



The Voter

League of Women Voters® of Arapahoe County

May 2013

Membership 81

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Hurray, hurray, the first of May. While the April snow was beneficial for skiers, gardens, farmlands and lawns, it's time for more warm weather and SUNSHINE!

And speaking of sunshine, our May 16th all member meeting will shed light on the current US Voting Rights Act, the role it played in the 2012 election and the threats from the current litigation. OK, that last sentence was a bit of a stretch (shed light?), but we want to make sure you attend the meeting. More on page 2

Friday, May 10, 2013

Great Decisions Discussion Group
10 a.m. @ Southglenn Library
6972 S. Vine Street
Streets of Southglenn,

Friday & Saturday May 10 & 11, 2013

LWVCO Convention
Colorado Springs

Thursday, May 16, 2013 All Member General Meeting

The Voting Rights Act.
6:30 p.m. @ Koelbel Library
5955 S. Holly, Centennial

Monday, May 20, 2013

Lunch Bunch @ 11:30 a.m.
Olive Garden, Southeast corner
of University Blvd & County Line
Road

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

LWVAC Book Club
10 a.m. @ Southglenn Library
6972 S. Vine St.
Streets of Southglenn

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Management Team Meeting
6:30 p.m. @ Koelbel Library
5955 S. Holly, Centennial

Saturday, June 8, 2013

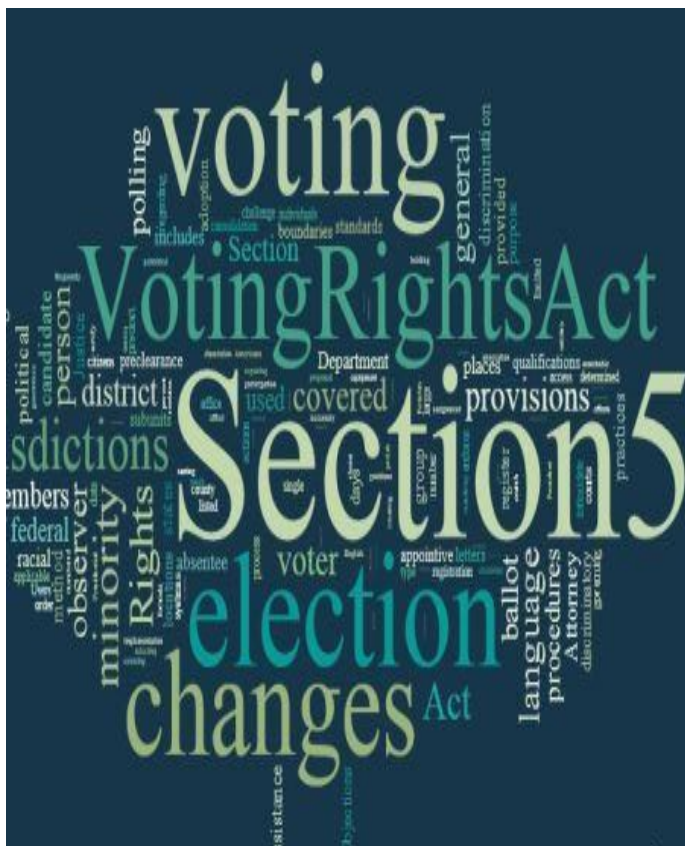
LWVAC Annual Meeting
8 a.m. - 12 Noon
Country Buffett.
7475 Park Meadows Drive.
Lone Tree

LWVAC ANNUAL MEETING

Mark Saturday, June 8th on your calendar as it's the date for our LWVAC Annual Meeting from 8 a.m. - 12 noon at the Country Buffett in Lone Tree. An Annual Meeting packet containing all the information will be sent to all members via email by May 8th, but we wanted to alert you to our featured speaker, Colorado Representative, Rhonda Fields. Ms. Fields will speak about her experiences during this year's Colorado Legislative session and outline the various bills that were passed.

The social hour run from 8 a.m.- 9 p.m. so you can visit over coffee and breakfast before adjourning to the meeting room for the business meeting. Ms. Field's speech will follow the business meeting. Breakfast prices are: Adult: \$6.49 + \$1.99 for beverages; Seniors (60+): \$5.99 +\$1.99 for a beverage.

