

League of Women Voters
of Dallas

VOTER



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

Unit Meetings April 9 and 10

Planning will continue on Voter Outreach projects and for May's Do-Your-OwnThing meeting.

Times and Locations

Oak Cliff – Mildred Pope

214-374-8067 or mderrpope@yahoo.com

10:00AM Wednesday Primrose Oaks Community Room, 2999 S. Hampton Road at Perryton Drive across from Kiest Park.

East Dallas – Suzanne Wills

214-324-1594 or suzwills@swbell.net

Noon Wednesday Lakewood Branch Library, 6121 Worth, bordered by Abrams & LaVista.

Dallas Evening – Miriam Foshay

214-503-7932 or mfoshay@speakeasy.net

6:30PM Wednesday Central Market (2nd floor Community Room B) 5750 E. Lovers Lane at Greenville Avenue.

North Dallas – Gayle Hurst

214-348-7112 **9:30AM Thursday**

Churchill Way Recreation Center, 6906 Churchill Way off Hillcrest.

Mockingbird – Pat Vaughan

214-350-2623 or dallasvaughan@aol.com or

Eleanor Sutherland 214-368-8215 or ews4167@att.net **9:30AM Thursday**

St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church, Inwood at Mockingbird

Annual Meeting Awards Committee Meets

Recipients of past awards and two board members gathered as a committee of eleven on February 22 to nominate our annual awardees.

They selected **Susybelle Gosslee** for the **Myrtle Bales Bulkley Award** and **Linda Camin** for the **Virginia Macdonald Award**.

Look for feature articles about these awardees in the May issue of the VOTER.

Honoring Fifty Year Members at May 3rd Annual Meeting

Nettie Terry Brown

Mary Jane Reynolds

Ann Tabb

Ginny Whitehill

Since membership is cumulative among all the Leagues and not just limited to the Dallas League, perhaps you are one to be recognized as well.

Please contact Katherine Homan at 214-948-6992 if we have missed you!

From the President's Desk

Board of Directors

2007-2008

Officers

President

Libbie Terrell Lee

Vice Presidents of

Organization

Katherine Homan

Program

Mildred Pope

Advocacy

Lynda Ender

Voter Outreach

Brenda Marks

Secretary

Suzanne Willis

Treasurer

Jane MacAdams

Directors

Ann Adams
Barbara Downey
Miriam Foshay
Michelle Manners
Alix Mason
Cherlyn Remington
Karlton Remington
Nancy Todes
Adrienne Williams

It was tremendous! The enthusiasm surrounding the Texas Primary elections generated so much interest that it was difficult to stay focused – let alone remain neutral and impartial. So to answer the question, does Texas matter? I don't know, but Texas certainly was the talk of CNN, MSNBC, and the Nightly News shows. The talk involved the long lines, the seemingly confused nature of the two-step process, and if a winner – especially on the Democratic side would be known before the night ended.

It was during this time that I found myself being less concerned about the sorting out of the day's winner. My chief concern, as an advocate for voter information and education, was around how many of the new participants really understood any of it. Throughout the voting period (both early voting and on Election Day), the energy of the "new to voting" person was amazing to see. At the office, people were talking; in the grocery stores, stranger to stranger exchanged political perspectives...and these conversations were between young, new, ideal voters. But then came the confusion and a lack of understanding of the entire voting process and thereby amassed a great deal of suspicions and misgivings.

I cannot know if there will be any adverse affect, such as distrust or apathy; it is too early to know what affect, if any might occur to these very fragile voters; there is no way to determine if there will be a return to the mindset that "well my vote won't matter, because they will do what they want anyway". Oh my, what a tragedy, if that happens!

The League of Women Voters organizations lead the way in championing voter education and advocacy. So it is incumbent upon us to do whatever is necessary and appropriate to keep the energy around being an informed voter moving. These are crucial times; we have a tremendous opportunity to accomplish one of the League's leading mandates – that being encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

So what am I asking you to do? Thanks for asking...I encourage you to find a voter initiative that is scheduled to occur in the upcoming months and will be highlighted in the VOTER to include:

- Join the "DART out to VOTE" campaign
- Volunteer and assist at whatever level asked in publishing the LWV Dallas General Election's Voters Guide
- Support the LWV Dallas Forums and Debates
- And commit to encourage all "new to voting" citizens to stay excited about their civic involvement, because we cannot lose this momentum.

Until next time...

