



The Voter

League of Women Voters® of Arapahoe County

February 2012

Membership 79

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There's a lot of activity this month, including a trip to the eastern portion of Arapahoe County to present an oil and gas program in Byers at the request of area residents. Another similar program will be Sunday, March 4 at Smoky Hill Library. Oil and gas drilling (and fracking) is the subject de jour these days. The privatization study is also on tap for March. See page 3 for more information on that item. And I ask you "What ever happened to relaxing after the busy holidays? "

Fridays, February 3,10,17,24

Great Decisions
9:30-11:30 am @ Castlewood Library
6739 S. Uinta St., Centennial

Saturday, February 4, 2012

Management Team Winter Retreat
10 am-4pm @ Southglenn Library
Streets of Southglenn, Centennial

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

Republican Caucuses

Tuesday, February 14, 20120

Valentines Day

Saturday, February 18, 2012

Oil & Gas program
1-3 pm @ Byers High School Cafeteria
444 E. Front Street, Byers, Colorado

Monday, February 20, 2012

LWVAC Management Team
6:30 pm @ TBA

Wednesday, February 22, 2012

LWVAC Non-Fiction Book Club
9:30-11:30 am @ Koelbel Library
5955 S. Holly St., Centennial

Friday, February 24, 2012

LWVAC General Meeting
Voter Rights
1:30 - 4 pm @ Koelbel Library,
5955 S. Holly

Sunday, March 4, 2012

Oil & Gas Program
2-4pm @ Smoky Hill Library
5430 S. Biscay Circle, Centennial

SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2012

Ms. Elena Nunez, Executive Director of Common Cause, will talk about voting rights at an all LWVAC member general meeting Friday, February 24 from 1:30-4 pm at Koelbel Library, 5955 S. Holly St., Centennial. This meeting will take the place of the two unit meetings originally scheduled for this month. There's more information about the program inside, but please save the date and plan to attend. In the meantime here's some questions to ponder:

- Is voter fraud really a problem?
- Will strict photo ID laws cut down on voter fraud?
- Is it true that nearly one in five citizens over 65 - about 8million - lack a current government issued photo ID?
- How many states currently have photo ID laws?

UPCOMING MEETINGS

LWVAC GENERAL FEBRUARY MEETING VOTER RIGHTS

More and more articles are appearing in the print and online editions of major news outlets these days about new rules passed by states to limit or discourage a citizen's right to vote. In 2011 more than a dozen states have passed laws requiring voters to show photo identification at the polls, cutting back early voting periods or imposing new restrictions on voter registration drives.

- Many state officials, political parties and voting experts have said the impact could be sizable. According to the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, 19 laws that passed and two executive orders that were issued in 14 states would "make it significantly harder for more than five million eligible voters to cast ballots in 2012."
- But legislators who have passed almost all of these new election laws, say they are necessary to prevent voter fraud, and question why photo identification should be routinely required at airports but not at polling places. Will these laws help or hurt voters? And is voter fraud really a problem?

Learn more about this issue and hear what's happening on the national scene, in Colorado and locally at an all LWVAC member general meeting, featuring Ms. Elena Nunez, Executive Director of Common Cause, Friday, February 24 from 1:30- 4 pm at Koelbel Library, 5955 S. Holly St. in Centennial. See you there!

OIL & GAS PROGRAMS

As mentioned on the front page, LWVAC, in conjunction with the Arapahoe Library District, will sponsor a program on oil and gas drilling in eastern Arapahoe County, Saturday, February 18, 1-3 p.m. in the Byers School Cafeteria, 444 E. Front Street in Byers. The program will include representatives from the oil and gas industry, an environmental advocate, and an attorney who represents mineral and surface rights owners. Topics will address what the oil companies plan to do; the methods they use to drill and produce oil and gas; the environmental impacts, and what to do when an oil company rep. knocks on their door. A question and answer period will follow. As it is a 40 mile drive to Byers, car pooling is available. Contact Deb Armbruster, 303-770-5505, darmbr@aol.com

If, however, you don't want to go that far, **another program will be held Sunday, March 4 from 2-4 p.m. at the Smoky Hill library, 5430 S. Biscay Circle, Centennial.** That program will also talk about oil and gas drilling, as well as whether local regulation of drilling activities is needed, and the limits local jurisdictions may face when attempting to regulate oil and gas activities. More information will be forthcoming, but mark your calendars now!

GREAT DECISIONS DISCUSSION PROGRAM

The Great Decisions Discussion Program begins Friday, February 3 at 9:30 a.m. at the Castlewood Library, 6739 S. Uinta St. The first topic is *Exit from Afghanistan & Iraq* led by Monique Hea.

