

# The VOTER

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

3212 Collinsworth St  
Fort Worth, TX 76107

Phone and FAX  
817-348-8683

L E A G U E O F W O M E N V O T E R S O F T A R R A N T C O U N T Y

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Annual Meeting Slated for May
- Transportation Forum April 2
- Tea & Chocolate Tasting Post-poned
- Early Voting Schedule
- Redistricting / Voter ID Bill

## YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING

- ♦ *May 11, 5:30 PM at Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas St, Fort Worth, 76102.*
  - ♦ *6:00 PM sit-down formal dinner is \$16.*
  - ♦ *R.S.V.P. to League office 817-348-8683 by May 4.*
  - ♦ *6:45 PM speaker is The Honorable Marti Van Ravenswaay, Tarrant County Commissioner.*
  - ♦ *7:30 PM Election of Officers and other business.*
- Please bring your Annual Meeting Workbook, which will arrive in your home about April 20.*

## TRANSPORTATION FORUM THURSDAY, APRIL 2 7 PM

**INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER**  
**SPEAKERS: DICK RUDELL**  
**JUNGUS JORDAN**  
**MARC VEASEY**

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On Thursday evening, April 2, 2009, Dick Ruddell, President of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (the T), and Jungus Jordan, Rail Texas Chair and a member of the Regional Transportation Council, will provide an update on the status of North Texas Transportation initiatives, the future of rail in North Texas, and proposed state legislation currently being debated. State Representative Marc Veasey will explain the sales tax bill for transportation funding he has introduced in the House. Edith Jones will be the moderator.

The event is sponsored by the **Tarrant County League of Women Voters** and will be held at the Intermodal Transportation Center at 9<sup>th</sup> and Jones Streets in downtown Fort Worth. The program will begin at 7:00 PM. **Free street parking is typically available.** The event is free and open to the public. For more information call 817-348-8683 or visit

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

**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**

Marjorie Montgomery

**President-Elect**

Nancy Stevens

**Vice Presidents**

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

**Secretary**

Martha Kissinger

**Treasurer**

Dolores Geisel

**Directors**

Dawn Ellison  
Ann Hammond  
Georgia Kidwell  
Vincent Kiernan  
Linda Pavlik  
Mary Stallings  
Ann Sutherland  
Judy Wood

**Nominating Committee**

Edith Jones, Chair  
Reed Bilz  
Anna Holzer  
Brenda Seaver  
Mary Stallings

**THE VOTER**

Nancy Stevens  
Donnetta Howard

**Office Administrator**

Donnetta Howard  
Office Hours: MWF 8:00-12:00

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*Greetings from Our President  
Marjorie Montgomery*

Dear League members and friends,

We have greatly benefited this year from having Donnetta Howard as our Office Administrator. I want to thank her for the many ways she has helped us. Donnetta has excellent computer skills, spent hours being trained in our systems by her predecessor Michelle, and has the rare quality of good instincts about how to handle phone calls and new situations that arise. We are most fortunate to have her with us.

I also want to thank the Board of Director and Officers for their fine work this year. Each individual has made a special contribution, and together the Board has worked as a team to get an amazing number of projects completed.

I highly recommend a visit to the LWV of the United States website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) to learn what the League positions are on various issues. The president, Mary Wilson, wrote a letter to U.S. Senators describing in detail the kind of health care reform that we need. LWV-US also joined with 17 other organizations to ask Congress to appropriate the remaining \$470 million of authorized funding for HAVA (Help America Vote Act) to help states pay for proper voting equipment, and poll worker training. The League joined with 4 other groups and wrote to President Barack Obama to express strong support for his Ethics Executive Order, which he issued at the start of his Presidency. The order prevents former government officials from improperly trading on their government service for personal gain. It is designed to reduce the inappropriate power of some lobbyists. I am proud of the work the LWV-US is doing.

You will not want to miss PRAIRIE FEST, Saturday April 25 at Tandy Hills Park in Fort Worth. The park is one of the few remaining wild preserves, with a variety of ecosystems. There will be guided tours of wild flowers in full bloom and booths with ecological information. We will have a booth describing our environmental concerns. For more information go to [www.tandyhills.org](http://www.tandyhills.org).

Save the date of May 11 for our Annual Meeting. Members are invited to bring spouses, sons and daughters who might be curious about what the League does, and potential members. Trinity Terrace will hold a LOT of people. And their food is excellent. Make your reservation by calling the League office, 817-348-8683 and leaving a message for Donnetta.

See you there. Warm regards,

Marjorie Montgomery, President, LWVTC



**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

**THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR  
THEIR SUPPORT:**

**NEW MEMBERS** — ERIN CARLSON, ASHLEY JAMESON, & HELEN TALBOT

**SUSTAINING ADVOCATE MEMBERSHIP** — MIKE & ROSIE MONCRIEF

**SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP** — EUNICE GIVENS

**RENEWING MEMBERSHIP** — EMMA ALLEN, DENISE ANDERSON, BILLIE JO RICHARDS, & BRENDA SEAVER

DETAILS FOR ANNUAL MEETING



AGENDA: Adoption of Budget and Local Programs for 2009-2010, Election of Officers, Awards, and Introduction of New President.

MENU: Includes Medallions of PorkTenderloin with mango chutney, side dishes, and N.Y. style Cheesecake, all for \$16. Or ask for the vegetarian option when you make your reservation. You may pay at the door but MUST have a reservation in advance.

Wine, juice, and table bouquets are courtesy of Trinity Terrace. Many thanks for their gracious hospitality.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS & PARKING: From I-30 just west of downtown Fort Worth, exit at Summit, go north to Texas St. Turn left and go two blocks to #1600, the front door of Trinity Terrace. Turn right into the half-circle drive, pass the front door and turn right into "Visitor Parking". Other parking is available near the church or at the corner of Penn and Texas Streets.

TEA AND CHOCOLATE TASTING POSTPONED

Because of a potential partnering opportunity with another organization, the Tea and Chocolate Tasting, originally scheduled for April 4, has been postponed until fall.

Eighteen members, spouses, and friends attended the Wine and Cheese Tasting at Betsy and Owen Hedden's home on March 6, and all seemed to enjoy the evening. Thanks to the Heddens for once again opening their home to the League.



"Thanks to the Heddens for opening their home..."

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

The League of Women Voters Health Committee met on March 6th. We decided to embark on a project to contact the three dozen schools in the I-20/I-30 band west of I-35 to make sure children are aware of the availability of clinics. Daurice Ring will contact JPS to try to get fliers which are specific to a particular school-based clinic, and John Huffman and Ann Sutherland will get to work with a couple of schools each.

We're doing flyers because, as it turns out, there are some appointment slots available in the existing school-based clinics.

Beth McClean, who oversees the JPS clinics for JPS, tells us they will open clinics at night if they have the traffic.

Eventually, our goal is to build utilization to get a clinic in our area.

On a related note, Ann Sutherland visited the South Central Alliance of Churches to spread the word about the clinics, where children can get health care for \$5 per visit. The dozen people there were enthusiastic and took flyers to distribute to several hundred people who come to their churches for food, clothing,



More children can receive much needed low-cost health care due to these efforts.

counseling, and work referrals each month.

The South Central Alliance of Churches is located at the Southside Church of Christ, 2101 Hemp-hill St in Fort Worth and serves needy individuals in zip codes 76104, 76109, and 76110.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, April 3, at 11:00 A.M. (note earlier starting time this month only).

U N I T S

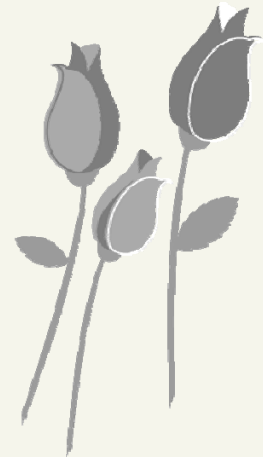
Unit meeting attendance is increasing; 25 members and one guest attended the three unit meetings in March. The meetings included lively discussion of program topics and several proposals for new local program studies in 2009-2010.

