

League of Women Voters
of Dallas

VOTER



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

November Units Meet to Seek Concurrence

LWV-TEXAS Study: Voting Procedures to Increase Voting Participation

Wednesday Unit - November 11

Meeting at 10 AM
in Piney Woods Room 203
Center for Community Cooperation
2900 Live Oak
Co-Unit Leaders

Mildred Pope, 214-374-8067
Suzanne Wills at suzwills@swbell.net

Evening Unit - November 11

Meeting at 6:30 PM
Community Room of Central Market
5750 E. Lovers Lane at Greenville Avenue
Unit Leader Jan Anderson at
214-621-8597 or j.anderson@dcccd.edu

Thursday Unit - November 12

Meeting at 9:30AM
Churchill Way Recreation Center,
6906 Churchill Way off Hillcrest
Co-Unit Leaders
Eleanor Sutherland at ews4167@att.net
and **Gayle Hurst**, 214-348-7112

Unit Coordinator

Ellen Key at 214-280-7521 or
ekey@sbcglobal.net

This month, unit members will discuss the voting procedures and decide if they concur that some, or all, of them should be added to our current state position on **Election Laws and Voting Rights**. Based on this kind of input from Leagues across the state, the LWV-Texas Board of Directors will announce additions to the position on March 1, 2010.

In preparation for this exercise, we have Facts and Issues papers on each of the following topics: **Vote by Mail, Election Day Registration, Election Day Centralized Voting, Instant Runoff Voting, and Internet Voting**. The papers for each topic, along with a brief summary, can be found at www.lwvtx.org.

Unit members discussed these materials at their meetings in September and received copies of all five summaries. We have also provided these copies as inserts in recent *VOTERS*, with the final two appearing in this issue.

The **questions** that will be used to determine concurrence are also provided **as an insert** for members who are unable to participate at a unit meeting.

Be Well Prepared for the 2009 Election

In order to vote intelligently on the **eleven Amendments to the Texas State Constitution**, consult our website lwvdallas.org for the *State League's Voters Guide*.

If you live in **DISD Districts 1, 3, or 9**, it is very important to know your candidates running for School Board Trustees. In our online **Voters Guide** for the DISD election, you'll find each of the candidates' interesting answers to a set of pertinent questions.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do is **GOTV**. Remember that slogan-- Get Out The Vote? With low turnout expected, **please urge family, friends, and neighbors** to make use of our website and **Vote Early** between October 19 and October 30 or on **Election Day, November 3, 2009**.

2009-2010

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of
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Mildred Pope

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Carolyn Dunnigan

Rose Harder

Judy Jacks

Ellen Key

Phillippa McDonald

Karlton Remington

*From the
President's Desk*

Two excellent general meetings got our **2009/2010 League year** off to a great start.

The **September Transportation Forum** at the Belo Mansion was attended by an overflow audience, comprised of equal numbers of Leaguers and non-Leaguers. We heard outstanding presentations from Dallas County Commissioner **Maurine Dickey on high speed rail**; Dallas City Councilmember **Angela Hunt on a streetcar system and second DART rail alignment for downtown**; and **Steven Polunsky, Transportation Committee Director** for Senator **John Carona** (who was scheduled to speak but was ill that day), **on transportation financing and the local option tax proposal** for regional commuter rail.

We heard many favorable comments about the speakers and the venue and even got some new members that day!

Our second meeting, "**Greening Our City**," was a combined unit meeting in early October that featured two highly qualified speakers on environmental initiatives. Our first presenter was **Steve Houser, who spoke about the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee at City Hall and UFAC's efforts to revise the often controversial Dallas Tree Preservation Ordinance**. Our second speaker that day was **Bud Melton, who told us about an advocacy effort to uncover Dallas creeks that have been put into underground culverts**. His power point presentation highlighted his remarks with pictures of various creek areas in the city and also pictures of creeks in other cities that have been uncovered and beautified. **Many questions from audience members showed there was great interest in these two topics.**

The League is currently busy with **voter registration efforts and forums featuring the DISD school board candidates for Districts 1, 3, and 9**. Thank you to League Board members **Carolyn Dunnigan** and **Katherine Homan** for organizing the three forums.