If you are interested in this very interesting and thought-provoking program contact Monique Hea, 303-220-9273, heamph@hotmail.com or Vicki Harimon, 303-770-8738, vickiharimon@aol.com.

MARCH PREVIEW PRIVATIZATION

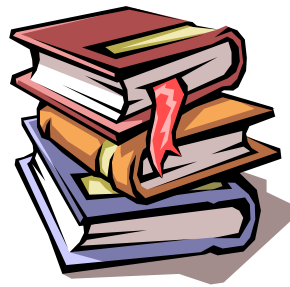
The March unit meetings will begin the first of a two month LWVUS privatization study. In March the presentation will focus on the scope, history and definitions of privatization, the guidelines which should be observed when privatization of government services occur, and issues to consider when privatization may not be appropriate. You will be asked to answer some consensus questions via discussion and background information.

The April unit meetings will discuss the remaining consensus questions and focus on regulations some states have passed to control the process of privatization, what should be included in the regulatory process and your take on whether the core issues of government should even be considered for privatization.

That's a lot of material to cover in a short amount of time, so we need your participation. **To this end the committee will be sending an informational paper and links to some materials and articles to read before the March meetings. Watch for it later this week or next.**

In the meantime, more information will be forthcoming in the March newsletter. Whew!

LWVAC NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB



The non-fiction book club will meet Wednesday, February 22 from 9:30 am To 12 noon at the Koelbel Library, 5955 S. Holly St. in Centennial.

The Book is *That Used to Be Us; How America Fell Behind the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back* by Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum. The book is very interesting and should invoke a lively discussion. If you haven't read all, come anyway. Contact Maggie Markey, 303-814-8038 or 704-661-9072, maggimarkey@mindspring.com

REPUBLICAN CAUCUS FEBRUARY 7, 2012

Thanks to Karen Hart, LWVAC Voter Service Chair, a separate attachment is being sent with this newsletter that explains precinct caucuses and lists all the contact information you need to find if you are registered to vote, where to find your precinct number and the web sites and phone numbers of the political parties and County Clerks for Arapahoe and Douglas Counties.

The first caucus will be for Republicans on Tuesday, February 7, 2012. See the attachment for more information.

This information will also be in the Election Central section of the web site along with other items on the 2012 election. Karen and Julie Beekhuizen have also added a new item in that section called *Arapahoe In The News*. It contains news articles about Arapahoe County election activities, including candidate announcements and other items of interest.

Check it out at www.lwvarapahoe.org

MEMBERSHIP BRIEFINGS

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gain, thanks to all who renewed and became members this past year and month. As of our official deadline to the LWVUS, we have 79 members. Care to make it 80?

But just because we turned in one count, doesn't mean that membership recruitment ends. We are always on the look out for new members so please let us know if you know anyone who might be interested in League. Contact Charlotte Faris, 303-690-8466, [faris28603 @ comcast.net](mailto:faris28603@comcast.net).

We also extend a warm welcome to new members Charlotte Adgie, Joan Grady, Lois Morgan and Kathie Head. Charlotte, Joan and Lois are residents of Wind Crest, a retirement community in Highlands Ranch.

Charlotte is a registered nurse who graduated from the Colorado School of Nursing. She has worked at several medical facilities throughout the U.S. and remembers the days when a nurse's uniform consisted of a starched white cap, white dress and white stocking and shoes. She and her husband, a retired pastor, moved to Wind Crest three years ago. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Joan has been married for 57 years and education is her field. During her career, Joan held several positions with the Cherry Creek School District, including principal of Horizon Middle School and Director of Special Projects. She was also a member of the Cherry Creek School Board in the 1990's and served for six months as the Superintendent of Schools for Clear Creek County. She has published numerous education articles and is active in several "learning" programs at Wind Crest.

Lois is one of the few women who broke the all-male barrier in the early days of the computer industry. Using her math degree, Lois started working as a computer programmer in the 1960's and didn't stop until she retired several years ago. She especially remembers her work as a contract employee for the Johnson Space Center, where she provided her computer and consulting expertise for the space program. She moved to Wind Crest two and a half years ago from Texas.

Kathie is also a retired registered nurse who currently lives in the Highlands Ranch area. She lived abroad for 18 years when her husband was in the oil business and now finds it refreshing to relax in Colorado. She has two children, one of which lives in London. One of her first League activities was participating in the Membership Orientation, January 25th.

Special thanks to lifetime member, Wilma Davidson. Wilma has been a league member for over 50 years and, as such, no longer needs to pay membership dues. She always sends a contribution, however, and we do so appreciate her generosity.

Our condolences to Sandee Quick on the death of her father, and best wishes for a speedy recovery to Charlotte Faris's husband, Pete, and to Wanda Ramey, who broke her pelvis. Ouch!