(A report on proposed local program items for the next League year will be published in the Annual Meeting Workbook, which will be sent to all members prior to the May 11 Annual Meeting.)

In April we'll follow up on the April 2 Transpor-

tation Forum with discussion at unit meetings. Be sure to mark your calendar (see last page of this VOTER) and plan to attend.

Martha Kissinger  
Unit Coordinator



P R A I R I E F E S T

*"...educating the public about the need to preserve what is left of our natural environment."*

We will be setting up a booth at Prairie Fest, Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Prairie Fest is an environmental festival held in Fort Worth's Tandy Hills Park. Tandy Hills Park is one of the few

remaining wild preserves with a variety of ecosystems. Many other ecology-minded organizations will be participating.

The purpose of the fest is to bring people to this gem of

a park at peak wildflower season and to educate them on the value of saving open space and parkland.

The League will take advantage of our booth to educate the community on our many environmental activities.

We will have a variety of educational material, both local and state, including several on the impact of gas well drilling on Tarrant County, the need for preservation of parkland and trees, clean air, etc. We will also have LWV information.

Prairie Fest is a true community activity devoted to educating the public about the need to preserve what is left of our natural environment. For more information, go to [www.tandyhills.org](http://www.tandyhills.org).

### EARLY VOTING FOR MAY ELECTIONS

Early voting will take place on:

- ◆ April 27-30 from 8 am to 5 pm
- ◆ May 1 from 8 am to 5 pm
- ◆ May 2 from 7 am to 7 pm
- ◆ May 3 from 11 am to 4 pm
- ◆ May 4-5 from 7 am to 7 pm
- ◆

**Election Day is May 9 from 7 am to 7pm.**

### UPCOMING BROADCAST

The League and the Fort Worth League of Neighborhoods are sponsoring interviews of the candidates for Fort Worth Mayor and Fort Worth City Council that will be broadcast on Charter cable, AT&T U-Verse cable, and hosted on the City's web site. Our Edie Jones will moderate the program. Taping will take place the week of April 6. Information about the broadcast schedule and specific districts and candidates will be posted on our web site in April. Check it out!

*"...interviews for Fort Worth Mayor and Fort Worth City Council will be broad-*

## TARRANT COUNTY LEAGUE LOBBIES FOR SAFER GAS GATHERING PIPELINES IN TARRANT COUNTY

On March 18, 2009, Linda Hanratty spoke before the Texas House Energy Resource Committee in support of House Bill 1537 on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County and the League of Women Voters of Arlington.

HB 1537 Prohibits construction of gathering or transmission lines within 300 feet of an established permanent structure that is used by human beings on a regular basis.

The bill also requires gas in the pipelines to be odorized and dehydrated at the wellhead.

We were able to support this bill based upon our

local position without a state position because the bill pertains only to Tarrant County.

Our testimony was well-received by the committee; however, passage even out of this committee will be difficult.

We also have permission to support HB 1533, 1535, 1536, and 1538, all of which pertain to gas drilling or pipelines.

If any of them pass out of committee, we will be asking you to contact your State Legislator to support this legislation that is so important to the welfare of Tarrant County.



*"...support this legislation that is so important to the welfare of Tarrant County."*

## STATE LEAGUE PRIORITIES

All League members are urged to contact their state legislators about two important issues: Redistricting and Voter ID. The Texas League's positions are summarized here. For more complete information, go to [www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org) and follow the links to Advocacy and to Testimony. Contact information for legislators is in the new Your Elected Officials brochure.

### Redistricting – SB 315

A basic tenet of our democracy is the "One Citizen - One Vote" concept. Following each decennial census, a basic step in ensuring that each citizen's vote in an election carries the same weight is redistricting to create voting districts approximately equal to the population.

With the goal of making redistricting fair, orderly, and less partisan, the League of Women Voters strongly supports establishment of an independent redistricting commission, operating within strict guidelines and time limits. The League further recommends that the legislature place a high priority on establishment of such a commission during the 2009 session.

