



## THE VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County  
"Not for Women Only"

**Making Democracy Work**

**January 2009**

[www.lwvtarrantcounty.org](http://www.lwvtarrantcounty.org)

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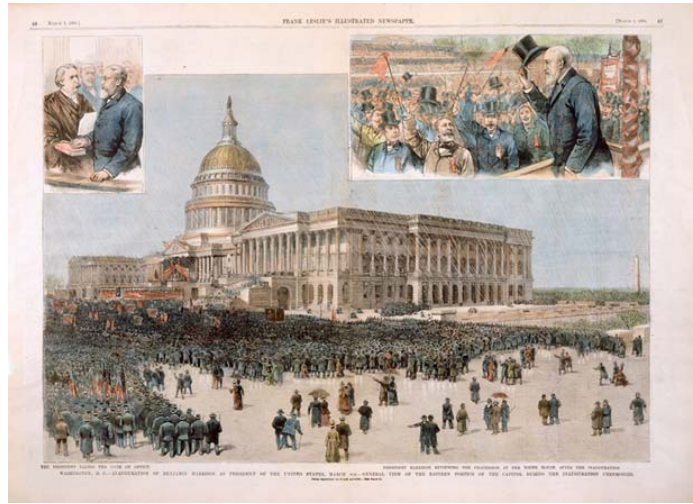
Presidential Historian Paul Boller will talk about  
Presidential Inaugurations, followed by a Wine and Cheese  
reception

**Date:** January 13, 2009

**Time:** 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Place:** Trinity Terrace  
Auditorium

**Suggested donation:** \$10



Every four years, usually following a rough-and-tumble election, Americans inaugurate their President. Some inaugurations represent dramatic shifts of power. Some reaffirm a current administration. All represent an orderly transition of presidential power.

As we prepare for yet another inauguration, presidential historian Paul Boller will talk about other American inaugurations and some of the larger-than-life personalities who have become President of the United States. Paul is the author of *Presidential Inaugurations*, *Presidential Anecdotes*, *Presidential Wives*, and other books. Hear Paul discuss this historic moment in Presidential history, then join him for a wine and cheese reception.

## 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.*

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Marjorie Montgomery

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Nancy Stevens

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## Greetings from Our President Marjorie Montgomery

Dear LWVTC members and friends,

The Holiday Party at Linda Pavlik's beautiful home was a perfect way to celebrate the season, and our friendships. Thanks to everyone for bringing great food, and to Linda for her very interesting collection of western Indian artifacts. An unexpected surprise happened because Betsy Hedden arranged for a high school mini-band to come and serenade us with carols.

Our sturdy and energetic Environmental Committee has been busy as usual trying to get the Fort Worth City Council to enact reasonable standards for Gas Drilling wells. Thanks to our Chair, Linda Hanratty, and to all who have come with us to City Council meetings.

A Naturalization Ceremony held on Dec 18 at 501 W 10th St, Fort Worth welcomed 70 new voter/citizens. Barbara Rubin's Committee was there to help them register to vote. Helping at these ceremonies was one of the first things I ever did with the League. I love to see our newest citizens smile with joy because NOW THEY CAN VOTE.

Dawn Ellison has done a superb job of organizing our visits to Legislators. We go in teams of 2 or 3 to every Tarrant County Legislator, to let them know what League priorities are, and to build friendships with them. They begin their Austin Legislative session on Jan 13, and will be there for five months. Unless the Governor calls a Special Session they will not meet again for 18 months. In my opinion, the business of the State of Texas is very constrained by our old-fashioned state constitution.

The NEW YEAR 2009 will bring us Information and Discussion at Unit meetings on Global Warming, Healthcare, and Air Quality. Take a close look at the three pages from our Environmental Committee in this issue of the VOTER.

2009 will also bring us educational Forums, May local elections, several small fundraising events, and our Annual Meeting on May 11. In January our Nominating Committee will begin to seek a slate of candidates for our 2009-2010 officers. Please give thought to serving, if you are asked. Service to the League of Women Voters is an investment in your community. And it has the unexpected return of the great pleasure of learning and friendships.