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LWVCO LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



Over 12 LWVAC members attended the Legislative Conference at the state capital January 23 to hear a variety of speakers and topics concerning relevant state issues. Highlights include:

- ◆ An evaluation of the 2011 Reapportionment Commission by Commission members Robert Loevy, retired Colorado College Political science professor, and Delores Atencio, Attorney.
- ◆ The principles and policies for the fiscal sustainability of Colorado's government as recommended by the DU Strategic Issues study, *Rethinking Colorado's Government*. This was presented by chairman, James Griesemer, and can be obtained by visiting www.du.edu/issues.
- ◆ An explanation of the Lobato school funding lawsuit and the Supreme Court's decision by Kathy Gebhart, lawyer for Children Voices of Colorado, and an overview of the reasons the Colorado Attorney General's Office will appeal that decision from David Blake, Deputy Attorney for Legal Policy and Government Affairs.
- ◆ A preview of the Colorado Legislative process for 2012 and upcoming bills that may be introduced this session by LWVCO lobbyist, Christine Watson.

LWVAC MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION

Many thanks to Mary Power, Charlotte Faris, Fay Plummer and Julie Beekhuizen for the great membership orientation attended by 25 League members, January 25. It was a enjoyable way to learn more about League.

NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING

LWVAC members, who attended the January unit meetings on national program planning, recommended LWVUS update their position on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as that amendment was never ratified, and recommended that LWVUS adopt, as a League legislative priority, the defeat of the Supreme Court's Citizen's United decision.

MAIL BALLOTS FOR JUNE PRIMARY ELECTION ?

Arapahoe County Clerk and Recorder Nancy Doty is considering conducting the June 26, 2012 Primary Election as a Mail Ballot Election.

This would mean that all active registered voters, who are affiliated with either the Democratic, Republican, or American Constitution parties, will receive their ballot in the mail approximately three weeks before Election Day. Voters would have until 7:00 p.m. on Election Day to return their ballot by mail or at one of several ballot drop-off sites around the county.

You may submit written comments on this matter to the Clerk and Recorder's Office, 5334 S. Prince St. until 4:30 p.m., February 3, 2012. You can also submit written comments to the web site, www.arapahoevotes.com/ or via email to elections@co.arapahoe.co.us.

WHAT IS A SUPER PAC?

There's been a lot of talk lately about Super PAC's and what they mean for the 2012 election. Most pundits say the Super PAC's will make the national and state 2012 elections the most expensive and acrimonious in decades. So, here's a simplistic explanation from Yahoo News.

A Super PAC (Political Action Committee) is any group that receives more than \$1,000 to advocate for an election. It developed from the January 2010 Supreme Court decision which said that individuals, corporations and other organizations can give unlimited amounts of money to these new Super PACs to work on behalf of their specific candidate.

A Super PAC is not allowed to coordinate directly with the candidate; it must work independently.

Individuals can only give \$2,500 directly to a candidate for each campaign, so Super PACs provide an opportunity for donors to give much more to support their candidate. But donors who contribute more than \$200 per year to the Super PAC are required to be identified.

In many cases Super PACs are outspending the individual candidate campaign funds by millions of dollars.

Since the candidate themselves have no direct control over what a Super PAC supporting them might say in its advertising, candidates can't control the message. They can ask the Super PAC to control or limit their messages, but the Super PAC is not obligated to do so.

JUST THE FACTS

As we continue into Election 2012 we're going to hear a lot of political rhetoric from the Super Pac advertisements and candidate speeches. If you want to separate fact from fiction, try these websites, courtesy of the Pikes Peak League. Keep this near your TV or computer.

www.factcheck.org is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

www.politifact.com is from the Tampa Bay Times.

www.opensecrets.org will tell you who is giving your representatives money.

www.snopes.com

www.TruthorFiction.com

Check the information you see on the Internet and all those other internet rumors and hoaxes.

If you have other suggestions send them in. But be sure they are non-partisan.



LWVAC MANAGEMENT TEAM NOTES

At the January management team meeting members reviewed the upcoming unit and public meeting formats; discussed possibility of forming a new LWVAC unit; set agenda items for the February 4th retreat; tabled, until the February meeting a proposed revision of the LWVAC non-partisan policy; agreed to send a letter to the Arapahoe County Commissioners urging public representation on their oil and gas committee; discussed additions to the LWVAC web site and reviewed the agenda for the January Membership Orientation.



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of Arapahoe County**

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Mission

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.

Join Us

Join the League to help make your community a strong safe and vibrant place to live. Help shape the important issues that affect you and your family.

Memberships are \$60 per individual; \$85 for households and \$25 for students. For more information call Charlotte Faris, 303-690-8466
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League Links

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