The League of Women Voters of Texas believes that an independent commission charged with drawing boundaries for Congressional and Texas Senate and House districts would prevent the difficulties of the past, and the League urges the

legislature to establish such a commission. The League also believes that protecting the value of each vote in an election should be the paramount goal during the redistricting process. This goal would be furthered by the establishment of an independent commission with the responsibility of formulating a redistricting plan, designating boundaries for Congressional and Texas Senate and House Districts.

- ◆ The commission should be appointed, bipartisan, small in size, and composed of an odd number of members.
- ◆ Specific provisions should be made for automatic court review, preferably with the Texas Supreme Court having original jurisdiction.
- ◆ The commission would operate under definite, pre-established time limits for each step in the process.
- ◆ As soon as census figures become available, the commission would begin its work and would hold hearings around the state, allowing citizens to voice their concerns.
- ◆ After convening in 2011, the legislature would receive the redistricting plan and would ultimately be responsible for its final approval.

### Voter ID Bill – SB 362

The League of Women Voters of Texas has real concerns that SB 362, the Voter ID Bill,

creates needless barriers to citizen voter participation and does not address the issue of election fraud.

It has been suggested that, with the requirement of a photo ID at the polling place, election fraud will be eliminated; however, Attorney General Greg Abbott, after a \$1.4 million investigation, found only 26 minor cases of election fraud, mostly involving mail-in ballots. In all of these cases, a photo ID would not have reduced fraud.

If we are to rely on a driver's license for a photo ID, we find that those who do not have a driver's license are more likely to be elderly, disabled, poor, a member of a minority community, or have an illness that makes it unsafe to drive. Also, there are many Texas women who have both a valid voter registration card and a Texas driver's license, but the names do not match because of marriage or divorce. These women will be inconvenienced when they attempt to vote, and it is entirely possible it could keep some away from the polls.

Voting is the most fundamental expression of citizenship. Breaking down barriers to citizen voter participation, from literacy tests to the poll tax, has been a constant battle for those of us who believe that all citizens should be able to exercise their right to vote.

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

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LWV/US PMP	\$26.30
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.





LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF TARRANT COUNTY  
3212 Collinsworth St.  
Fort Worth, TX 76107

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

**League of Women Voters of Tarrant County Calendar**

*All Members and Guests are welcome and encouraged to attend any League event*  
**League Office Hours: M, W, & F 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon**



**April Board Meeting:**

Apr. 20 (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.

**Dates to Remember:**

Apr. 2 (Thurs) 7:00 p.m.

**Transportation Forum**, Intermodal Transportation Center at 9th and Jones Streets, Fort Worth, 76102. Visit [www.lwvtarrantcounty.org](http://www.lwvtarrantcounty.org) for more information.

Apr. 3 (Fri) 11:00 a.m.

**Health Care Committee Meeting** at the League office, 3212 Collinsworth St, Fort Worth, 76107.

Apr. 7 (Tues) 6:45 p.m.

**JPS Health System Forum**, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1330 S Fielder Rd, Arlington. For more information contact the League of Women Voters of Arlington at 817-472-5982 or [www.LWVArlington-Tx.org](http://www.LWVArlington-Tx.org)

**April 2009 Unit Meetings:**

Apr. 16 (Thurs) 12 noon

**Topic: State Program: Transportation**

**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. Apr. 14. Call Jean Baggerly at 817-926-6189 for information.

Apr. 16 (Thurs) 2:00 p.m.

**Environmental Committee Meeting** at the League office, 3212 Collinsworth St, Fort Worth, 76107.

Apr. 16 (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.

Apr. 20 (Mon)

Estimated arrival of Annual Meeting Workbook.

Apr. 21 (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.

Apr. 27 – May 5

Early Voting Scheduled (see pg. 5 for times)

May 4 (Mon)

Latest date to make reservations for the Annual Meeting. Call the League office at 817-348-8683

May 11 (Mon) 5:30 p.m.

**Annual Meeting** at Trinity Terrace, 1600 Texas St, Fort Worth, 76102.