Libbie Terrell Lee



New Citizens Swearing-In Ceremony

March 13, 2008

Ruthe Jackson Center
Carrier Parkway
Grand Prairie.



Oath of Allegiance administered by the Honorable Irma C. Ramirez

Oath of Allegiance

"I hereby declare on oath that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United State of America against all enemies foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, so help me God."

Early Thursday morning several hundred prospective citizens headed out for the Ruthe Jackson Center in Grand Prairie. So did their family and friends, as well as a number of Dallas Leaguers and Delta Sigs. Our new Voter Registration Chair **Toni Rose** was there early with **Libbie Lee** and **Katherine Homan**, helping to set up the Registration Tables. The **Remingtons** and Lifetime Video staff members were ready to record the event.

After the ceremony **Barbara Downey**, **Miriam Foshay**, and **Cherlyn Remington** helped to register voters as did Delta Sigma Theta members **Hattie Marie Newhouse**, **Bobbye Sanders**, and **Delores Washington**. **Our thanks to all the participants.**



At the left, Delores Washinton and Barbara Downey assist new citizens in filling out their registration cards.



Deputy Registrar Libbie Lee signs a completed registration card

Photos courtesy of Stacey Rocha and Lifetime Videos



At the right, Cherlyn Remington answers a question. You may recognize Miriam Foshay in the center.

League to Take Action in Commissioners Court

Lynda Ender, Advocacy VP

The **League of Women Voters of Dallas** (LWVD), the **Older Women's League** (OWL) and the Health & Human Service Coalition of the **Women's Council of Dallas County** have voted to form an informal coalition to advocate for a **social worker in the Dallas County jail**. There may be many needs for such a position, but the one most glaring for women is that children are often suffering. Many children see their mother taken away in handcuffs, and some return from school to empty homes with no one to care for them.

Pregnant women are a special concern. They often do not receive needed medical attention. They are shackled when they are transferred to Parkland for medical care or for delivery. Women are often ignored when they state that they think they are ready to deliver, and there have been births in the elevators and common areas. We are also looking into whether frail elderly citizens may be suffering due to losing their caregiver.

Most of the women in the Dallas County jail are young and are arrested for nonviolent crimes. **Suzanne Wills**, a LWV of Dallas Board member, has been aware of this issue and others for a number of years. You may remember the three articles she has written for the VOTER about women in the justice system: December '02 *Women & the Drug War*, December '03 *Pregnancy & the Drug War*, and April '06 *Child Custody & the Drug War*.

We are interested in growing our coalition. If you want to work on this issue or have a group which is interested in joining the effort, please, contact **Lynda Ender**, lender@theseniorsource.org.

Thanks to Volunteers on Election Day

Eleanor Sutherland, Volunteer Coordinator

The stalwarts who handle calls on Election Day were there again on March 4, helping people find their polling places (one voter even called from a bus!), explaining the precinct caucus, and answering all manner of questions. Thanks to **Dottie Box, Katherine Homan, Ann Adams, Pat Vaughan, Suzanne Wills, Lea Frailey, Julie Lowenberg** and **Eleanor Sutherland** for the help.

Voter Outreach Activities

Libbie Lee did a 30-minute interview with radio host David Rankin that was heard on KVIL and six other radio stations throughout the metroplex. She also presented a 50 minute segment on IMedia (carried on cable TV) about voting, caucusing, and the youth vote.

Libbie Lee, Adrienne Williams and **Toni Rose** participated in a panel discussion on voter education at the Black Youth Vote Rally at Paul Quinn College.

Brenda Marks and **Libbie Lee** were featured guests on a 30-minute election special report on CW33 that focused on the March 4th primaries.

Mildred Pope facilitated three Lunchbox Seminars for Strategic Industries at 4514 Mountain Creek Parkway. 45 attendees enjoyed her League overview on voting with special interest in the Your Elected Officials (YEO) pamphlets she shared. Fifteen signed up as new and updated voter registrants.

May 3 Annual Meeting Notification

Our Bylaws require that the reports of the Nominating, Program, and Budget Committees be sent to members for consideration at least 21 days before the Annual Meeting.

Local Program Planning Committee Report

*Eleanor Sutherland, Linda Sharp, Arline Pitt, Liz Wally, Susybelle Gosslee
Linda Wassenich, and Kathleen Matsumura, Chair.*

No new recommended local study.

Not recommended items.

