

**League of Women Voters of Salt Lake**

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# The Salt Lake Voter

**Joyce Barnes, Sharon Walkington, Co-Presidents**

**Gigi Brandt, Editor**

**May, 2006**

**May Unit Meetings  
 Death Penalty Abolition  
 Concurrence**

Salt Lake League delegates to the LWVUS Convention in Minneapolis will be asked to vote to adopt by concurrence the LWV of Illinois position that the death penalty be abolished. The May unit material is composed of material from their website and an article for the death penalty. The LWVUS board is recommending adoption of this concurrence.

Concurrence is the "act of agreeing with or concurring with a statement or position." It is a process that was originally proposed to expedite the usual process of a lengthy (and costly) study, discussion and consensus by a league. LWVUS has used this procedure to adopt positions on Gun Control (1990) and Early Intervention for Children at Risk and Violence Prevention (1994).

**Meetings, Meetings, Meetings**

May and June are busy months for League member meetings, with each level of the League meeting to elect officers, adopt program and budget and make future plans.

The Utah League has set May 20 at the Inn in West Bountiful for their Council date. Officers will be elected, a budget adopted and workshops on Voter Service activities for Election 2006 are scheduled. Each League sends three delegates; members are welcome as observers. Call the office (272-8683) if you are interested in attending.

LWVUS Convention is scheduled in Minneapolis June 9-13. Salt Lake Board will choose its three voting delegates on May 15. Members are welcome as observers.

Salt Lake Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 5 at 6:30 pm. Members will be receiving a handbook mid-month. The program for 2006-2007 will be voted on.

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## President's Letter

By Sharon Walkington

We are winding down on the year's activities, but at this point there are yet many important things to do. Our May unit meetings are significant, not just because of the method used to collect consensus. We will use the concurrence method which means that LWV Salt Lake will use a study and subsequent statement of position by another League and agree or disagree with the same.

Our National Convention is scheduled for Minneapolis June 9-13. Delegates will be sent from the Salt Lake and Utah League and observers are always encouraged to go. The official delegates are the only ones who can vote but observers can be involved in all the very exciting education and lobbying activities. Observers can sometimes go as voting delegates from another League which is not sending a delegation.

Salt Lake members are also invited to attend the LWV Utah Council on Saturday, May 20 in Bountiful. Officers will be elected, workshops scheduled and a budget adopted. Call the office if you are interested in attending.

It is important that all League members come to Annual Meeting on June 5 to help select the issues the League will work on in 2006-2007. (I hope that you have already sent in your program suggestions which were mailed to all members to the office.) Also we will elect new board members and adopt a budget for the year. New member orientation is scheduled for one half-hour before the business meeting. A potluck will precede the meeting.

Thanks go to the Community Luncheon committee. They have again done a great job! Thanks to Ann O'Connell and Jan Miller for their work on April Air Quality units.

Editors Note: Thanks, too, to Sharon Walkington who will complete her term as LWV Salt Lake co-president. We appreciate her experience and her willingness to work on all League projects.

### *Welcome to Our New Members*

Mary Ann and Ed Williams  
4702 Millrace Lane  
Murray 84107  
293-9070

Joyce Dolcourt  
409 Northmont Way  
Salt Lake City 84103  
364-7060

### *Thanks to our contributors*

Peggy Shaw  
Alma Anderson  
Norma Matheson  
Chriss Mecham

## Member News

Speedy recovery wishes go to **Ray Brim** who is recovering from foot surgery and to **Mary House** who is having knee replacement surgery this month.

### *Meet these new members:*

**Joyce Delcourt** is the director of public policy for ARC of Utah. She has a master's degree in library science from the University of Denver. She became involved with ARC because her son has a muscular condition. She likes knitting, cooking and reading. She joined because she saw the LWV at work at the Legislature and was impressed with our efforts.

**Mary Ann Williams** is a retired educator. She worked as an administrator for special education in Davis County and later the

coordinator for children's health in the Division of Mental Health for the State of Utah. She joined because she liked the work the League does.

**Ed Williams** is a retired Air Force pilot. He worked for Thiokol for 20 years, and now works in the family business.

**Lauren Ashley Jordan** is a new student member recruited by Gina Rieke when Gina spoke to a University of Utah political science class about lobbying.

## 2006 State of the Community Luncheon

By Nancy Melling

"While 'people overpopulation' might describe the human-environment complex in the developing world, 'consumption overpopulation' might describe the human-environment complex in the developed world. With 19% of the world's population, the people of the more developed countries consume 50% to 80% of the world's most important natural resources and cause a similarly disproportionate share of the world's pollution. The next 50 years will be critically important as the pressures of both people and consumption meet with emerging environmental constraints. A peaceful and humane future will depend on the best efforts of a world community that recognizes the gravity of the situation and is prepared to make significant changes to meet the challenges of sustainability."

This theme was the focus of Fred Montague, speaker at our 14<sup>th</sup> annual State of The Community Luncheon at Little America on April 12<sup>th</sup>. One hundred fifty-five attendees honored Claire Geddes, who received our Community Service Award, and responded enthusiastically to Professor Montague, Professor of Biology at the University of

Utah, who talked about "Population, Resources, Sustainability – The Challenges We Face."

With the help of our attendees and our underwriters we raised just under \$8,000 which will enable the League of Women Voters of Salt Lake to provide its share of the cost of the office and executive secretary, Sandy Peck. Without this very successful fundraiser we would not be able to provide the non-partisan voter information, legislative information, and studies, etc. that are the backbone of our mission "*to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.*"

So, thanks to all who attended, all who contributed and all who worked so hard to make our luncheon successful.

Nancy Melling chaired the Luncheon Committee and was helped by Genevieve Atwood, Pat Brim, Sheryl Gillilan, Mary House, Susan Lind, Pat Nielson, Judi Short and Corinne Wunderli.

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### League of Women Voters Contributors

Genevieve Atwood  
 Dr. Eugene Bliss  
 Joel and Marilyn Bown  
 Pat Brim  
 Dixie Huefner  
 Sue Lind  
 Natalie Mallinckrodt  
 Norma Matheson  
 Sarah Michl  
 Madeleine Noehren  
 Gina Rieke  
 Irene Sweeney  
 Nancy Wingelaar  
 Nancy Young  
 Nancy and George Melling  
 Donna Vogel

### Ten Favorite Books of Dr. Fred Montague

*Walden* by Henry David Thoreau  
*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard  
*The Outermost House* by Henry Beston  
*The Sea of Cortez* by John Steinbeck  
*Sand County Almanac* by Also Leopold  
*Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson  
*Desert Solitude* by Edward Abbey  
*The Diversity of Life* by E. O. Wilson  
*Tools for Conviviality* by Ivan Illich  
*The Age of Reason* by Thomas Paine

### Ten Favorite Books of Claire Geddes

*The Rise of American Democracy* by Sean Wilentz  
*When Corporations Rule the World* by David C. Korten  
*The Post-Corporate World* by David C. Korten  
*All the Shah's Men* by Stephen Kinzer  
*Canaries on the Rim* by Chip Ward  
*The Smartest Guys in the Room* by McLean & Elkin  
*The Wal-Mart Effect* by Charles Fishman  
*Conspiracy of Fools* by Kurt Eichenwald  
*Hope's Horizon* by Chip Ward  
*Good to Great* by Jim Collins

### WANTED!

A volunteer to take over the invitation and program responsibility for the annual State of the Community Luncheon.

Your time commitment would be to attend 3-4 meetings prior to the luncheon, create and oversee the printing of the invitation, print programs, and create miscellaneous signs and book lists needed at the luncheon. Computer files for all of the above are available on a disc, so some technical experience is necessary, but you don't have to be a whiz! Detailed instructions for the "job" are also available.

If you are interested, please call the chair of the committee: Mary House, 484-8074.

### February Units on Health Care Access

By Pat Nielson

What are Salt Lake League Members saying about access to health care? The following is a brief summary of comments or positions taken in response to the February health care study presented by the SL League health care committee. These are Unit responses. I regret that we have not received individual member comments. They are most welcome.

Library Unit: Seeks to amend National position by adding some of the enumerated benefits found in the SL position such as pre-natal, reproductive health, long term and mental health care. They find that the existing system fails miserably given the number of uninsured in Utah. All units reflect a similar position. They suggest that

a national health care system may provide better coverage.

The Bench Bunch: Favors a Single Payer or Universal Health Care System like Canada's.

University Unit Meeting: Defines access as "where everyone has easy access to preventative and curative health care."

Old Farm: Stated that rationing of health care already exists (limited access to or quality of health care received). Suggest that the time may be "NOW" for League to be involved as advocates for change in Health Care delivery and that a single payer system should be considered.

Challengers: Suggests that physicians, hospitals, and insurance companies balance services and responsibilities with the goal of making access less exclusive and more affordable. Cooperation rather than competition should be considered. Include mental health in the national position.

Night Owls: Defined access as having an adequate medical facility close by which is willing to take all patients. They recommend a single payer system to insure access to health care. Existing systems don't work. Competition does not work.

A majority of units recommended that SL's position be moved out of social issues to stand alone, while preserving existing language. Most supported the National position with a few additions such as inclusion of mental health care.

If this inspires you to contribute your thoughts and comments, please send them to the SL League Office or call me at 583-6932. I'll be happy to take a message.

## Quote of the Month

"The US has not learned anything from 55 years of foreign-policy debacles. Even now, at the same time it is enmeshed in the very trap it laid for the Soviets in Afghanistan, and is bogged down in Iraq in a replay of Vietnam, it is rattling sabers at Iran. One reason Kolko gives for the United States' failing to heed what history is telling it is that its wealth and military power enable it to continue making the same mistakes - though not indefinitely. It also has a massive military-industrial empire to which it is beholden for domestic political reasons...

... [says Kolko] America's leaders are increasingly dangerous as their ambitions soar ever higher. Their weapons are more potent, but so are those of their enemies and their nuclear-armed fair-weather friends who may be future enemies. They are backed by, and in some cases are members of, powerful religious constituencies - not exactly what is needed to make sober foreign-policy decisions. And they have more power to do as they please, with fewer checks and balances - they can dissemble and still receive bipartisan support from a docile, shell-shocked Congress and a tame press.

.... all Americans need to reassess their country's role in the world, both for the world's and America's own sake. If they don't, America's long addiction to military force as a way of remaking the world to suit itself will slowly but surely ruin it, and this writer, for one, does not want that to happen."

Allen Quicke, "The Lose Supercannon", a book review of *The Age of War: The United States Confronts the World*, by Gabriel Kolko\*, Asia Times On Line ([www.atimes.com](http://www.atimes.com)), May 3, 2006

\*Author Gabriel Kolko is a professor at York University, Toronto, Canada. The reviewer states that the author who looks at the 60 some interventions of the US in the affairs of other countries since 1950 is not particularly critical of the current administration.

Thanks to Xmission ([www.xmission.com](http://www.xmission.com)) for its donation of ISP services to LWV

*Farewell, Goodbye....*

This is probably the last **Quote of the Month** that Salt Lake League members will have to skim. This is the last *Salt Lake Voter* I will put together. A lot has happened over the 16 plus years that I have had this stint. (I had another one in the 70's). I am on my third computer and have learned two editing languages over this time. The widespread use of the internet has changed so that articles can be referenced for interested readers without summarizing them as I used to do. Sandy and I have even produced *The Voter* long distance. As well as informing members quickly and substantially, using the internet to distribute *The Voter* and study materials has saved all League members at least \$5 a year in dues. It has been a good experience doing this job.

Gigi Brandt

## Education Notes

Do the higher scores on standardized tests received by private school students really reflect better education or do they reflect the students' socioeconomic backgrounds that foster academic achievement? A new study confirms the suspicions of many public school advocates. The study looked at the math scores from the 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) which tested fourth and eighth graders nation-wide. The private school students did better but when the authors controlled for socio-economic status the private school advantage disappeared. When the researchers compared students within socio-economic brackets as opposed to looking at them across the brackets, the public school students actually *outscored* their private school counterparts in both grades tested.

For more information, see "Primary Sources", *The Atlantic Monthly*, May, 2006, page 52.

## Is Nuclear Energy the Solution?

By Naomi Franklin

This is an article printed in the April 1 edition of *The Utah Sierran*. Naomi hopes that Salt Lake League members will consider adopting a program on nuclear energy at Annual Meeting.

Heads up for Congressional Hearings this Spring on the future of atomic energy in the U.S. -- and in the world. President Bush has been promoting a "Global Nuclear Energy Partnership" ([www.gnep.energy.gov/](http://www.gnep.energy.gov/)) for which Congress has already allocated a multibillion-dollar package of nuclear incentives. Now at last Congress is ready to consider whether this policy is desirable- Whether \$250 millions more should be committed to this quest in 2007.

There are a few problems for the U.S. to overcome:

- 1) a looming energy deficit, as oil sources become depleted world wide. A need to find energy sources that produce no greenhouse gases and therefore do not contribute to our global warming.
- 2) A very large backlog of radioactive nuclear waste: the spent fuel rods from some 100+ nuclear plants that have been operating now for 30-50 years; also the construction debris from these plants, now scheduled for decommission; and the waste from nuclear weapons manufacture.
- 3) A new world-wide threat by unlawful individuals, desperate to serve their own interests by whatever means.
- 4) A limited economic base, now deeply in the red.

Nuclear energy generation has the appeal that it emits no greenhouse gasses. Furthermore it might now be based upon the spent nuclear fuel waste that we would so like to dispose of, since that spent fuel can be reprocessed, removing the highly radioactive components and generating pure plutonium that is itself a nuclear fuel

that can be used and reused in special fast-neutron reactors. The latter is a new generation reactor of much greater cost than the old light water reactors now in use.

Unhappily, reprocessing cannot neutralize radioactive waste, for which no geologically safe hole-in-the-earth has yet been created anywhere in the world.

Both the 'hot' radioactive components of nuclear reactor waste and the 'cool' plutonium product are major biological hazards, inducing cancers and birth defects. The plutonium component is hard to detect, since it emits only low energy alpha particles; yet just a few pounds suffice to make an enormously destructive nuclear bomb, and only a few grains inhaled can corrupt a lung. Because plutonium is not easy to detect, it can be stolen and transported with impunity: a terrorist's dream. Thus the stuff of nuclear power is an ongoing hyper-hazardous material that cannot be neutralized. The more we move it around, the more we chemically manipulate it, the greater its spread and menace. Like a sticky bit of chewing gum -- except that nuclear waste comes in mountain-loads.

For 30 years, the U.S. has pursued a course of limited uranium usage, allowing no reprocessing, precisely to forestall the generation of that major angel of death, plutonium. We have engaged 189 other nations in compliance with a Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT): only India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba have abstained, and North Korea and Iran are considered to have violated. The acknowledged nuclear weapons states (U.S., U.K., Russia, China and France) are obligated to transfer no nuclear weapons or technology to any non-nuclear-weapon state. The latter agree not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons; they declare all nuclear materials in civilian facilities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and are inspected by

IAEA.

Now the Bush Administration is fostering a switcheroo: In the name of abundant, CO<sub>2</sub>-free energy, a GNEP program proposes to facilitate nuclear energy use world-wide. Its concept is to recycle existing nuclear reactor waste into a nuclear fuel that would not have weapons potential--but such a product is yet to be known. The recycled fuel would be supplied to non-nuclear countries, and the waste from their reactors would be returned to the provider nations for disposal, thus restricting nuclear reprocessing to the few nuclear weapons states. Such a program has been under consideration by IAEA, which recognizes the strict international monitoring that is an essential feature.

It was India that first corrupted the NPT 30 years ago, by taking material and means from the U.S. Atoms for Peace program to manufacture nuclear bombs. The nuclear pact offered by Pres. Bush to India March 2, 2006 of this year would forgive that infraction, calling India a "responsible nuclear state". Unfortunately, to close this deal India is not required to sign the NPT, nor may they so long as they continue to produce weapons-grade material. Furthermore a 1978 U.S. law bans our nuclear trade with nations that do not accept the safeguards established by the IAEA. Thus the Bush pact with India undermines the NPT treaty as well as IAEA authority.

Since the desired technical solution (nuclear fuel with no weapons potential) is not anticipated before many years, the proposed treaty with India is jumping the gun. The U.S. is also aggressively proceeding with both uranium enrichment (two private firms are building plants in New Mexico and in Ohio) and with reprocessing, for which a major facility is being built in South Carolina. In Utah we observe first hand

through the aggressive advertising by Energy Solutions (nee Envirocare) that business interests see profits from expected increases in nuclear waste. Nuclear waste, however, is another unsolved aspect of accelerated nuclear energy production.

Thus the world is faced with difficult trade-offs in planning its energy future. Britain has called for 18 months of deep analysis; the IAEA favors a 5-10-year moratorium for nuclear reprocessing. Yet the U.S. plunges ahead, without having held any public discussion.

Nuclear energy could be abundant and CO<sub>2</sub>-free, but the costs needed for research and new nuclear facilities are vast, and the hidden costs to health and security are incalculable. On the other side, great energy gains have been shown possible by increased efficiency and by development of the safe, renewable sources in wind, tides and sun. Could these suffice to power a world of insatiable appetites? Perhaps if the militarism could be curbed? If population size were held constant? If we could learn to husband rather than plunder, the resources we have been given?

### **Children's Health Care Initiative Threatened**

"Annually, diabetes costs the U.S. upward of \$132 billion, autism costs more than \$43 billion, and asthma's toll is \$11.3 billion. Spending just \$100 million in each of the next 20 years to understand better the origins of those conditions, if it would reduce their burden even fractionally, thus sounds like a bargain. Yet our national leaders now seem prepared to throw that opportunity away in favor of other priorities in the country's \$2.7 trillion federal budget."

The National Children's Health study is a national research effort, ala the Framingham study, to follow children from conception to age 21. The *Scientific American*

"Perspectives" columns in the May 2006 issue laments the shortsightedness of this proposal to eliminate the funding for the National Children's Health Study in the 2007 federal budget, (then Budget Director Joshua Bolten said the need is "to focus on national priorities and tighten our belt elsewhere") noting that the study had already been designed and a nationwide network of researchers identified to begin collecting the data in 2007. Will Congress restore the funding? SA isn't necessarily hopeful since Congress did not fund the program more substantially last year. For more information, go to [www.sciam.com](http://www.sciam.com).

### **Unit News**

#### ***Old Farm***

Jan Miller from the Utah Dept. of Air Quality talked to the Old Farm Unit and was followed by a delightful presentation by the Green Team from Morningside Elementary. Patti Tanner-White, their 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher helped her students compete for the Community Service award that they won from their district and the state competition. They have been practicing in preparation for their national competition in Colorado. Their theme is "Stop Idling", and had some valuable information for us. Did you know that you should turn off your key if idling for more than 10 seconds? They ended their presentation with a song and cute skit they had made up called "Don't idle". They will have made over 13 presentations that included both the Democrat County and State Convention. We wish them luck in Colorado.

#### ***Nightowls***

Nightowls will have a potluck supper at 6:30 on May 22 at Sharon Walkington's, 999 South 15th East. All members are welcome.



May Units--Death Penalty Concurrence

- May 22      **Old Farm** 11:00 – 12:30PM  
Old Farm Community Center  
601 East 4110 South  
Anne Zeigler – 944-4163, Unit Chair
- University Unit** 12 Noon – 1:00 PM  
Hinckley Institute, Rm 255, Orson Spencer Hall  
Phyllis Frankel – 582-8957, Unit Chair
- Night Owls** 6:30 PM Potluck Supper  
Sharon Walkington's , 999 South 15<sup>th</sup> East  
Judi Short, Unit Chair - 487-7387
- May 24      **Bench Bunch** 9:30 – 11:00 AM  
League Office, 3804 Highland Dr.  
Carolyn Dunn, 278-9409, Unit Chair
- May 25      **Challengers** 12 Noon—bring a sack lunch  
Pat Eager's – 2229 Westminster Ave  
Marelynn Zipser, Unit Chair - 578-2069
- May 25      **Library** , 12 Noon – 1PM  
Main Library, Basement  
210 East 400 South, SLC  
Susan Aldous – 487-2484
- May 20      State Council, West Bountiful
- June 5        Annual Meeting

If you cannot attend your regular unit meeting, feel free to attend any of the units listed above.

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