Warm regards and a very Happy New Year!

Marjorie Montgomery, President LWVTC



## Membership News

Thanks to the following for their support:

**New Members** – Linda Steinsultz

**Renewing Membership** – Eloise Frye, Mary Beth Garcia, Martha Stewart, & Audrey Weil

**Sustaining Advocate Membership** – Margaret DeMoss

**Sustaining Membership** – Linda Pavlik



Picture from [www.askchesapeake.com](http://www.askchesapeake.com)

# Urban Gas Drilling

## January Unit Discussion

As you are aware, the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County has been very active in advocating for enhanced regulation of Urban Gas Wells. We presented our recommendations for changes in the Fort Worth Gas Drilling Ordinance to the Fort Worth City Council at their December 2, 2008 meeting. At the January Unit meetings we want to hear from our members. Our latest advocacy paper is included in this *VOTER* and all our gas well papers are on our web site. Come to a Unit meeting to learn and discuss the issue that the Fort Worth League of Neighborhoods has said is the most critical issue facing the City of Fort Worth, and by expansion Tarrant County, since the coming of the railroads.

### QUESTIONS

- A. Twenty-three towns in Denton and Tarrant Counties have joined the little town of Dish in passing resolutions calling for the state legislature to give them more control over pipelines and the ability to proscribe condemnation for gas lines. (The main issue is the right of eminent domain.) What should cities implement if allowed?
1. Approval of pipeline routes?
  2. Power to adopt regulations with regard to placement of lines, such as limits on how close to homes, schools, health facilities, government buildings, and other places where large numbers of people congregate?
  3. Power to require drilling companies to share pipelines where such pipelines run near each other?
  4. Power to inspect local facilities and enforce regulations?
  5. Other?
- B. The ability to regulate gas drilling and related activities in non-incorporated county areas is set by state statute and is very limited. Should the County Commissioners be able to regulate these activities in the way that municipalities can now?
- C. What measures could be taken to ensure that gas well regulations are enforced?
1. More frequent and more thorough inspection of drilling sites, pipelines, and other appurtenances of gas production?
  2. More and better trained inspectors?
  3. More severe penalties for infractions?
  4. More insistence on requiring that streets, well sites, and other environmental infringements be restored as close to their original state as possible?
  5. Other?

*This is an image of pipes and valves at the wellhead to control the flow of natural gas or oil.*



Picture from [www.askchesapeake.com](http://www.askchesapeake.com)



## LWV Gas Advocacy Issues – November 2008

As a result of the slowdown in leasing and drilling, the communities in Tarrant County have a window of opportunity to protect the health and safety of residents and preserve the livability of this area, while still enjoying the economic benefits of gas drilling. We are not experts, but we have studied the issues surrounding gas well drilling for more than two years and have listened to many experts on all sides of these issues. Based on our study, we recommend a master plan for well placement, gas pipeline routes, compressor placement, truck routes, etc. This plan should include risk analyses and environmental impacts of all phases of urban gas well drilling. The local municipalities should also adopt an ordinance that includes the recommendations outlined below to help safeguard our residents and the environmental quality of our county. In addition, municipalities must enforce the regulations through frequent, thorough inspections by adequately trained employees.

### Water

1. Disposal of produced water (including flowback water):
  - a. Require the municipality to be responsible for disposal of its own flowback and produced water.
  - b. Encourage water recycling by imposing high fees for other forms of water disposal. The water usage for drilling is staggering: 10,000 gas wells in Tarrant County at a conservative 3.5 million gallons per well equals 350 trillion gallons of water that our communities cannot afford to lose.
  - c. Require that water disposal wells be drilled into the Ellenberger formation; that the wells be carefully inspected during construction; and that they be regularly monitored once operation begins in order to avoid groundwater contamination and other negative environmental impacts. In addition, all water injection well pumps should be electric. Municipal enforcement will be crucial because, at present, the Texas Railroad Commission has insufficient staff to provide adequate oversight of the disposal wells.
2. Impose limitations on the number of annual drilling permits issued, so that water resources are not over-used in any single year. During times of drought, the number of permits should be further reduced so that the water resources can be used prudently for the citizens as a priority.
3. Discourage the piping of flowback and/or produced water. There is huge potential for environmentally damaging leaks, especially as the pipes age.