1. The North Central Texas Council of Governments.
2. Clean elections (publicly funded) for city and/or state offices.
3. Rationale and legalities behind ballot-language. How can it be more voter-friendly?
4. City initiative on alternative energy or energy efficiency (offering rebates, like Austin, etc).
5. Transparent community input process, including online programs that encourage public input and revision as used by various cities.
6. Rethinking TIF rebates for developers and instead considering the whole cost to city and taxpayers, including building community (or dividing it), the environment and the long-term effects of the project (also done in other cities).
7. Ethics in Dallas Government

Explanation

The Committee members have examined the reports on survey results and found that there were several topics that interested members. Also, some of the topics suggested on the survey already have positions that would allow advocacy, meaning that a new study is not necessary. Therefore, no new study should be initiated in the coming year. However, there is an interest in current information on the above topics.

The Committee recommends that Unit Meetings review local, state and national positions so that the members become informed about their status and any opportunities for advocacy. The positions could be presented in three Unit Meetings covering Local Government, Social Policy, and Natural Resources. One idea might be to produce a September Kick-Off event including information tables, breakout sessions, and seminars on using LWV Handbook, carrying out the LWV Mission with education and advocacy, and the study-to-action process.

Rules for Adopting Not-Recommended Items

Members wishing to **Move for Consideration of a Not-Recommended item** should **notify the VP Program** before presentation of the Recommended Program in order that time can be divided fairly among all items. **Two copies of the motion should be given to the Secretary.** The motion should include a **Focus and an Outline for Work.** A **majority vote** will place a not-recommended item before the membership for **discussion.** A **two-thirds vote** is necessary to **adopt** a not-recommended item

Program Review Committee Report

Lynda Ender, Ellen Key, Mildred Pope, and Katherine Homan, Chair.

The Program Review Committee recommends retention of all but two positions in the Local Government and Social Policy sections.

1. As the City Bill of Rights position (I.B.5) was considered and deemed to be superfluous, the Committee recommends that this position be dropped.
2. The Economic Conversion position (I.D. 2) should be updated to include "work force training, physical rehabilitation and medical assistance."

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS
 An organization exempt under IRC Section 501(c)4

Proposed Budget for 2008-2009

Revenue	
Membership dues	\$21,000
Contributions	4,500
Transfers from LWVD-EF	
Reimbursement of general operating costs & handbook	19,500
Reimbursement of VOTER costs	<u>1,400</u>
Total revenue	\$46,400 =====
Expenditures	
General operating costs	\$30,600
Payments to LWVUS and LWVTX:	
National PMP	4,700
State PMP	3,900
Publications:	
Handbook/Directory	1,400
VOTER	1,600
Annual Meeting	1,000
Conventions and memberships	2,300
Constant Contact Subscription	200
Annual giving letter	200
Accounting services	<u>500</u>
Total expenditures	\$46,400 =====

LWVD Budget Key

Revenue

Dues: General membership dues are \$60 per year. Lower rates apply to members from the same household and to students. Some members choose to pay higher patron or benefactor rates.

Contributions: Donations from members, in addition to dues.

Transfers from LWVD-EF: Reimbursement of 60% office and website costs incurred on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Dallas Education Fund. Reimbursement of 85% of publication and distribution costs of the VOTER newsletter.

Expenditures

Operating costs: Office rent and expense, including salary of office administrator, supplies and telephone.

Per Member Payments to LWVUS and LWVTX: 50% of required payments to League of Women Voters of the United States and League of Women Voters of Texas. Calculated at \$26.80 and \$22 per member, respectively.

Publications: The handbook and membership directory is distributed to all members once a year. The VOTER newsletter is published ten times per year.

Conventions and memberships: Partial reimbursement to the President & Program Vice President for travel expenses to national and state LWV conventions; membership dues to local organizations.

Accounting services: Form 990 preparation and review of the books.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS EDUCATION FUND

An organization exempt under IRC Section 501(c)3

Proposed Budget for 2008-2009

Carryover from fiscal yr.-end May, 2008	\$21,000
Revenue	
Contributions	7,300
Susan B. Anthony Luncheon, net of expenses	23,000
American Express grant	6,000
Investment Income	<u>5,000</u>
Funds available	\$62,300 =====
Expenditures	
Transfers to LWVD	
Reimbursement of general operating costs	\$19,500
Reimbursement of VOTER costs	1,400
Publications and voter services	30,000
Website	300
Meetings and studies	2,000
Payments to LWVUS and LWVTX:	
National PMP	4,700
State PMP	
Accounting services	3,900
	<u>500</u>
Total expenditures	\$62,300 =====

LWVD-EF Budget Key

Revenue

Contributions: Donations from members and the general public.

