

VOTER

AUGUST 2008

AMARILLO LEAGUE OF WOMEN

VOTERS

Margaret Peebles, Editor

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

♠ VOTERS GUIDE QUESTIONS

August 13, 2008-Wednesday
Barbara Cheek's Home
2:00 pm

*Input for vital questions for candidates reporting
in the VOTERS GUIDE.*

*All members welcome-If you cannot attend, you
can send questions via email at*

barbcheek@gmail.com or call 383-5848.

Directions to Barbara's Home: Go out Western,
North until you come to Sierra Hills Drive and
turn left. Go ¾ mile and Barbara's Home is on
the left.

**♠ September 5, 2008—First Day to apply
for ballot by mail!**

♠ Board Meeting

Friday, September 5, 2008
Senior Citizen's Center on Tyler
May also enter on Polk
Lunch is at 11:30 for \$5.00 in the cafeteria
Bring your tray to the meeting room
12:00 noon--meeting

♠ Business and Professional Women's Luncheon

Monday, September 8, 2008
Come and hear Mina Speak about our
League!

♠ State Senator Kel Seliger

Central Library
Saturday, September 13, 2008
3:00 PM

Will speak on water-related issues!!

*Please come and invite as guests those you feel
would be interested in meeting Kel Seliger!!*

♠ Voter Registration Drive

Saturday, September 27, 2008
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
United Market #524
3300 I-40 East
Fiesta Foods
1012 SE 10th Street at Arthur

*Volunteers needed!! Contact
Margaret Peebles lealonlealon@yahoo.com or
call 806 356 8119*

*October 6, 2008—Last Day to Register for
November General Election!!*

♠ Candidates Forum

Tuesday, October 14, 2008
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Location to be announced later

*Volunteers will be needed—Contact Janette
Kelley at 373-0855*

**♠ October 20 to October 31, 2008—Early
Voting!!**

**♠ October 28, 2008—Last Day to apply
for ballot by mail!**

♠ General Election

Tuesday, November 4, 2008

*Volunteers needed to answer phones in the
League Office!! Contact Janette Kelley at 373
0855*

President's Column

You are all invited to attend the Business and
Professional Women's Luncheon September 8 at
11:30 to hear me wax eloquent about the amazing
accomplishments of the Amarillo LWV. Let me
know early the week before if you would like a
luncheon reservation.

Barbara Cheek with Joyce Hinsley has accepted
an invitation the same day to speak to a group of
teachers at Clarendon High School about the
League. The teachers' sorority is especially

interested in knowing about issues and candidates in the state election. I think that it is exciting that our Speakers Bureau is functioning. LWV member Barbara Cheek is a regular when Amarillo TV stations need information on the elections.

I hope everyone has had a restful summer. There is so much work ahead: *VOTERS GUIDE* preparation and distribution, raising the money to pay for it, voter registration, getting the Observer Corps off the ground, starting our study of issues related to water, making the League's position on immigration known, and keeping up with what is happening with the state and national issues.

Pay your dues if you haven't done so. Tracking down "strays" is very time-consuming. Also, keep alert for new "recruits" for our League. Growing our League is not just for the officers and board—it takes all of you!

Mina Johnson

VOTERS GUIDE Questions

The creation of the *VOTERS GUIDE* is easily the most important work of the League as perceived by the public. The voting public is dependent upon the League to provide insightful questions for our local candidates to answer that reflect what the candidates believe in and what they will do if elected. For these reasons, our League needs input from all of our members. Questions for the *VOTERS GUIDE* don't float down from heaven; they are created by hard work and much thoughtfulness. Your input is needed. Please call or email Barbara Cheek at 383 5848 or barbcheek@gmail.com. If at all possible, attend the *VOTERS GUIDE* question meeting.

Barbara Cheek, 3rd Vice-President (Voters)

Upcoming Water Study

This fall the Amarillo League will begin a two-year study of both short-term and long-term environmental issues that impact our area and region, focusing specifically on our water resources and related ecological concerns. In the course of our study, we'll look at the various

types of water resources available to us and the various entities (municipalities, the State Water Board, the regional water-planning commissions, and others) that determine how those resources are used. We'll examine the issues (both short-term and long-term) that will impact our water supply and its quality and try to determine steps that may be taken to improve the outlook, not only for our immediate needs, but for those of future generations as well. Various individuals in the Amarillo League are already attending meetings of various water groups as observers under the auspices of our newly re-established Observer Corps to learn more about how these groups function.

