

League of Women Voters of Wichita Falls

P.O. Box 4034, Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

Phone / Fax 940-767-0129

Web Page - - - www.LwvTexas.org/WichitaFalls.htm

VOTER for June 2009

211 - - YOUR CALL FOR HELP

BRENT SMITH, Resource Director for 2-1-1 Texas will be our Speaker

Wednesday, June 3rd - - - at Luby's Cafeteria

Go thru lunch line prior to the 12 noon, call to order

What if a Disaster Strikes? Who 'ya gonna call?

What if you or a friend needs immediate public service? Who 'ya gonna call?

The Answer is - - - 211. Well...maybe sometimes 911. But what's the difference? Brent will tell us.

2-1-1 Texas (telephone number 211) is one of the most important telephone numbers each of us should have in our memory banks. Most of us only know vaguely about the 211 Service, but in times of need it stands ready to help. Brent Smith has been Resource Director for our local 11 county North Texas regional office since September 2008. There are five persons who stand ready to help those in need. And he will be our speaker for June 3rd, so that we can become aware of how the system works (for US), and how it is used in those potential times of need.

2-1-1 Texas is a statewide network. For instance, during Hurricane Ike, and its aftermath, 2-1-1 was the main source of information for persons in the Houston & Gulf areas of Texas. And when the help lines in Houston were overloaded, our local 2-1-1 Texas office received over 4,000 calls (automatically transferred from the Houston area) from people needing help. And they stood ready (like all the call centers throughout Texas) to respond.

Brent Smith was born in Pennsylvania, but grew up in Burkburnett, because his father transferred here to work at the PPG Plant. He received his Bachelor's of Psychology degree from MSU. His job with 2-1-1 Texas is to keep the local data up to date, file reports with all the state agencies, and to look for new services, as well as changes in existing services - - - that may be needed.

He will help us learn the historical development of the service, what 2-1-1 provides, and how to use it should we suddenly need its help. Also, how it differs from the more familiar 911.

Come with both your questions, and a friend who might be interested. See you Wednesday.

IT'S DUES PAYING TIME, AGAIN

The League year runs from July 1st, thru June 30th. So, it is time to renew memberships. Dues are \$55 for an individual (and \$75 for a couple). Either bring your dues to a meeting, or mail to the Treasurer at our P.O. Box 4034, Wichita Falls TX 76308.

We also need donations. Most of our dues goes to either State or National, but we have operating expenses and (especially) the expense of preparing VOTERS GUIDES for

Elections (City, School, Primary, General & Special elections). For ongoing operations, make checks payable to LWV-Wichita Falls. For Voters Services, make checks payable to LWV-Texas Education Fund [tax deductible]. Bring to a meeting, or mail to the Treasurer.

OUR NEW STUDY on PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE WICHITA FALLS AREA - - - Begins this Fall.

Are you interested in finding out about the Parks & Recreation Facilities in the Wichita Falls Area? If so, maybe you would like to be a part of the League's study group? It should be interesting for us to look at and discuss whether we have plenty of recreational areas, or maybe we need more.

We have four people who have agreed to be a part of the study group, and need two or three more. It shouldn't involve more than one meeting a month. Please let Penny (867-9761) or Irene (767-7015) know if you are interested.

LWV-TEXAS REGIONAL WORKSHOP in WICHITA FALLS

LWV-Texas has been holding Regional Workshops across the state, during May. One of them was held in Wichita Falls on May 16th, and included Leaguers from Wichita Falls, Amarillo, and the Metroplex. The workshop focused on several areas:

League Programs.

League Positions, and how they are arrived at by consensus of the members.

League Advocacy, especially during the Legislative Sessions, such as this year.

Collaboration with other groups, in order to broaden our outreach, and yet stay within League principles.

LWVUS POSITION ON PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS & THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

The National LWV has had a long-standing position favoring direct election of the President, and abolition of the Electoral College. Several organizations have gone even further, and advocated a National Popular Vote Compact between the states, to bypass the Electoral College. Their thrust is to bypass the constitutional provision without having to amend the Constitution.

So, the LWVUS set up a study committee on the issue, published several study papers, and then submitted it to all Local Leagues (such as ours), to respond to the results of the study. League Positions are always adopted only after receiving grass roots input from Local League members. We had our Consensus Meeting in March. After sifting through the Local League responses, the National Board has issued the following statement:

"The LWVUS affirms its support of the direct election of the president and abolition of the Electoral College, but the LWVUS has no position on the National Popular Vote Compact as studied in 2008-2009."

LWVUS HEALTH CARE EDUCATION TASKFORCE

In 2008 the LWVUS established a taskforce to study health care issues. From time to time the taskforce will be publishing information papers, which will be posted on the LWVUS web site. One was recently published titled "*What is Driving the Rapid Rise in*

U.S. Health Care Costs?" If you want to read this paper, and find out more about the taskforce, click on the following link:

http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Health_Care_Education&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=13499.

THIS SUMMER'S LEAGUE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, June 3rd, noon: Regular monthly meeting, at Luby's.

Friday, June 12th, 6:30 p.m.: Cookout for current & incoming Officers & Directors, at Lou Lechman's.

Monday, August 10th, 5:15 p.m.: Board Meeting at Wichita Falls Public Library.

Wednesday, September 2nd, noon: Regular monthly meeting, at Luby's.

You will note that we do not have our regular Monthly Membership Meetings during July & August.

See you on Wednesday, June 3rd, at Luby's. Feel Free to forward this VOTER to your friends & associates.

Feedback to LaryLambert@prodigy.net, or by phone or fax to 767-0129.