

League of Women Voters
of Dallas

VOTER



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

Combined Unit Meeting

TIFs and MMDs 101

The who, what, when, where, and why of

Tax Increment Financing and Municipal Management Districts

Theresa Daniel, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, Texas A & M University

Rod Hissong, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Associate Dean

School of Urban and Public Affairs, University of Texas at Arlington

Mark Stein, Economic Development Consultant, Stein Planning LLC

Thursday, April 8, 2010 11:30AM-1:00PM

Center for Community Cooperation in the **Gulf Rio Room**

2900 Live Oak Dallas, Texas 75204

Please note the room change and call our Office if you want to order a box lunch.

Dallas Nominees Win Environmental Awards

LWV-Dallas nominees won two awards, which will be presented at the **Environmental Awards Luncheon** on Saturday, April 24 at the State League Convention in San Marcos.

Along with our co-nominator **Margie Haley**, Dallas-based, online retailer of **only** environmentally responsible office supplies and printed paper products, **Dolphin Blue**, won in the **Business** category.

And with our co-nominator **Katy Hubener**, a grassroots citizen organization whose main focus is to reduce the toxic emissions of the cement kilns, **Downwinders At-Risk**, won in the **Public Policy Non-Profit** category.

They can be even bigger winners with your support - Dolphin Blue by your shopping them online at dolphinblue.com and Downwinders by your support at EPA Hearings on Air Quality Standards.

Meeting monthly at the home of **Beverly Tobian**, TIF Committee members have been studying the economic development tools used to encourage redevelopment in Dallas.

Brenda Marks, new Co-Chair replacing **Judy Jacks** who moved to Colorado, has researched the legal requirements in the Texas Tax Code and the City of Dallas Financial Guidelines.

Susybelle Gosslee, **Mary Vogelson**, and **Linda Sharp** have designed spreadsheets on the unique characteristics of our 17 TIFs and 3 MMDs. They have also done interviews and on-site investigations. **Jane Davis** has specialized in researching TIF boards.

Linda Camin and **Genie Fritz** are managing our educational endeavors, while Co-Chair **Barbara Downey** maintains a Yahoo site for all our reports and records our progress.

General Meeting

City of Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert

will be presenting to us

**A Progress Report on
The Greening of Dallas**

6:00-7:00PM on April 27, 2010

in the Oak Corner Room of the

Center for Community Cooperation

2900 Live Oak, Dallas 75204

From the President's Desk



2009-2010

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Barbara Downey
Carolyn Dunnigan
Rose Harder
Judy Jacks
Ellen Key

LWV-TX and LWVUS conventions are coming up in April and June respectively. The state convention will be in **San Marcos from April 23 to April 25**. LWVD, the second largest League in Texas, gets 31 delegates. There is plenty of room so if you would like to attend, please let me know. **We'd be happy to have you join us!**

The state League has informed us that recent program planning meetings by Texas Leagues resulted in a recommended study of water. The formal title of the study is **Marketing of Water Resources in Texas**.

The focus of the study is an update of our water position to consider the competition for water in Texas, including governmental policy, public interest rights, and water resource protection concerns.

The **scope** of the study is:

Analyze **current state regulations** which govern the sale of water rights by river authorities, groundwater districts, and individual landowners;

Consider **ramifications if Texas were to classify water as a commodity** rather than as a natural resource;

Explore options such as a state-run water marketing administration;

Assess laws that would be needed for interstate or international water transfers; and

Assess the best use of our water (i.e., public interest concerns, environmental factors, effect on third parties, future water requirements).

The study was recommended by seven Texas Leagues, including Dallas, and will be voted on at the state convention.

Other LWVD recommendations that came out of our state program planning unit meetings were **revisiting term limits for governor** by updating our current position via consensus or concurrence, a **new study on capital punishment**, a **restudy of dedicated funds**, and an **amendment to the current redistricting position** so that prisoners are counted by where they last resided and not where they are incarcerated.

Lastly, I'm really pleased to report that the state board will be recommending **NO increase in per member payments** for the next two years. I'll vote for that!

The Census Is Coming--Get Counted Safely!

Katherine Homan, Organization VP

In mid-March, the Census Bureau will be mailing 2010 Census forms to all households. Please respond promptly and urge others to respond as well. **Census workers will follow up with home visits to all households that do not respond by April 15.**

With census workers canvassing neighborhoods, the big question is – **how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist looking for an opportunity to get into your house or your bank account?** A joint Census- Better Business Bureau offers the following advice:

1. The means of contact will be the U.S. Postal Service or in person. **No phone calls and no e-mails.**
2. Much of the Census Bureau's **canvassing work** will have to be done in the **evenings and on weekends.**
3. If a U.S. Census field representative knocks on your door, **ask to see their photo ID badge** before answering their questions. **Never invite** anyone you don't know **into your home.**
4. Needed **census information is limited** to name, gender, race, ethnicity, household members' relationships, and if you rent or own your residence. **Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information.**
5. Donations are never sought.

To minimize the extra taxpayer cost of sending out census workers and the risk of fraud or identify

Morning Units Look at Confusing Ballot Language

What can we do about confusing ballot language that discourages the electorate from being informed and from voting? The **Wednesday Unit Morning posed that questioned to Brooks Love**, a political consultant and former City of Dallas employee, and the **Thursday Morning Unit asked City Attorney Tom Perkins.**

Our speakers provided us with excellent handouts. Mr. Love made **copies of the ballots** from five proposition elections (2002-2009), so we could see the actual ballot language. Mr. Perkins, using the City-owned hotel proposition as an example, provided copies of the required Notice of Intent to Circulate, Petition Requiring the Election, and Ordinance Regulating the Election; as well as sections of the City Charter on **Initiative and Referendum** and the state **Election Code on Propositions.**

Both speakers made it clear that the Election Code states that **“the authority ordering the election (our City Council) shall prescribe the wording of a proposal as it appears on the ballot”** and further stipulates that it shall be **“in the form of a single statement.”** According to the City Attorney, the **City Council prefers to “track the wording of the proposition”** to be safe from misinterpretation and future legal challenges. However, as Mr. Brooks pointed out, the result is a lengthy statement with many sections separated by semicolons to preserve the requirement of one sentence. He noted that **when voters feel confused or negative, they tend to vote “NO.”**

The Election Code prescribes that **“on the ballot ‘FOR’ and below it ‘AGAINST’ shall be printed to the left of the proposition.”** It also provides that the authority responsible may substitute ‘YES’ and ‘NO’ on the ballot, if it considers these words more appropriate. **The Thursday Unit strongly urged the City Attorney to advise the Council that “FOR” and “AGAINST” a particular proposition would help clarify their thinking as voters.**

Mr. Brooks suggested that this would be a good time to speak with our Council representatives when there are no specific issues on the table. Since the Council is considering another Charter Review Commission, we may have an opportunity to propose a Charter Amendment **authorizing the petitioners to sign off on ballot language.**

“Failure is impossible...”
Jane Pak and Becky Brakke, SBA Silent Auction Chairs

A quote attributed to Susan B. Anthony seems appropriate in describing the Susan B. Anthony Award Luncheon and Silent Auction this year. A record amount of snow did not stop the League event from going forward on February 12. Stalwart Leaguers, sometimes accompanied by their husbands, traveled on snow-filled streets, dodging broken tree limbs while encountering silent street signals, to deliver the auction items and appear early on Friday to help set up. And so many attendees arrived in good cheer to enjoy the special lunch and support the League with bids on a wide variety of items!

Leaguers provided many tempting items for the auction again this year. The 90th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment and the founding of the League was celebrated with a colorful variety of red, white and blue items -- Susan B. Anthony memorabilia, a beaded Lone Star purse, and richly framed ads from the Harding Campaign that the first national election when women could vote. Our artistic side was tempted with a Marc Chagall lithograph, silk sari fabrics, and a variety of fine jewelry.

Two of you offered to host special events in your home. You created baby blankets, scarves, a recycled plastic purse, and precious childrens' sweaters. A wonderful Colorado vacation home was offered. Many of you walked the streets of shopping centers recruiting gift certificates. Units put their special talents to work assembling unique theme baskets. And speaking of baskets, once again you donated the baskets for our colorful blooming flower baskets --33 of them this year.

A big Thank You to so many who helped in a variety of ways. And a special thank you to three members of our team who so willingly volunteered to do many jobs big and small. **Ann Adams**, always willing to recruit and run important errands, **Patti Crumley**, willing to write countless solicitation letters and volunteering her cabana for flower assembly, and **Judy Coats**, willing to step in and oversee the creation of all the flower baskets. But it takes big team of Leaguers to bring this event off, and we were delighted to see so many returning table monitors and cashiers. There's plenty to do. It's fun Next year we hope you'll join in.

See lwvdallas.org for Luncheon Program and Pictures

We were treated to another edition of the *League of Women Voters Dallas Gazette*, a creation of **Cecilia McKay** based on *The Revolution*, a short-lived newspaper on suffrage and women's rights that was a joint effort by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton published in 1868. It served as our program for the luncheon and included biographies of our speakers and honorees, as well as many tributes to our honoree, **Julie Lowenberg and Nancy Todes** who nominated her sister for this year's award, just a short time before she passed away.

