LWV® Comal Area The Voter

March, 2012
League of Women Voters - Comal Area, PO Box 311324, New Braunfels, TX 78131
Website Facebook

My Water, Your Water, Our Water

Wednesday, March 14, 7-8:30 P.M.
New Braunfels Public Library
700 E. Common Street
New Braunfels

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LWV-CA Calendar

March Calendar:

Sat, Mar 10, Noon-2 P.M.
Consensus on Privatization
LA MADELEINE
4820 Broadway, San Antonio

Wed, Mar 14, 7-8:30 P.M.
My Water, Your Water, Our Water
Public meeting,
New Braunfels Public Library,
700 E. Common St, NB

SAVE THE DATES
April 13-15
LWV-TX Convention
San Antonio

Week of Apr 30-May 4
Candidate Forums for local municipalities and school districts. Watch for details.

All About Political Parties and Primaries

Held on February 9th at Smithson Valley High School

It reaffirmed my faith in the political process. I confess that this was not what I had thought my reaction would be at the end of the evening. I hope that the high school students in attendance felt the same.

Joy Streater, Comal County Clerk, was invited to talk about voting procedures and the impact of the redistricting court case. Political parties were represented by: **Robbi Boone**, Chair of the Democratic Party of Comal County, **Larry Nuckols**, Chair of the Republican Party of Comal County, and **Laura Valle**, Chair of the Libertarian Party of Bexar County. The political party representatives were asked to describe how candidates are selected for the general election and to summarize the core beliefs of their party but not to characterize the other parties. Each person followed that guideline. As Mr. Nuckols observed, the parties agree on basic goals such as good schools and hospitals. They disagree on who has the responsibility

From the President

On February 14th we commemorated the League's 92nd birthday. For those 92 years, the League has been a strong voice for voters and a source of thoughtful and factual information vital to keeping our democracy safe from the strong influence of special interests. Let's continue to raise awareness in Comal County about the issues. By doing so, we continue our tradition of ***Powering the Vote***.

The musical ***NUNSENSE*** at the Circle Arts Theatre was a wonderful musical and I want to thank **Jan Estes** for setting it up for us. Our net proceeds were $762.00.

to achieve those goals and how best to solve the problems. With that in mind, listening to three people with very different points of view, made me feel that talking together they could find a way toward agreement. It was also pointed out that there is no problem facing America that can be solved in a sound bite or bumper sticker. Everyone needs to remember that there are no simple answers.

Joy Streater described the complexities of running an election and the impact of the delay in approval of a map of the voting districts in Texas. Primary dates can't be determined and voter registration cards can't be printed until this is done.

As I am writing this article, the case is still being heard by the U. S. District Court for the Western Division of Texas, San Antonio Division. For the most current information, go to http://txredistricting.org. The judges have proposed that the primaries be held on May 29, 2012.

Roxanna Deane

New Braunfels Transportation Plan

The future transportation plan for New Braunfels has been discussed for the last several years. Now it comes down to the TxDot plan of a 40 mile all new road in a circle around New Braunfels or the Parkway Plan drawn up by the New Braunfels Planning Department which uses 75% existing roads that are to be upgraded and addresses the flow of traffic within the city. The Parkway Plan will have a 200' or less right-of-way with a speed of 45 mile per hour speed limit while the Outer Loop will be a 400 plus foot right-of- way with an 800' dedication and a 70 mile per hour speed limit.

The Outer Loop will put a 6 lane bridge over the Guadalupe River at 2nd crossing but there is no crossing of the river at 2nd crossing with the Parkway Plan. The Guadalupe is one of the draws to our beautiful area by visitors every year.

The Parkway Plan avoids the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone whereas 40% of the Outer Loop is over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. The City Council asked the Planning Department to combine both plans. They will present that plan in another workshop. There is also a need to finalize the Seguin/New Braunfels Metropolitan Planning Organization's plan that must be presented to the State in March, 2012.

More information can be seen at the following sites:
1. www.nbtexas.org - Quick Links - Regional Transportation Plan
2. www.nbcase.org
3. www.save-river-road.net

Sue Cummings

The Comal Area League opposes the Outer Loop plan because it covers so much of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.

I have been appointed to the Stakeholders Group to discuss forming a Groundwater Conservation District in Comal County. There are 25 people on this committee. We are meeting the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. We have just started talking about this so I don't have any information to share with you yet. I will keep you posted as we progress. This Stakeholders Group was set up by Comal County Commissioner Scott Haag.

Deanna Frisk, President

Thank you to LWV-CA Groundwater Committee:

Thanks to the following LWV-CA members who have worked all fall and winter to inform residents in the county about the importance of a Groundwater Conservation District for the Trinity Aquifer in Comal County. You can come see the presentation for yourself on March 14 in New Braunfels! (See article elsewhere in this VOTER.) Thanks to:

- **Jill Sondeen** - content and design of the power point presentation

- **Sue Cummings** - arranging with homeowners' and property owners' associations to have a presentation

- **Deanna Frisk** and **Anngail Smith** - assisting at presentations

- **Coco Brennan** and **Jensie Madden** - making presentations

Board of Directors, LWV-CA

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Deanna Frisk

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Jensie Madden

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Jill Sondeen

Action Letter to Water Development Board

This is an action letter the Comal Area League sent to the Water Development Board.

To: Board Members of the Texas Water Development Board:

The League of Women Voters of Comal Area urges you to rule that the Desired Future Conditions (DFC) adopted by GMA 9 be set aside and that new DFC be set at a substantially lower drawdown over a 50 year period.