MAY MEMBER MEETING



THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Can it withstand the challenges?

Thursday, May 16, 2013

All member General Meeting

6:30 p.m.

Koelbel Public Library, 5955 S. Holly
Centennial

Speaker: Hanna Weston.

Ms. Weston. has held various positions with the local, state and national American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and practiced law with the Nadler & Weston law firm from 1984 - 2005.

She will relate the history of the Voting Rights Act, its role in the 2012 election, and the threats from current litigation.

Some call the Voting Rights Act the most far reaching civil rights legislation in the US. Others see it as a punitive measure or a “perpetuation of racial entitlement.”

This June, the Supreme Court will rule on whether Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act is outdated and represents an overreach of federal power. Section 5 states that certain states and localities with a history of imposing unfair voting requirements, must obtain federal approval or “preclearance” before making changes to voting laws. The case was brought before the Supreme Court by Shelby County, Alabama, which claims that Section 5 is outdated because the political climate has improved and it is a burden for such states to have to seek federal review whenever they change their election laws.

Those opposing this challenge say that Section 5 is necessary to protect voting rights in the states and localities with histories of voting discrimination, especially in light of the ongoing attempts by state legislatures to pass voter ID laws and other voting restrictions.

Will this 1965 Act withstand this challenge? Is the Act in jeopardy? This law was passed by President Johnson in response to the discriminatory voting laws enforced during the turbulent civil rights battles of the 60s and is a companion to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. These challenges and their implications will be the focus of the May 16th meeting.

Please come.

LWVAC PROGRAM

FEBRUARY PROGRAM PLANNING UPDATE

As a prelude to our June Annual Meeting, here's a recap of member suggestions and discussion at our February Program Planning Meetings. A similar recap will be in the Annual Meeting packet, which will be sent to you the first week in May.

The February meetings resulted in many intriguing ideas for programs and possible studies for the LWVAC 2013-2014 League year. These included unit meeting presentations, special member programs and public presentations. The manner in which we conducted our April unit meeting on gun control is also being considered as another method to engage our members in meaningful discussions.

LEAGUE STUDIES

Members suggested a new study for LWVCO regarding the rights and responsibilities of the mentally ill and the community. As this was mentioned by several Colorado Leagues, the State League has set up a task force to identify various mental health systems and programs. LWVAC members Chris Angle, Janice Green and Nancy Jackson are on the task force.

This involvement, however, has led Chris and Janice to suggest that LWVAC conduct a new study for 2013-2014 regarding mental health issues. It was also suggested by other members that LWVAC embark on a new study on the sources and uses of water in Arapahoe and Douglas County.

As you know, to adopt a new study, items must have a team of at least three members willing to conduct the research and present it to LWVAC members. It should have a general timeline and rationale for the study, a goal, and state what you plan to study. During the February meetings the water study was suggested, but no one volunteered for the study. As a mental health study has now been suggested, we are extending this invitation to those interested in doing a water study. We do, however, need something by May 28 so the management team can review the proposal before submitting it at the June 8th Annual Meeting. It does not have to be formal, but it must have a focus and a goal. For assistance contact Chris Angle, mcangle@comcast.net and also look at the LWVUS Clearing house web site clearinghouse.lwv.org which contains studies and research already conducted by League members throughout the U.S.

PS: Member suggestions for future unit meeting programs are on page 4.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LWVAC DISCUSSION GROUP

The Discussion Group will meet Friday, May 10, at 10 a.m. at Southglenn Library in the Streets of Southglenn. They will discuss updates on this year's Great Decisions Topics.

After this meeting the group will take a break for the summer. It will resume the second Friday in September. For more information contact Monique Hea, heamph@hotmail.com, 303-220-9273. or Vicki Harimon, vickiharimon@aol.com, 303-770-8738.

LWVAC LUNCH BUNCH

A lunch bunch is scheduled May 20, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. at the Olive Garden, corner of University Blvd and county Line Road.

Organized by our new social committee members, Vicki Harimon and Phyllis Graham, we invite you to attend, meet Vicki and Phyllis, and enjoy a bit to eat. You can order all you can eat salad/soup and breadsticks for \$6.95 or try something new.



LWVAC BOOK CLUB



Wednesday, May 10
Southglenn Library
6972 S. Vine St.
Streets of Southglenn
Centennial

BOOK CLUB The LWVAC Book Club will discuss Helen Thrope's book, *Just Like Us* - the story about four young women from Mexico who have lived most of their lives in the US and attend the same high school. Open to all interested members. Information: Maggie Markey, maggimarkey@mindspring.com, 303-814-8038.

Please let Vicki or Phyllis know if you plan to Attend. Phyllis Graham, phyllisd.graham@gmail.com, 720-524-6057. Vicki Harimon, vickiharimon@aol.com 303-770-8738

MANAGEMENT TEAM NOTES

Management Team members agreed to schedule an orientation for new team members in June and a retreat in July; reviewed the March and April unit meeting responses and plans for the May 16 meeting on the Voting Rights Act; adopted the 2013-2014 LWVAC budget to be presented at the June Annual Meeting; acknowledged a thank you from the Great Decisions group; and discussed the 2012 LWVCO grant expenditures for submittal to

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE UNIT MEETINGS

- Climate Change
- STEM Schools & School Finance Act
- Banking Regulations
- Update on County Commissions
- Drones
- Civics 101 Series
- Poverty and hunger in Arapahoe & Douglas Counties
- Health Care
- Field trips to NOHA, NCAR in Boulder, Arapahoe County Sheriff Dept/Jail Agencies dealing with poverty and homelessness.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LWVCO LEADERSHIP RETREAT

You are invited to attend the 22nd Annual Leadership Retreat sponsored by the LWVCO, June 21-22 at Best Western Lodge, Frisco, Colorado.

The retreat is for new and experienced League members and will feature topics on management, membership, voter service, partisanship vs non-partisanship, League advocacy and more. Sessions will be facilitated by long-term League members who have expertise in helping Leagues become successful.

Cost is \$40 for the first participant and \$75 for each additional member. This includes meals, lodging and retreat materials. LWVAC will pay the retreat fees. Deadline is June 5 to register.

If interested, and want more information, contact Marlu Burkamp, 303-798-2939, marluburkamp@gmail.com

LWVUS ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

The LWVUS is urging members to oppose H.R. 3., the latest proposed legislation re construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Sponsored by Nebraska Congressman Lee Terry, the bill would allow TransCanada to begin construction of the pipeline without receiving a permit. This would bypass a decision that must be made by the U.S. Department of State after a review of the environmental impacts is completed.

According to an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report there are several concerns regarding risks to groundwater resources, greenhouse gas emissions, pipeline safety, alternative pipeline routes and community and environmental justice impacts, and the EPA believes these issues should be thoroughly examined before any legislation is proposed.

The Keystone XL project would construct a pipeline that starts in Alberta, Canada, goes through six US states and ends at the Texas Gulf Coast. It is estimated the pipeline would carry 800,000 barrels of oil a day and that the majority of this oil would be shipped overseas.

LWVUS UPDATE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE

The LWVUS is currently monitoring campaign finance legislation that has been introduced in Congress and will continue to report on possible action items.

To this end the LWV Campaign Task Force would like to have copies of proposals that are circulating regarding a Constitutional Amendment on Campaign Finance/Money in Politics. Send specific proposals to Toni Larson, LWVUS Advocacy Chair and Chair of the task force to toni.larson@gmail.com. The national league needs these materials to help them evaluate the proposals in term of existing LWV positions.

LWVAC ADVOCACY

At the April 25th movie night, League members viewed a documentary about hunger in America entitled, *A Place At the Table*. During the discussion that followed, we talked with Kathy Underhill, Executive Director for *Hunger Free Colorado*.

Kathy explained the need to convince U.S legislators to reauthorize the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and maintain its current eligibility and benefit levels. Additional items were discussed regarding the growing number of people with food insecurity and what can be done regarding this inequity. As this reauthorization will be considered this month, we pledged to talk to our senators and congressmen/women about this issue.

Thus, please look for a LWVAC Call to Action that will be sent to all members the first week in May.

PS: Many have asked if they should call or email their legislators if they already know their opinions. The answer is **YES**. Their offices keep a tally of calls and if they know how You feel, it will make a difference.

Democracy is not a spectator Sport. Get Involved!





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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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