt with street and library bond issues in February. The following years were busy ones with national elections, state legislative sessions, and the strong mayor issue in Dallas. **The Bond Study was extended several times at our Annual Meetings.**

Last year our interest in bonds picked up when the city held a bond election in November. In preparation we invited a group

(Continued on p. 3)



Seated: Mary Vogelsson, Kathleen Matsumura, Michelle Manners.  
Standing: Linda Sharp, Lois Finkelman, Veletta Lill, Susybelle Gosslee.

## President's Post

2006-2007

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It's March - Women's History Month - so we are featuring local women who have made history! Please note on page 4 the first submission by Environmental League Luminary **Genie Fritz** to our Story Bank Project "What the League Has Meant to Me." Each of us has our own unique Story, and Membership Director **Michelle Manners** is looking forward to collecting one from you. I encourage you to call Michelle at 214-750-2197.

Also on page 4, please note a special photo provided by co-founder of numerous Dallas women's organizations and League icon **Virginia Whitehill** of her suffragette Mother, **Myrtle Bales Bulkley**, with Governor **Ann Richards**. This is one of several pictures of archival significance that Ginny donated and you are seeing before they are retired to our League Archives at the Dallas Central Library!

**At this month's Unit meetings, we will be seeking consensus for a position on the municipal bond process in Dallas.** Please take the time to review your Facts & Issues in order to be best prepared for participation in discussions about the consensus questions, which are listed on page 3. Many, many thanks to our **intrepid Municipal Bond Study Committee** for its long, data-gathering labors and for presenting this complex information at January Unit meetings and an *In League* meeting on the Trinity River Corridor Project.

By now, those of you with e-mail availability should have received three editions of the State League's **2007 Legislative Newsletter**. LWV-TX is tracking, supporting and opposing various bills for us as they pass through this session of the State Legislature. In the most recent edition, Dallas Leaguer-for-all-Seasons and State Program Chair **Julie Lowenberg** provides information on bills under consideration that relate to Reproductive Choice and Women's Health. If you are not yet receiving it or know someone who would like to subscribe to this *Legislative Newsletter*, please let **Editor Brandon Spenrath** know by emailing him at [www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org).

One area of pending State legislation that is of particular interest to Leaguers pertains to the installation of devices on electronic voting machines that will produce a **voter-verified paper trail (VVPT)**. The League's position in that regard comes from a **resolution passed at our 2006 National Convention** and reads as follows: LWVUS supports only voting systems that are designed so that

1. they employ a voter-verifiable paper ballot or other paper record, said paper being the official record of the voter's intent; and
2. the voter can verify, either by eye or with the aid of suitable devices for those who have impaired vision, that the paper ballot/record accurately reflects his or her intent; and
3. such verification takes place while the voter is still in the process of voting; and
4. the paper ballot/record is used for audits and recounts; and
5. the vote totals can be verified by an independent hand count of the paper ballot/record; and
6. routine audits of the paper ballot/record in randomly selected precincts can be conducted in every election.

**Keep your eye out for coverage in upcoming editions of the *Legislative Newsletter* on the almost half dozen VVPT bills that are in progress!**

## Municipal Bond Study Consensus Questions

1. How should **planning** for bond programs be accomplished? What role should the public have in the **decision-making process**?
2. How can citizens be kept **informed** of bond programs? How should an **educational program** be managed?
3. How can the public know if **more bond elections** will be needed in the future to complete a project?
4. What role should **General Obligation bonds** have in general? What role should General Obligation bonds have in specific, such as paying for Major Maintenance items, like roofs and street reconstructions that have a 20-year or more life span?
5. In order to have informed citizens, **how much time** should there be between the approval of the bond package by the city council and the bond election?
6. Should major projects with phases of construction be listed under the **same heading**? For example, in the 2006 bond election, Trinity River Corridor Projects were scattered under different propositions. Why or why not?
7. How should projects be **balanced** by district and citywide needs? What criteria should be used for decision making? Is there a role for discretionary funds in a bond program?
8. Under what circumstances should a project financed by bonds be **reconsidered** by voters?

### Consensus is the Next Step (Continued from Page 1)

of experts, including our **City Manager, Mary Suhm**, to address the topic: **Financing City Government with Bonds**. **City Government Observer Corps** kept us up-to-date on the issues with articles in the *VOTER*.

The Bond Study Committee maintained its interest and research, which has been summarized in the Facts and Issues paper. In January, Unit meetings were held on streets and libraries, and in a general meeting later in the month, we participated in a presentation on the Trinity River bond issues. League members and former City Council members, **Lois Finkelman** and **Veletta Lill** contributed to a lively discussion.

In the interest of finalizing a copy of the Facts and Issues after all the board and member discussions, the unit meeting on the Consensus Questions was postponed until this month. **Join in the discussions if you can**. Otherwise, **contact Committee Chair Susybelle Gosslee or Program Vice President Judi Stewart** if you have comments or ideas to contribute toward **consensus**.