Investment income: Dividends and interest.

Expenditures

Transfers to LWVD: Reimbursement of 60% office and website costs incurred on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Dallas Education Fund. Reimbursement of 85% of publication and distribution costs of the VOTER newsletter.

Publications and Voter Services: Publication and distribution costs of the 2008 Dallas Voter's Guide and Your Elected Officials brochure. Voter education and registration activities to facilitate and improve voter turnout in Dallas.

Website: Includes \$160 for 5-year renewal of domain.

Per Member Payments to LWVUS and LWV-TX: 50% of required payments to League of Women Voters of the United States and League of Women Voters of Texas. Calculated at \$26.80 and \$22 per member, respectively.

Accounting services: Form 990 preparation and review of the books.

Nominating Committee Report
Ann Adams, Nancy Caveness, Barbara Downey, Janet Eickmeyer,
and Joanne Early, Chair

The 2007 Nominating Committee is pleased to submit the following slate of officers to lead the League of Women Voters of Dallas with terms beginning in June, 2008.

Officers for a Two-Year Term:

Advocacy Vice President	Brenda Marks
Program Vice President	Mildred Pope
Voter Outreach Vice President	Doug Taylor
Treasurer	Miriam Foshay

Officer for a One-Year Term:

President-Elect	Sandy Greyson
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Directors for a Two-Year Term:

Carolyn Dunnigan	Ellen Key
Rose Harder	Jane Mac Adams

Nominating Committee for a One-Year Term:

Agnes Ellsworth, Liz Wally, and Judi Stewart, Chair

Immigration Study Report

Barbara Downey, Board and Committee Member

At its March meeting, the LWVD Board of Directors voted to end the Immigration Study, basically because the proposed Facts and Issues paper did not meet League standards for presenting all sides of the issue in order to answer the consensus questions.

Action on this matter has been tabled since the Committee presented its report in September. In December Program Vice President Mildred Pope suggested that a new chair be appointed to replace the Co-chairs who resigned because personal circumstances prevented their devoting more time to the study. No action was taken, but an article was prepared for the VOTER to solicit additional interest in the Committee or Chairmanship. No responses were forthcoming.

The Board invited the Committee to its February meeting. Committee members testified that their study and their monthly meetings had been worthwhile in furthering understanding of the issues involved, but were not willing to devote any more time to attempt a more balanced approach. The matter was tabled.

Help us promote the League to AAUW members!

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) will be holding their State Convention in Dallas at the **Hilton Lincoln Center**, 5410 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75240. Over 2000 participants from around the state are expected to be here Celebrating 100 years of AAUW in Texas

Volunteers are needed to staff our booth on **Friday, April 25, from 3:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**, and on **Saturday, April 26, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

If you are able and interested, please **contact Katherine Homan** at 214-948-6992 or kvhoman@sbcglobal.net.

Voting Matters: What Is Voter Suppression?

Doug Taylor, League Member and Contributing Columnist

Voter suppression takes many forms, but it essentially means that a citizen is prevented from voting. Many think they are registered, but find out when they attempt to vote that they are no longer on the rolls. If a voter shows up at the polls and they aren't on the registered voter list, then even a provisional vote won't be counted.

Purging the voter rolls with caging lists is a long time practice. Normally it's done by sending mail to a voter's address in the hopes of getting mail returned as undeliverable to challenge the voter's legitimate registration. In Texas a technique is used by elections officials who match voter rolls against the driver's license database. Younger and lower income voters move more frequently than wealthier voters. Often their driver's license and voter registration information does not match since they tend to forget to update them both. If the voter registration and driver's license data don't match, then the registration is suspended or even revoked.

Voter suppression by campaigns ranges from threatening letters sent to voters likely to vote for an opponent to physically intimidating voters in their homes and at polling places. In the last five years complaints have been filed with the Department of Justice over incidents in Texarkana, Dallas, and Waller.

Waller County is an excellent case study of voter suppression in Texas. The town of Prairie View is the home of Prairie View A&M, a predominantly black university. In years past county officials have asserted that students were not residents and therefore could not register or vote in Waller County. Those who did were threatened with prosecution. Even after repeated investigations by the Department of Justice, losses in court, and continued negative publicity, the elections department continued to do its best to prevent students from voting. This year officials closed the primary early voting site in Prairie View. They required early voters to go to Hempstead 7 miles away. Only the threat of legal action forced the county to reinstate the early voting location in Prairie View.