### Air Quality

1. Require vapor recovery units on all tanks and vessels that will contain any amount of condensate or hydrocarbons, and apply the same requirement to all diesel storage tanks.
2. Require use of the latest technology for emissions control equipment on all engines – engines driving drilling and workover rigs, frac pumps, compressors, and all other engines on site for drilling, re-work, and production.
3. Require trucks used for moving drilling equipment, construction equipment, water, etc., to meet Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) standards.
4. Require the use of electric or low-emission natural gas powered engines, especially for compressors and drilling rigs.
5. Require the use of green gas well completion techniques that recover gas from the first burst of gas and liquid from a well, rather than allowing the gas to vent or burn (flaring).

### Safety

1. Drilling:
  - a. Require risk analysis of each proposed drill site to ensure safety of surrounding land uses. The analysis should include gas production and gathering pipelines.
  - b. Require at least a 600-foot set-back between gas well bore holes and property lines. Set-backs for other gas facilities such as tank batteries, compressors, valve stations, and other equipment should also be at least 600 feet.

## LWV Gas Advocacy Issues – November 2008 (cont.)

- c. Require drill site sensors for detection of any possible gas releases, etc.
  - d. Require that trucks be routed outside residential neighborhoods or along arterials, both to and from drill sites.
2. Gas Pipelines:
- a. Require risk analysis of each gas producing and gathering pipeline to determine adequate separation between occupied structures and outdoor gathering places and the proposed pipeline. Establish requirements for risk mitigation, especially through populated areas. This may mean higher quality pipe, deeper depth for pipe, etc., and lining for pipeline routes to guard against corrosive soils and potential soil movement.
  - b. Require extensive pipeline marking to prevent accidental pipeline ruptures.
  - c. Establish a schedule for continual monitoring of pipelines and the increased measures to prevent internal and external pipe corrosion.
  - d. Require baseline assessment of pipelines by specific dates and maintenance of a written integrity management plan or face heavy fines or even jail. Reports should be taken seriously and audited.
  - e. Require pressure testing or in-line inspection of all pipelines at regular intervals as well as inspections to detect possible internal or external pipe corrosion.
  - f. Require that gas in all urban area pipelines be odorized.
  - g. Impose stringent financial and operation requirements for all secondary and later operators that take over from initial pipeline operators.
  - h. Prepare and distribute comprehensive, location-accurate pipeline maps to fire and police departments and make them available to the general public.
3. Urban Gas Drilling and Production:
- a. Require adequate training, testing, and oversight of gas drill workers, pipeline workers, and gas well and pipeline inspectors.
  - b. Require comprehensive reporting on all possible related safety hazards to the fire and police departments, especially toxic products resulting from drilling, compression stations, valve stations, and pipelines.
  - c. Provide adequate funding and training for emergency response planning, including an analysis of the hazards that first responders and affected citizens may face. Hold safety drills like those for air crash emergencies.
  - d. Require sufficient insurance coverage of all the companies involved in gas drilling, gas production, water transportation, and pipeline construction and operation to compensate municipalities and property owners in case of property damage or human or animal injury. In addition to insurance coverage, require that all companies currently or subsequently involved in urban gas drilling be bonded for restoration of the drill site.

### **Other Issues**

- 1. Require sound and light barriers, especially where drill sites are near residences, commercial uses, etc., and require additional measures to limit low-frequency noise.
- 2. Limit operation of the fracturing process to daylight hours when possible.
- 3. Require landscaping, trees and clean-up to be an integral part of drill site development.
- 4. Require payment from users to restore roads damaged during the gas drilling and production process.
- 5. Protect surface landowners' rights.
- 6. Implement significant fees for each gas well permit that is approved to offset the city's cost of providing the services to oversee and administer gas development and to plan and respond to any emergencies related to gas wells. We estimate that fees would run about \$30,000 for an approved urban gas well permit, and \$80,000 or more for an approved high-impact gas well permit.