## What the League Has Meant to ME

By *Genie Fritz* January 12, 2007

We moved into our house on Cochran Chapel Road in 1951. I was mother to four girls under 6 years of age. My life was consumed being a mother to my children. We had come back to Dallas in 1945. I hadn't grown up in Dallas so I had few friends. I really was starved for conversation that wasn't about babies.

It so happened that Jo Fay Godbey, whose family had been friends of Ned's in Tulsa, Oklahoma, invited me to a League unit meeting about 1952. In those days, units made arrangements for baby sitting accommodations, so I went. I was amazed. Here were all these brilliant women discussing something other than household affairs. With much trepidation I joined. That was the start of a wonderful experience.

Over the years I chaired many a resource committee and served on the boards of the Dallas League, the State League, and the Overseas Fund of the National League. I served as president of the Dallas League from 1963 to 1965.

So what has the League meant to me? First, the League has been a source of enduring friendships with intelligent women who are interested in governmental affairs. Second, the League has given me the opportunity to grow in knowledge, in public speaking ability, in confidence lobbying political figures, in learning how to preside over board meetings. When I first served on the LWVD board Virginia McDonald was president. She was a wonderful role model and teacher. Anyone who served under her learned how to conduct a meeting.

When the women's movement took many of my friends away to study for Ph.D's and to the workplace, I felt that my education was furthered by working in the resource committees of the League. Writing reports and Facts & Issues was just as demanding as writing a thesis for a college course. Third, in gathering information for those reports, there was opportunity to meet important persons in the world of public affairs. Fourth, by participating in all the opportunities for action that the League has presented I have grown in understanding and confidence.

The League has been a very important factor in living an interesting and fruitful life.

## Ru Aaronson

For those of you who knew Ru -

She died this morning in a hospice setting in Ft. Worth. They were working on a team for her, so she could come home, but...

This last bout of cancer had been very painful, and the doctors had not given her much hope because they didn't have any treatments to suggest. Annie Jones says, though, that she was still talking about possible alternatives to investigate. Her step-son was with her when she died. We don't know about the arrangements yet.

For me, Ru was our Dallas Molly Ivins - so witty and with such a unique perspective on life. She was intensely interested in politics (and music and quirky media of all sorts, of course). Our Lakoff group was urging her to have her own radio show where she could ask her inciteful questions in her vague "old lady" persona-- innocent and cutting at the same time.

I will miss her very much, but love the image of Ann, Molly and Ru setting the heavens into non-stop laughter!

Liz Wally

## We Remember

## Ann Richards



With Myrtle Bales Buckley in the early 80's

## Molly Ivins

"If Texas were a sane place, it wouldn't be nearly as much fun."

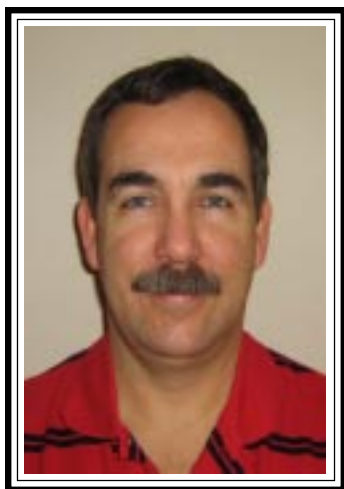
"Whee, here we go, the Lege is back in session! And many a village is missing its idiot."

"When it comes to voting, we in Texas are accustomed to discerning that fine hair's breadth worth of difference that makes one hopeless dipstick slightly less awful than the other."

"Not that I'm accusing anyone of lying, of course, but these people are slicker than bus station chili."

"ff God keeps hanging out with politicians, it's gonna hurt his reputation."

*Doug Taylor,  
League Member &  
Contributing Columnist*



## Voting Matters

Last month I discussed some of the key points of the **Brennan Center Task Force on Voting System Security's study** on voting system vulnerabilities, available at <http://www.brennancenter.org>. This month we'll look a bit more at which threats the Brennan Center felt were most important and how we can ensure **free and fair elections on electronic voting systems**.

Remember the common vulnerabilities among all electronic voting machines? If the goal is to change a **close election** it is easiest to install attack software or corrupt programs. Furthermore, if a voting machine has a **wireless access it is far more vulnerable** to attack.

For voting machines without **voter verified paper trails**, there is no way to independently audit the results. If the voting machine does have a paper trail, or is an optical scan machine, it is useless without an **audit process**.

The threat is real: installing software or corrupting programs requires very few participants and can easily swing a **close election**. It requires installing software, perhaps during the setup or calibration of a machine, in order to selectively miscount the results. It could even be loaded or triggered by the wireless component. For your average election judge it would be an invisible attack.

**Voter verified paper trails are another problem.** Several studies have shown that few voters will verify their own ballots. Unfortunately, without a **mandatory audit program** it is unlikely that fraud or error will be caught by the voter. Of course a smart programmer can also modify the paper and electronic tallies at the same time. If the voter even notices, they may just assume that they made the mistake.

**Precinct count optical scan machines show the highest accuracy and reliability**, but central count optical scanners are subject to fraud and error at the central counting station. The former have under and over vote protection; the latter do not.