Our **online Voters Guide** with information on the DISD races and early voting is available at lwwdallas.org. You can find information on the eleven proposed amendments to the State Constitution with arguments for and against online at lwwtexas.org.

A busy time but all good!



Steve Polunsky Fills in for Senator Carona

When illness forced Senator Carona to send a replacement speaker, he turned to his Committee Staff Director in Austin who did an excellent job. His bio reads as follows:

"When Senator John Carona was appointed Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security in March of 2006, his first act was to hire Steven Polunsky as Staff Director of the Committee. Steven has 25 years of state service, including six years as Chief Clerk of the Texas House Transportation Committee, four years as Director of Research and Planning for the Texas High Speed Rail Authority, and thirteen years in the Legislative Affairs Office at TxDOT. Under Chairman Carona's direction, Steven and his staff analyze legislation, conduct policy studies, and perform oversight of state and local agencies."

Transportation Forum Speakers



Steven Polunsky, Commissioner Maureen Dickey, League President Sandy Greyson, Council Member Angela Hunt

Greening Our City Speakers



Bud Melton, Environmental Advocate; Steve Houser, Arborist and Master Naturalist; President Sandy Greyson

Let's Talk League *Barbara Downey, VOTER Editor*

Now that I am a 13-year member of the League (with no prospect of becoming a 50-year member), I think I understand **League language** well enough to "talk League." There are many of you who qualify with more years and more understanding. I hope **you'll contribute to the Let's Talk League column for the VOTER in the near future.**

Linda Wassenich wrote under this title every month during her four years as League President. Now **Sandy Greyson** writes "From the President's Desk." Since we have many new members—and even some older ones—who struggle with our terminology, let's use this column for special **topics that contribute to our understanding of how the League works and has survived as an organization for almost 90 years.**

Concurrence with a State League Study is our task this month. Since the 1920's, the League has used **Consensus** to establish agreement among members. **Concurrence** is a more recently established process. In fact, we adopted a statement on **Concurrence, an Alternative Form of Member Agreement**, for our bylaws last year, and it was adopted by the State League.

We use the Consensus method when we have no position to start with and are trying to educate ourselves by study and discussion to come to agreement. We start with open minds, read the Facts and Issues, discuss the Pro and Cons, and seek agreement. If we have a consensus among members, we can create a position from which to do advocacy or action. If not, the League can't address that issue, but we, as individuals, may continue to do so on our own.

Occasions arise when we already have a position—basic agreement among members-- but want to add to it or update it, like we did with our Boards and Commissions position last year. **Using the Concurrence method, members are simply asked if they agree or not** with the Facts and Issues submitted by the Study Committee. It is a process that relies more on the **individual member's judgment**—rather than being a **group process** like consensus.

Therefore, a **Concurrence Form is inserted in this issue for any member unable to attend a Unit meeting. Please complete the form and return it to the Office by November 10.**

Seeking a New Office Administrator

Katherine Homan, Organization VP

Next spring, Meg Kimberland's son Eric will be graduating high school, and she will be leaving Dallas to join her husband who is working in Austin. **She will be sorely missed in our League Office.**

In order to train her replacement before she leaves, we are starting to search for a part time office administrator and asking for member recommendations.

This is a 20-hour-a-week position with sick leave and vacation appropriate to half-time employment. The qualifications are:

Strong **interpersonal skills** with ability to work with diverse populations and conform to the League's policy of non-partisanship.

Technological savvy to maintain multiple member databases and furnish regular reports.

Detail orientation with experience in bookkeeping and finances for nonprofits.

Self-starter with organizational skills and ability to work independently, including scheduling and directing office volunteers.

Please call me at 214-948-6992 if you have any recommendations.

My Life on the LWVUS Board

Elaine Wiant, LWVUS Secretary-Treasurer

Many League members have asked me, "What is it like to serve on the LWVUS Board"? It's great! And not as intimidating as I thought it might be. The other Board members and the staff are all extremely dedicated to the League and its mission--and wonderful people, too. I've made great friends with many of the Board and staff. It's also hard work--but no harder than serving on a local or state Board. The work is somewhat different, but there's lots of it.

In my twenty-some years as a League member, I spent nine years on the Texas Board and am now serving my second term as the Secretary/Treasurer on the LWVUS Board. My early years in the League were as a member of LWV Irving--I moved to Dallas in 2001. Before election to the national Board, I served on the LWVUS Budget Committee for two years, which was a terrific introduction to serving at the national level of League.

As Treasurer, I don't keep the books or write checks. We have an accounting department that handles the nuts and bolts. My main job is to present the financial statements to the Board at Board meetings and to the delegates at Council and Convention and answer questions. I also respond to questions from local and state Leagues about PMP and other Treasurer type issues.

As Secretary, I am responsible for the minutes of the Board meetings and the Executive Committee meetings. I also end up taking notes at Board retreats and compiling them for the Board. This is NOT my favorite job, but it is important. The LWVUS and LWVEF minutes of each Board meeting are posted to www.lwv.org after they are circulated to the Board for any corrections.

The Board works on a committee system, and I serve on a number of the committees. This term I serve on the Advocacy Committee, Membership Committee, Governance Committee, Executive Committee and Development Committee (every member of the Board is on the Development Committee!). We spend one entire day of Board meeting weekends in committee meetings and many of the committees meet between Board meetings by conference call. And, as Treasurer, I also serve on the Budget Committee.

In addition to those responsibilities, each Board member is assigned to be a liaison to several states. This term I have Arizona, California and the



Virgin Islands. As liaison, I stay in touch with the state and local Presidents and am available to answer questions of all kinds. I also spoke at the Arizona Convention in Tucson this year. They had great speakers including *Boston Globe* political columnist Tom Oliphant (who lives part time in Tucson) and *Arizona Daily Star* political cartoonist David Fitzsimmons ("Fitz"). When Fitz heard I was from Texas he drew a hilarious cartoon of me with President George W. Bush! If you want to see it, I'll see what I can do.

Like all Boards, we also have Development responsibilities including making phone calls to major donors and helping to identify potential donors.

Our advocacy priorities at the national level this year are health care and climate change – both topics of great interest to all of us. We've also had to focus on managing our finances in the current economic climate. We managed to finish the last fiscal year very close to the revised budget that we adopted in January, and we adopted a budget for the current fiscal year that recognizes the current reality.

The League's 90th Anniversary will be our focus next year. We'll have League activities all year with special attention to state and local celebrations and many festivities at the Convention in Atlanta in June (y'all come!). We continue to dedicate resources to supporting local and state Leagues, including work on Membership Recruitment and Leadership Development.

In short, being on the national Board is a lot of work, but it's great work with great people and I highly recommend it. Questions? Email me at ewiantlwv@sbcglobal.net.



Above: Katherine Homan and Essie Reed.

Registering Voters at the Dallas Zoo

A Voters Service Project on Sunday, September 27



At the left: Louis Lewis,
Brenda Marks, and
Frances Gonzalez

SMU Louise B. Raggio Endowed Lecture Series on Women's Studies

M. Joycelyn Elders,
the 15th Surgeon General of the U.S.,
will be addressing
the present and future state of
Women's Healthcare in America.

**Wednesday, November 4,
2009, at 7 p.m.**

Hughes-Trigg Student Center Theater
3140 Dyer Street, SMU campus
Tickets: \$10 each
To purchase tickets, visit smu.edu/raggio,
or call 214-768-1384.

SAVE THE DATE!

National Council of Jewish Women and WITH
ONE VOICE Coalition present

The Business of Immigration Reform Luncheon with Guest Speaker: **Ruben Navarrete**

Syndicated columnist and editorial board member,
San Diego Union

Tuesday, December 8, 2009, at Noon

Cityplace Conference Center
, 2711 North Haskell Ave.

\$26 registration includes lunch and
complimentary parking under building
or ride DART's Red or Blue Line
to Cityplace Station

Contact Julie Lowenberg: jmlowenberg@sbcglobal.net; 214-352-4667 for more
information and/or to receive invitation.

League Bulletin Board

Contributions

Debra Decker for the Scholarship Fund; **Janet Eickmeyer** for the Scholarship Fund; **Ann Folz; Sandy Greyson; Rose Harder; Mary Ann Johnson** for the Scholarship Fund; **Ellen Key**, Patron Member; Texas Industries, Inc.; **Linda Wassenich** in memory of Pat Penzel and Jean Cozzens; **Elaine Wiant** in memory of Wendell Melasky, uncle of Julie Lowenberg and the late Nancy Todes.

New Members

Peggy Hopkins (National)
5804 Milton St. Apt 102
Dallas 75206

Elizabeth Walley
(Not to be confused with **Liz Wally**)
1112 Siebold Court
Mesquite, TX 75150
972-279-5886
ewalley1@gmail.com

Directory Changes

Holly Carless
2801 Live Oak St, Apt 2305
Dallas 75204

Judy Jacks
12593 Montego Plaza
Dallas 75230
214-866-0119 (H)

Norma and Bill Matthews
yeehah@yahoo.com

Lindy Ranier
5931 Columbia Av
Dallas 75214

Jerry Weiss
Additional phone:
214-369-4173

Non-renewals: Emily Decker;
Elisabeth and Alan Lerner,
Kathleen Matsamura;
Kathryn Murphy, Randa
Stephenson.

Calendar

November

3 - **Election Day**
5 - Board Meeting at 11
11/12 **Unit Meetings**
12 - Dec.VOTER Deadline

December

3- Board Meeting at 11
9/10 **Unit Meetings**
10 - Jan.VOTER Deadline

United States
Census
2010



IT'S IN OUR HANDS

**Tom Thumb /Safeway
Good Neighbor Program
2917**
**Our most recent rebate
\$78.46.**
Please join our program.

To All Volunteers:
Looking for a spot job? You may not have realized how that "hard" copy of the VOTER got to your mailbox at the front door, but there were small crews from each unit who teamed up to stick on labels, sort in ZIP codes, fold and seal each one.
Now that it comes to a majority of us via the Internet, there would seem to be no more need for mail help. NOT SO!
This is a call for volunteers who can give a couple of hours on the third Thursday morning each month to do the labeling, folding, etc. for the 100 (or so) VOTER subscribers who aren't on line. Call me, **Eleanor Sutherland**, 214-368-8215, and I'll put you to work!

Help Make Democracy Work

Join the **League of Women Voters of Dallas** *Not for Women Only!*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS
DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters of Dallas (LWVD), in both its values and practices, affirms its belief in, and commitment to, diversity and pluralism.

LWVD welcomes any person to participate in any activity of LWVD, regardless of gender, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or political persuasion.

LWVD recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making.

LWVD subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that inclusiveness enhances its capability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

LWVD affirms its commitment to reflecting diversity in its membership, board, staff and programs.

Membership Levels

___\$60/year Individual ___\$30 additional member at same address
___\$150/year Patron ___\$500/year Benefactor

___Reduced Membership rates available upon request. Call 214-688-4125
___\$25/year Student \$_____Contribution to LWVD Scholarship Fund

Name(s) _____

Address _____

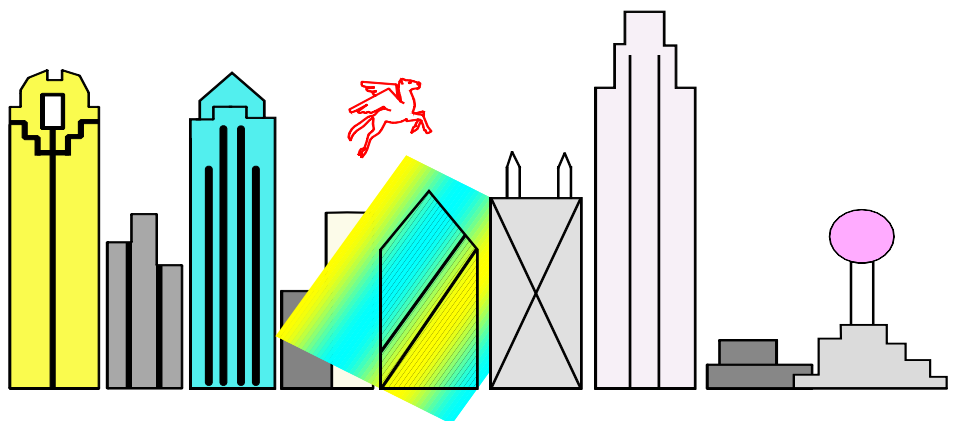
Phones: Home _____ Work _____

Cell _____ E-mail _____

Mail a check payable to **LWVDallas** with this information
to the **League of Women Voters of Dallas**
at the address noted below

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