Cecilia was also responsible for single-handedly designing, creating, and placing our lovely table centerpieces of red and white carnations in vases decorated with red, white and blue ribbons. Many of us made another small donation and took them home to enjoy.

Viewing the posted pictures will give you an idea of the lovely setting and many of the folks who attended. **Becky Brakke, Katherine Homan, and Judith Furnish**, a former League member and friend of Julie's, took most of the pictures. We didn't know everyone's name, so we left it up to you to recognize your friends and acquaintances.

League Bulletin Board

Introducing Our New Office Administrator--

Lilia Hollis

Katherine Homan, Organization VP

With a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering, a Masters in Statistics, and another Masters in International Business and Marketing, Lilia is a virtual 'trifecta winner' who we are so fortunate to have succeeding Meg Kimberland.



In addition to Lilia's extensive technical experience in building, managing and maintaining databases and professional accomplishments in all aspects of organizational management, she is bilingual in Spanish and works with the nonprofit animal rescue group Metroplex Mutts.

Please note that our new Office Hours are now **Monday and Wednesday 10:00AM to 2:00PM** and **Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 1:00 to 5:00PM**. Y'all call and say 'Welcome' to Lilia!

Desperately Seeking Nonagenarians!*

Having already identified a couple of our members on their special birthdays, **we're wondering if there are others born in 1920 or before** that we could include as we celebrate the 90th anniversaries of the League and Women's Right to Vote. If you know of any, let the League Office know who those **League Luminaries** are!

*Webster defines nonagenarians as 90 years old or between the ages of 90 and 100.

Contributions

Sharan Goldstein for the Education Fund and the Scholarship Fund; Mike Thomas.

Calendar

April

- 1 - Board Meeting at 11
- 8 **Combined Unit Meeting**
Apr.VOTER Deadline
- 13 - Runoff Primary Election
- 23-25 - State Convention in San Marcos
- 26 - Early Voting begins for Local Elections
- 27 - **General Meeting** with Mayor Leppert

May

- 4 - Early Voting ends
- 6 - Board Meeting at 11
- 8 - **Election Day**
- 12-13 - Unit Meetings
Do-Your-Own-Thing

**Tom Thumb /Safeway
Good Neighbor Program
2917**

**Our most recent rebate
\$108.32.
Please join our program.**

IN MEMORIAM

We note with sadness the passing of long-time League member

Jean Gross

and also of

Ralph Henderson

who was a good friend of the League even after his wife Rosemary died.

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 _____

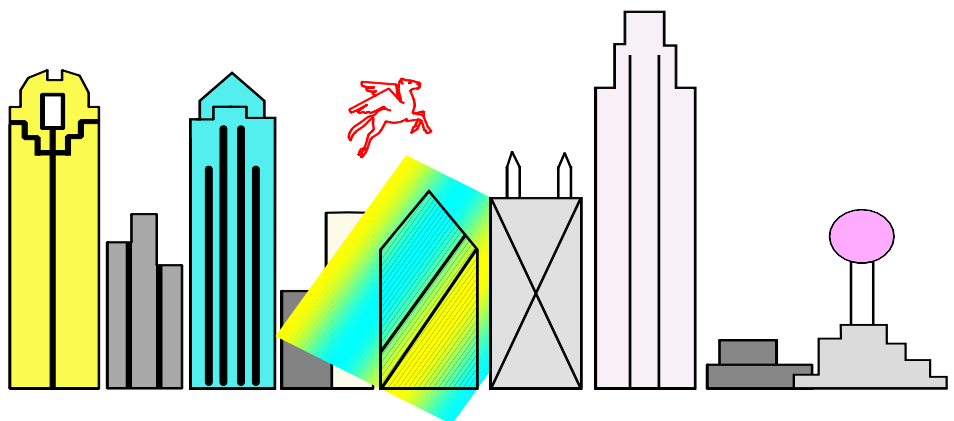
Phones: Home _____ Work _____

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

League of Women Voters of Dallas
2720 N. Stemmons Freeway., Suite 812
Dallas, TX 75207-2241

Office: 214-688-4125
Fax: 214-688-4126
E-mail: lwvdallas@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.lwvdallas.org



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You may contact
Editor Barbara Downey
214-948-6641 bdowney3@sbcglobal.net
Office Administrator Meg Kimberland
214-688-4125 lwvdallas@sbcglobal.net



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