For at least the first year of the study, we shall be partnering with the Amarillo Public Library to present a series of public forums that will alternate with group discussions of selected books, articles, and other resource materials that speak to the issues that confront us. The members of the environment committee, under the leadership of Tonya Klueskens, are presently working to determine the final list of materials that members of the library discussion group will be asked to read (or view) prior to each discussion meeting. This group of individuals will begin meeting in January. Everyone who is interested is encouraged to become involved with this facet of the study, in addition to attending the public forums that our League will present. The Amarillo Public Library will announce details of the discussion group this fall, and we'll also keep you apprised through our Amarillo Voter.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, September 13, we shall begin our water study with a meeting of the membership at the Central Library at 3:00 PM. State Senator Kel Seliger will be our guest presenter and will answer questions the audience may have regarding the issues he discusses. Be sure to invite other people that you think will be interested in hearing what he has to say. In October we shall have a candidates forum. Copies of the Voters Guide will be available. In November we hope to have Assistant City Manager Jarret Atkinson or a member of his staff speak to us about water issues that confront the city and the measures that are being taken to deal with them.

Please reserve the second Saturday afternoon of each month for this new study we are about to undertake. Let's find out what we can do to ensure that water will be available not only for us, but for our children and grandchildren as well.

Joyce Hinsley, 2nd Vice-President (Program)

Amarillo League Puts "Sunshine" in Its Orbit

"Sunshine" is a metaphor for transparency in government, something LWV has championed since it's founding in 1920 and constitutes a vital part of its mission. That is why Amarillo LWV has adopted as one of its goals in the current program year to organize its own Observer Corps.

Observer Corps or monitoring programs are not new. Many Leagues across the country have had programs in place for decades. League efforts in this area reinforce our reputation of fairness, nonpartisanship and trust. League members attend governmental meetings to learn what their government is doing and to monitor whether those meetings are conducted in an open and transparent way. Experience has shown the importance of the League being present to watch – and to take action when necessary.

In the local program, volunteer observers will be trained and given identifying badges before any observer assignment is made. A "Directory of Public Meetings of Interest to the League" is already available to help volunteers locate meetings. And public officials in the community will soon be introduced to the program with a letter from our League president, Mina Johnson.

The Observer Corps is an excellent way for League members to learn about local issues and share information with League members through *Voter* articles and League meetings. In addition, a LWV "public presence" more perfectly ensures that the public's right to know is being honored.

For more information about the observer program or to volunteer, you may contact Alan Abraham, who serves as Coordinator, or any board member.

His contact information is: 806 355-1637 or alannancy@sbcglobal.net.

Alan Abraham

Amarillo League Meets, Greets, and Registers New Citizens

On Monday, June 23, 2008 Judge Mary Lou Robinson swore in approximately 80 persons as new US citizens in the Federal Court. Amarillo LWV members were on hand to assist them and hand out Voter Registration Cards, League Pens, and our "Facts for Potter and Randall County Voters". Members attending were brand new league member, Laksmiwati Cortes, and also, Alan Abraham, BJ Opperman, Robert Goodrich, Lou Ann Garrett and Margaret Peebles.

June 23, 2008 was the first time the League had the new League pens to hand out to new citizens. The pens are red, white and blue with stars on the lid and stripes on the end of the barrel. Our League has our name and phone number on the barrel of the pen with the legend, "Exercise your right to Register and Vote". The pens are black ink that is required by the Federal government on all official documents signed. These pens were also handed out to Amarillo High School seniors when the league made presentations on Registering and Voting. They make a great way to make our League known.

Due to the swearing in, our league learned that the county offices could no longer supply the league with large numbers of Voter Cards. In response, we called the Texas Secretary of State's offices and obtained a case—approximately 2,000—Voter Cards for our use for registration. I will see that these cards get to our league office.

Our League will hold our ***Voter Registration Drive*** on Saturday, September 27, 2008 at two market locations. We will again concentrate on the East side of Amarillo to capture new voters for the November election.

Margaret Peebles, Director, Place 3

MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political 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.

The **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** is open for membership to all citizens (men and women) 18 years of age or older. Its purpose is to promote the informed, active participation of all citizens in their government. It does not support or oppose any political party or candidate but does take action on issues after study and consensus by its members.

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The hard work and dedication shown by your League is what keeps our organization strong and well respected.

Amarillo League of Women Voters

P. O. Box 19333

Amarillo TX 79114-1333

TEL: 806 372-5438

Dues are as follows:

\$60.00—single membership

\$90.00—family membership

\$35.00—student membership

To join, please send your check made out to Amarillo League of Women Voters to “Kay McMinn, Treasurer, 3512 Killeen, Amarillo TX 79109.