**The best protections are a combination of testing and audit strategies.** On Election Day, testing randomly selected voting machines should be routine. In addition, audit the paper trail and match it to the electronic tally. With multi-day early voting in Texas, this would have to be a **daily procedure**. Both the audit and testing process should be performed by **independent auditors with observers present**. The audit and testing should be video recorded and retained.

**Some facts to think over:** only 2 states ban wireless access to voting machines. 26 states require voter verified paper trails, but only 12 of them require audits. **Texas doesn't require any of them.** **All of Dallas County's early voting and ADA voting machines have wireless access; none have voter verified paper trails.**

**Next month** I will review the **National Institute of Standards and Technology white paper** on voting machine vulnerability and recommendations about accrediting voting machines. Check out <http://vote.nist.gov/>

## Deja Vu All Over Again-- Town Lake & the Trinity River *Eleanor Sutherland, League Historian*

**Dateline: Dallas, November 11, 1983**

"Sitting between the 30-foot-high levees along the Trinity River flood plain, **the women were asked to visualize themselves on a small boat riding the waves of a 3-mile-long lake.** As the breeze would fill the boat's sails, they would turn to see the downtown skyscrapers looming in the distance and the mirrored faces of the Hyatt Regency Dallas at Reunion gleaming in the bright sun.

"This was the idyllic promise of Town Lake. But in reality, **the women faced a swampy 2,000-foot-wide wasteland,** nearly devoid of trees and split by the trickling Trinity River and its murky, green waters."

That news story was about the League's bus tour of the proposed Town Lake development area between downtown and Oak Cliff. **Molly Van Ort, Chair of the League's Natural Resources Committee, organized the tour** to provide information to the members on the controversial proposal as it is debated by the Dallas City Council.

The council was to vote on a \$200,000 feasibility study to determine if the project is environmentally, socially, and economically sound. **"This study is designed to see if Town Lake is truly feasible,"** said Jill Jordan, Hydraulics Engineer in the city's Public Works Department. "If the answer is yes, the city might want to go through with a bond election. If the answer is no, it was good we looked into it."

"Town Lake was first proposed in 1918, but it was 1975 before a design plan was submitted to the city. **In 1978, the project was shelved when voters rejected a bond package that included funds for Town Lake.** The pros and cons sound familiar: the river's water too polluted, too much sediment, too much displacement vs. how the water can be made environmentally safe, how development would enhance the surrounding area."

The full story of that tour can be found in the League's Archives, now stored at the Dallas Public Library. In 1993, **Barbara Weinstein and Barbara Materka** pulled together LWVD files and found that the library was able to accept them. **The League's beginnings in 1937 on into 1994** are an invaluable resource and a part of the history of Dallas.

Editor's Note: We are assembling another group of records for the **Archives**. Now is the time to **donate any League items** you have saved for posterity. Bring them to the Office or call one of the interested volunteers: **Eleanor Sutherland, Barbara Weinstein, or Barbara Downey** who will be happy to arrange for their delivery to the Office.

## We're Ready! Leave a Legacy the League *Linda Wassenich, Development Chair*

After several years of arduous work, the League of Women Voters of Dallas and the Dallas Education Fund now **have two policies to guide the organization in its fundraising.** One of the policies is an Investment Policy that will guide the Board in investing donations given for a restricted fund for endowment and for reserves. **Treasurer Jane MacAdams** put in an enormous amount of work on this policy. In January the Board adopted a Gift Acceptance Policy that was constructed from one developed by the LWV-Illinois and made more readable by **Organization Vice-President Joanne Early.**

These two policies are part of the League's efforts to position itself as a sound organization with the required policies for the next 85 years. When you are thinking about your legacy, **consider leaving a bequest** to the League in your will or **making a planned gift** (which could be a onetime major gift in your lifetime) to ensure that the League is here for the next generations of women and men who desire nonpartisan, unbiased information in order to participate responsibly in government.

Please let the office know if you would like to receive a copy of either or both policies.

### Volunteer Opportunity

If you are looking for a fun, productive volunteer opportunity, come join us March 20 at the Dallas Convention Center. We will be offering voter registration for a large group of newly sworn-in citizens.

There will be a morning and an afternoon ceremony. The volunteer hours are 9:30 to noon and/or 1:30 to 4:00. You do not have to be deputized or experienced to join the fun. If interested or if you have questions, please email [elizawally@aol.com](mailto:elizawally@aol.com) or call **Liz Wally at 214.821.2237.**

### **The Women's Council of Dallas County Dallas 101: The Partnership between Dallas ISD, the City of Dallas and Dallas County**

Dr. M. Hinojosa, DISD Superintendent  
M. Suhm, Dallas City Manager  
Dallas County Judge J. Foster

**Thursday, March 29 6-8PM**

Center for Community Cooperation  
**Oak Corner Room**

**2900 Live Oak, Dallas 75201**

RSVP [loglesby.dal@avance.org](mailto:loglesby.dal@avance.org) or 214-520-6268