Our members support measures that assure the long-term productivity of groundwater resources and availability of groundwater supplies. We believe that the DFC adopted by GMA 9 does not assure such long-term sustainability. We ask you to study the scientific data provided by the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association which show the many negative impacts of 30 feet drawdown. The WVWA cites domestic wells going dry more frequently even in short periods of dry weather, a reduction in income for

businesses throughout the hill country that rely on a flowing river, and a reduction of flows from the Trinity to the Edwards Aquifer.

We have noted that the *Water for Texas 2012 State Water Plan* (page 169) states that future regional plans "will be required to use modeled available groundwater (MAG) volumes" rather than the estimated groundwater availability figures used in 2011. The State 2012 Plan goes on to note "that despite what is shown in this plan for groundwater availability," the MAG and a GCD's "associated permitting process will ultimately dictate whether or not a particular strategy can be implemented." Since estimating the availability of groundwater is a continually evolving science, we ask you reduce the amount of drawdown in order to protect the resource.

The impacts of the adopted DFC affect all of us in the region, including Comal County. We rely on the Texas Water Development Board to act in a way which protects our groundwater resource for the long-term, so that our children and grandchildren may be assured of sufficient drinking water, so that our water-oriented businesses may continue, and so that springs are protected.

Deanna Frisk, President

Privatization Consensus Update

The LWV-CA Board has decided not to conduct our own consensus for the LWVUS study of Privatization. However, the **San Antonio League has invited members of LWV-Comal Area to attend their consensus meeting**, which will be held on Sat, March 10, Noon to 2 pm, at La Madeleine restaurant, 4820 Broadway, in San Antonio. We appreciate their offering this opportunity to our members who wish to be part of deciding a national LWV position on this important issue. Extensive materials are available on the LWVUS website, including the consensus questions, an overview of the study, background papers, and several case studies.

Find the materials here. We hope that some of you will go to San Antonio to take part.

Your League Needs YOU!!!

This is the time of the year that the League will be asking for your help in filling several positions on the Board, including VP for Organization, VP for Program, Treasurer, two Directors who will be asked to chair a committee such as membership or publicity, and Chair and member of the Nominating Committee.

There are many benefits of being on the Board such as developing new skills, developing a network within the community, and helping the LWV be effective in our mission of education and advocacy.

Your League needs your involvement to continue its important service to our community and we hope you will consider saying "YES" to serving on the Board or as a Director when you are contacted by the Nominating Committee. If you would like to know more about any of these positions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Nominating Committee. The slate for the new board will be publicized in the April Voter.

Phyllis Walther, Chair
phylwalther@hotmail.com
830-626-6185

Bonnie Leitch
bleitch@earthlink.net
830-660-2335

Voter Registration Certificates Delayed

AUSTIN, TX-"Uncertainties about redistricting have delayed mailing of new Texas voter registration certificates," according to Karen Nicholson, President of LWV-TX. "New certificates must include congressional and legislative districts for each voter, and disputes about district boundaries must be resolved by a San Antonio district court before new voter registration certificates can be printed and mailed."

Registered voters should know that their voter registration remains in effect, and they will automatically receive new voter registration cards after redistricting maps are finalized. There is no action required of registered voters unless they have moved or changed names. Voters can check their registration online at the Secretary of State's voter information website, www.votexas.org.

Voters who have moved within the county in which they are registered or changed names should notify the county voter registrar of changes in writing. Voters who have moved to a new county must reregister with voter registrar in their new county of residence at least 30 days before the next election, by April 12 to vote in local elections on May 12, 2012.

"Decisions voters make at the polls in 2012 will shape the future of Texas and the nation," says Nicholson, "and it is important that all eligible Texans vote to have a say in our future." US President, a US Senator, all Congressional districts, all of the State Legislature, two Railroad Commissioners, all of the State Board of Education, statewide and district court judicial positions, and many county offices will be on the primary and general election ballots in 2012. Many areas will also have additional local elections on May 12.

Eligible Texans who are not registered to vote should register now to make sure to have a say in the important 2012 elections. To register to vote, you must be a US citizen, a resident of the county, and at least 18 years old on Election Day. You can register in person at the voter registration office in your

county, or fill out an application that can be mailed or returned in person to the voter registrar in your county of residence. Application forms are available at many libraries, government offices and high schools and online at www.votexas.org. You must be registered to vote at least 30 days in advance of the election date or by April 12 to vote in local elections on May 12, 2012.

"LWV-TX and local Leagues across Texas are increasing outreach so Texas voters have the nonpartisan information and encouragement essential for meaningful participation in 2012 elections," Nicholson adds. VOTE411 online will provide voters expanded access to races and candidate information, including short videos, plus information on voter registration and voting. Both VOTE411 and traditional LWV-TX Voters Guides can be accessed through the LWV-TX website, www.lwvtexas.org, and will be available about three weeks before statewide elections. Local Leagues and their Voters Guides can also be accessed from the LWV-TX website.

For More Information

Visit our website: www.lwvtexas.org/local/comalarea
Visit our Facebook page: League of Women Voters, Comal Area
Call our President: Deanna Frisk, 830-223-5200

Send dues of $50 per person or $75 per household to:
LWV-Comal Area, P.O. Box 311324, New Braunfels, TX 78131-1324.

"Not for women only."
We welcome everyone 18 years of age and older.

LWV is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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