Voter ID laws are another means to suppress voter turnout. Requiring photo identification to vote tends to prevent the elderly, disabled, and the poor from voting. Some who have a photo ID don't bring it to the polls and can't get back in time to vote. Others don't have a driver's license, the primary form of photo identification. In addition, these are the same voters who are most likely to have a voter registration application rejected or have their voter registration suspended because they are not in the driver's license database. In Texas we have had Voter ID laws presented in the last several years' legislative sessions. There is no evidence of widespread fraud by voters; it's a blatant ploy to keep certain voters from the polls.

Obviously we need to be vigilant. Many politicians do not want every vote to count; they want to choose who can vote to guarantee that they or their party stays in power.

On another note, I have created a new website, <http://dallas-votes.org> I will be putting information about a coalition of Dallas County organizations that are working together to register and educate voters. This is being modeled after RegisterTravis.com which vastly increased voter registration and turnout in Travis County.

Signs of Success from our Susan B. Anthony Award Luncheon **Michelle Manners, Luncheon Chair**

Thank you all for your participation in our 2008 Susan B. Anthony Award luncheon. It was a wonderful event and I was so proud of everyone's involvement. Thanks to having Ginny Whitehill as our honoree, Rosine Hall was filled! Here are the stats:

- Guest seating in the Arboretum's Rosine Hall was sold out.
- Sponsorship revenues from members and nonmembers were an almost equal mix.
- Nonmembers donated and brought tickets nearly twice as much as members.
- Congratulatory ads in the Program provided a whole new revenue source.
- Another new revenue source was the availability of online credit for ticket, program ad and silent auction purchases.
- Silent Auction proceeds exceeded last year's by 56%.
- **Net** event proceeds are **\$43,772** - although monies are still coming in and all expenses have been paid!

If you couldn't make it this year, we hope you will get involved and join us next year. **A photo album and streaming video of the event is available in the Susan B. Anthony section of our web-site lwvdallas.org .** The program can also viewed on a DVD which is available on request in the League office.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You! **Jane Pak and Becky Brakke, Silent Auction Chairs**

So many of you stepped in to help with this successful silent auction. You solicited items, you contributed items, you made items – original art pieces, hand-decorated gift items, and hand-knit scarves and baby items. Importantly, you realized you have gifts to donate because of your special talents – offering legal advice, videographing events, creating music. You helped solicit restaurants and your favorite spas, you gave symphony and lecture tickets, you donated priceless antiques and favorite books. We enjoyed hearing about the member who, dining with her husband at a favorite restaurant, turned to the manager and asked for a donation. Each unit's basket presented a story of how members pondered their unique theme and presentation. This auction event is fun!

For the second year in a row, auction chairs **Becky Brakke** and **Jane Pak** have headed this month-and-a-half long life-consuming project. We want to acknowledge the patience of our husbands **Ron** and **Charlie** whose homes were turned into staging centers with items filling every chair and table and whose Valentine's Days were deleted as paperwork was completed and cars loaded. And we also want to thank those, not all of whom were League members, who missed all or part of the luncheon as they worked behind the scenes as cashiers -- LWV Office Administrator **Meg Kimberland**, League member **Frances Gonzalez** and Friends of the Dallas Public Library office manager **Krista Samouris**, who were joined by LWV members **Miriam Foshay** and **Jane Mac Adams** and Lifetime Video secretary **Stacey Rocha**. Thanks also to table monitors – **Alix Mason**, **Roger Kallenberg**, **Adrienne Rosenberg**, **Barbara Munford**, **Ann Adams**, **Eleanor Conrad** and **Dottie Box** who came early and stayed late to make sure no one missed the special items on their tables.

Special thanks to **Cheryln and Karlton Remington** who not only provided a couple of very generous auction items but also quietly watched and offered help as they saw the need. Their staff was there when the doors opened and helped dress tables. They stayed to the end and helped pack away supplies. Early in the event when we learned an experienced cashier would not be present, Cheryln offered her secretary Stacey Rocha as the substitute. We cannot thank the Remingtons enough.

Winners, when you use your gift certificate, please tell the manager thank you from the League of Women Voters Dallas.