# Unit Meetings

A total of 21 members and one guest attended three unit meetings in November. Mid-Cities Unit had eight members and one guest, and Southwest Lunch Unit had 10 members. Fort Worth Evening Unit did not meet due to a conflict with a public hearing on Gas Drilling. Only three people attended East Fort Worth Unit, and it was recommended that it be discontinued. If anyone who has attended the East Fort Worth Unit (or would like to) is interested in continuing the Unit, maybe on a different day or at a different time, please contact the Unit Coordinator, Martha Kissinger, at 817-457-2622 or E-mail at [kiss23@juno.com](mailto:kiss23@juno.com)

## 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	<b>Full voting Member</b>	\$ _____
\$49	<b>Full voting Member</b> , Age 30 and under	_____
	<b>Full voting Member</b> , Age 65 and older	_____
	<b>Full time student</b> (please list school)	_____
\$29.50	Additional <b>Full voting Member</b> in same household	_____
\$1,000	<b>Benefactor</b> Membership	_____
\$500	<b>Patron</b> Membership	_____
\$250	<b>Sustaining Advocate</b> Membership	_____
\$100	<b>Sustaining</b> Membership	_____
\$20	<b>Friend of the League</b> – Mailing list only	_____
_____	<b>Contribution</b>	_____
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (E-mail) \_\_\_\_\_ (Fax) \_\_\_\_\_

LWV/US PMP	\$26.30
LWV/TX PMP	\$22.00
PMP = Per Member Payment	

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.



*League of Women Voters  
of Tarrant County  
3212 Collinsworth Street  
Ft. Worth, TX 76107*

## League of Women Voters of Tarrant County Calendar

*All Members and Guests are welcome and encouraged to attend any League event*

### January Board Meeting:

Jan. 26 (Mon) 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting at the League office, 3212 Collinsworth St, Fort Worth 76107, Optional dinner at Panera Bread at 5:15 p.m.

### January 2009 Unit Meetings:

Jan. 15 (Thurs) 12 noon Southwest Lunch Unit, Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas St, Fort Worth, RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. Cost \$10/person. Call John Johnson at 871-810-9399 for reservations. Deadline for reservations is Tues. Jan. 13. Call Jean Baggerly at 817-926-6189 for information.

Jan. 15 (Thurs) 5:30 p.m. Fort Worth Evening Unit, La Madeleine Restaurant, 6140 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. Dutch Treat.

Jan. 20 (Tues) 7 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.

### Dates to Remember:

Jan. 8 (Thurs) 1:00 p.m. Fundraising Committee meeting

Jan. 13 (Tues) 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Historian Paul Boller speaks about Presidential Inaugurations, followed by a wine and cheese reception, Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas St, Fort Worth 76107, Suggested Donation \$10/person.

Jan. 15 (Thurs) 10:00 a.m. Naturalization Ceremony, 501 W 10<sup>th</sup> St, Fort Worth 76102, to volunteer contact Barbara Rubin at 817-927-2736 or [Barbara@rubin.net](mailto:Barbara@rubin.net)

Jan. 20 (Tues) **VOTER** info deadline

Jan. 22 (Thurs) 10:00 a.m. Naturalization Ceremony, 501 W 10<sup>th</sup> St, Fort Worth 76102, to volunteer contact Barbara Rubin at 817-927-2736 or [Barbara@rubin.net](mailto:Barbara@rubin.net)

Jan. 22 (Thurs) 2:00 p.m. Environmental Committee meeting at the League office, 3212 Collinsworth St, Fort Worth 76107

Jan. 30 (Fri) February **VOTER** mailed



**League Office Hours: M, W, & F 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon**