

THE VOTER

FEBRUARY 2010

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TARRANT COUNTY



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
of Tarrant County
3212 COLLINSWORTH ST
FORT WORTH, TX 76107

“NOT FOR WOMEN ONLY”

WWW.LWVTARRANTCOUNTY.ORG
LWVTARRANTCOUNTY@SBCGLOBAL.NET

PHONE AND FAX 817-348-8683

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- League's 90th Anniversary
- Direction for the League
- Employment opportunity



www.lwvtarrantcounty.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	2
BASICS OF GOOD GOVERNMENT	3
ANNOUNCEMENTS	4
MEMBERSHIP	5
FEBRUARY CALENDAR	6

HELP WANTED

The League has a job opening for a part-time **Office Administrator** and a volunteer **Webmaster**.

Do **you** or anyone you know possess these skills? Be on the lookout for a talented individual for these positions.

See page 4 of this *VOTER* for more info.

LEAGUE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



You are cordially invited to celebrate the League's 90th Anniversary at a Luncheon with the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County

Special Guests

*Chandler Roosevelt Lindsley
and Shelley Kofler, News Director for KERA*

Thursday, February 11th

11:15 am to 11:45 am Pre-Luncheon Reception

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm Luncheon and Program

Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas Street, Fort Worth

\$15 - League Members

\$20 - Non-League Members

*For Reservations contact Donnetta Howard
no later than Monday, February 8th
817-348-8683 or lwvtarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net*

**League of Women Voters
of Tarrant County**

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy and advocacy.

President

Nancy Stevens

President-Elect

Dawn Ellison

Vice Presidents

Program – Marion Henderson
Community Relations –
Dorie Cranshaw
Organization – Penny Clowers

Secretary

Martha Kissinger

Treasurer

Dolores Geisel

Directors

Georgia Kidwell
Linda Pavlik
Mary Stallings
Judy Wood

Nominating Committee

Pat Cheong, Chair
Emma Allen
Dolores Ruhs

THE VOTER

Reed Bilz
Dawn Ellison
Donnetta Howard
Martha Kissinger

Office Administrator

Donnetta Howard
Office Hours: MWF
8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Mailing Address

3212 Collinsworth St
Fort Worth, TX 76107

Telephone

817-348-VOTE (8683)

Fax

817-348-8683

E-mail Address

lwvtarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net

Web site

www.lwvtarrantcounty.org

FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Happy Anniversary!

This is a big year for the League of Women Voters of the United States, which was founded in 1920. Please help us celebrate the League's 90th anniversary at a luncheon at Trinity Terrace on Thursday, February 11. Chandler Roosevelt Lindsley, the Texas-born granddaughter of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, has graciously agreed to be our speaker. She will reminisce about her grandparents with Shelley Kofler, news director of KERA. Preceding the luncheon, members can meet Mrs. Lindsley at a reception. I hope that you can join these special guests for a memorable celebration of a milestone anniversary for the League. Reservations are due by February 8.

As we wrap up our anniversary celebration, it will be time for early voting in the March 2 party primaries. Working again with the Arlington League, we are putting together a Voters Guide for candidates in contested races for both parties, and LWV Texas is assembling a Voters Guide for statewide races. The Voters Guides will be available on our website, www.lwvtarrantcounty.org, in early February. Please help us spread the word about these Voters Guides.

In other news, Donnetta Howard and her family are moving from the area at the end of February. As everyone who has worked with her

knows, Donnetta has done a fantastic job since she began working here in the fall of 2008, and we hate to have to say good-bye. To smooth the transition, we are looking for a new part-time office administrator as soon as possible. If you know anyone with strong organizational and internet skills who is interested in working 12 hours a week, please contact Dawn Ellison, Penny Clowers, or me for more details.

As we look toward program planning at March unit meetings and the May 10 annual meeting, the Board of Directors would like to know what direction you would like for our League. Over the next month, Board members will be phoning to find out your thoughts about the League and what direction you would like to see LWV Tarrant County take over the next couple of years. If you have ever thought, "I wish the League would ...," this is the time to let us know what you want from your League.

I look forward to seeing you at the February 11 luncheon and to hearing your thoughts about the League's direction.

Nancy Stevens

Nancy Stevens

kenandnan@sbcglobal.net
(817) 926-3109



**Which direction
would you like to see
the League
GO?**

LET'S FOCUS ON THE BASICS OF GOOD GOVERNMENT

By Linda Pavlik, 25 year plus member

Democracy is a treasure that we value and which the League of Women Voters has worked diligently to preserve. One would think that in this 21st century, here in America, we would understand and nurture the tenets of good government. The Texas Open Meetings Act clearly states, "Government is the servant and not the master of the people." Who among us does not truly believe this?

Open Meetings

Transparency is synonymous with open government, and we've trusted this law to keep elected officials from hiding behind closed doors when making important decisions. A recent Star-Telegram editorial stated, "Officials doing their civic duties in good faith shouldn't fear accountability." We as League members surely agree with this and should rally against any changes to this important legislation. Presently, the Texas Municipal League, in which many of our local cities are active, is pushing to weaken the consequences should any elected official knowingly and intentionally act counter to the law. There are concerns expressed by some that criminal penalties—which could mean imprisonment—are too tough of a sentence for conducting business on the phone, by emails, or in "closed" sessions so the public doesn't know what is going on. But if a person is doing the job right—and being open and honest with us citizens, this law is appropriate—just the way it is.

Open Records

In another situation, the City of Fort Worth is expressing concerns that the state's open records act is too cumbersome. Staffers often demand to know a requestor's address, telephone number, phone number, email address—and the reason the information is wanted. But the law does not require you to provide any of this; in fact, it is illegal for you to be required to

say why you are making the request. Also, the City now wants to stop providing copies of police reports requested by defense lawyers, even though these are certainly public information, because of the time and expense involved. Again, let's reflect back to the fact that government is really the servant of the people; the volume of work is not really relevant.

Food Safety

A 22-year-old children's dance instructor was paralyzed from the waist down after being stricken by E.coli found in frozen hamburger meat from a national grocery chain. A number of years ago, according to the New York Times, a company began injecting ground beef with ammonia to kill E.coli and salmonella and selling its "cheaper" product to fast food restaurants and school lunch programs with USDA approval. Only recently, two 27,000 pound batches of beef were recalled for contamination. In the meantime, just think how many kids—and fast food purchasers—suffered! Now the USDA is trying to improve its systems and regulations. But as the newspaper stated in a recent editorial, "Consumers should not have to wait until somebody in the school lunch program blows the whistle."

A Strong Unified Voice

The League's mission states that our organization "encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy." I urge you to think about issues like these—and join me in pushing for two League studies; one being open government and one being food safety. I have thought about which is more important, but they must go hand-in-hand. After all, the government must be the advocate of the people. If you would like to talk about these issues, please contact me at 817-332-2972 or pavlik@pavlikandassociates.com.

What would you like to see brought up in March local program planning? Make your voice heard in the March *VOTER* by submitting your brief program planning ideas to Nancy Stevens (kenandnan@sbcglobal.net) and Donnetta Howard (lwwarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net) no later than February 15.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The *Voters Guide* for the March 2 Primary Elections will be online only. Check out local and state races at www.lwvtarrantcounty.org, starting February 13, and share this resource with your friends. Early voting begins February 15 and ends February 26.

HELP WANTED

The League of Women Voters of Tarrant County seeks a mature, experienced Office Administrator to work 12 hours/week (ideally 3 days/week) in a single-person office in Fort Worth. Applicants must be computer proficient in Microsoft Word and Excel, be able to assist league board members and community volunteers leading a variety of concurrent projects, have strong “attention-to-detail” skills, excellent written and oral communication skills, along with diplomacy skills in dealing with members and the public.

For more information, contact Nancy Stevens at 817-926-3109 or kenandnan@sbcglobal.net or visit www.lwvtarrantcounty.org. Applications must be received at lwv@lwvtarrantcounty.org by February 5, along with email or cover letter stating interest, availability and any limitations on part-time scheduling.

NATURALIZATION

Sixty-seven new applicants from 33 countries became new U. S. citizens Thursday, January 28, in the courtroom of the Honorable Judge Charles Bleil. Participating for the League of Women Voters were Barbara Rubin, and registrars Emma Allen, M. Vincent Kiernan, and Janine Thomas. Several of the new citizens completed their



League member and voter registrar Emma Allen helps a new citizen with his voter application.

voter registration applications that same day, while the remainder took home the applications to mail.

Barbara Rubin addressed the candidates before the ceremony, stressing the importance getting their applications completed in time to vote in the March 2 primary elections. In a show of hands, only two of the candidates knew what a primary election was, so she explained the party nominating process.

Judge Bleil, during the ceremony, told the parents of the many children there that he had no objection to their outbursts, and was particularly amused by the youngster standing in front of the Judge’s podium enthusiastically waving



Sitting in the courtroom waiting for the start of the Naturalization

two flags as each country was announced and applauded.

The next Naturalization ceremony will be held Thursday, February 18, at 10:00 a.m. in the court of judge Terry R. Means. Any League member who would like to participate may call Barbara Rubin or send an e-mail to naturalization@lwvtarrantcounty.org

MEMBERSHIP

NEW FRIEND OF THE LEAGUE - Carlos Puenta

NEW MEMBERS - Daphne Adams, Beth Epps, Beth Ganslen, and Michael Haney

RENEWING MEMBERS - Bonnie Bowman, Pat Cheong, Nancy McVean, Duane & Marjorie Montgomery, and Richard Trice



Thank you for 90 years of support! ~ LWV-TC



Help Us Bring New Talent into the League of Women Voters

We're the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County, one of the hundreds of local organizations across the nation whose members are committed to Making Democracy Work. Our non-partisan organization encourages informed and active participation by citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters does NOT support or oppose any political party or any candidate. Our goal is to empower citizens to shape better communities around the world.



MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

\$59/yr	Regular full voting member	\$59 _____
\$49/yr	Senior full voting member, Age 65 and older	\$49 _____
\$89/yr	Family (two members in one household; one membership vote)	\$89 _____
\$100/yr	Sustaining Membership ~ Elizabeth Cady Stanton	\$100 _____
\$150/yr	Advocate Membership ~ Carrie Chapman Catt	\$150 _____
\$200/yr	Patron Membership ~ Mary McLeod Bethune	\$200 _____
\$300/yr	Benefactor Membership ~ Eleanor Roosevelt	\$300 _____
_____	Contribution	Contrib. _____
\$10/yr	Additional fee to receive <i>The VOTER</i> Newsletter by U.S. Mail (online <i>VOTER</i> is no additional cost)	<i>VOTER</i> _____
		Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

LWV/US PMP	\$29.20
LWV/TX PMP	\$22.00
PMP = PER MEMBER PAYMENT	

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

(E-mail) _____

(Fax) _____

Membership dues and contributions are not eligible for a tax deduction under I.R.S. 501(c) (3) rules. You may make an additional tax-deductible contribution by writing a separate check payable to the LWV/Texas Education Fund. This will be used for educational projects benefiting the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County. Mail your membership application, dues, and contributions to LWV-TC, 3212 Collinsworth Street, Fort Worth, TX 76107 or join online www.lwvtarrantcounty.org.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
of Tarrant County
3212 Collinsworth St.
Fort Worth, TX 76107

FEBRUARY 2010 CALENDAR

Unit Meetings Discussion Topic — Food Safety

- Feb. 16 (Tues) 7:00 p.m.—Mid-Cities Unit**, Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 861 North East Mall Blvd., Hurst (The Shops at North East Mall). Call Georgia Kidwell at 817-282-0712 for information.
- Feb. 18 (Thurs) 12 noon—Southwest Lunch Unit**, Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas Street, Fort Worth. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. Cost: \$10/person. Call John Johnson at 817-810-9399 for reservations. Deadline for reservations is Tues., Feb. 18. Call Christie Campbell at 817-732-0556 for information.
- Feb. 18 (Thurs) 5:30 p.m.—Fort Worth Evening Unit**, La Madeleine Restaurant, 6140 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. Dutch Treat. Call Betsy Hedden at 817-923-9198 for information.

Feb. 1 (Mon) — Last day to register for Primary Election.

Feb. 8 (Mon) 5:30 p.m. — Board Meeting at League Office, 3212 Collinsworth Street, Fort Worth, 76107

Feb. 11 (Thurs) 11:15 a.m. registration, event begins at 12:00 noon — League Anniversary Celebration, Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas Street, Fort Worth. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.
Cost: \$15 member/\$20 non-member. Call Donnetta Howard at 817-348-8683 for reservations.
Deadline for reservations is Mon., Feb. 8, 12:00 noon.

Feb. 15 - 26 — Early voting

Feb. 18 (Thurs) — VOTER info deadline

Mar. 1 (Mon) — March VOTER mailed

~ WE'RE ON THE WEB! ~
WWW.LWVTARRANTCOUNTY.ORG

ALL MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ANY LEAGUE EVENT.

LEAGUE OFFICE HOURS: M, W, & F 8:30 A.M.—12:30 P.M.