



April 2008

President's Letter

When we compare our activities and accomplishments with our membership numbers, it appears that each person is doing two or three jobs at once! And, in fact, that's actually true for many of our hard-working folks. For instance:

The Community Luncheon on April 10 is the culmination of a year's planning and work by a committee chaired by Pat Nielson. The stalwart folks behind the scene include Judi Short, Pat Klentzman, Nancy Melling, Sue Lind and Sandy Peck, with coaching from Mary House. This event is the once-a-year fundraiser for the Salt Lake League and promises to challenge us. Our speaker, Dr. Pamela Perlich, a Senior Research Economist at the University of Utah, will speak on the "State of the Community." Given that Utah is in a real growth pattern, we can learn a lot from our speaker who concentrates on long-term economic and demographic projections. The honoree for our Community Service Award will be former Utah Senator Paula Julander. We look forward to seeing you there.

Attendance at the Sunshine Week webcast and forum topped last year's numbers, and we hope for even more next year. The Headliners Chapter of the Utah Society of Professional Journalists awarded eight "sunshine awards" and no "black hole awards."

Our own Sandy Peck received a Sunshine award for her work for the League and the public monitoring and providing citizen input to the Legislature over the years, particularly regarding open government. Sue Lind deserves a great big bouquet of thanks for her tireless work publicizing the event. Panelists Mark Shurtleff, Sherilyn Bennion, Ben Winslow and Dan Harrie provided entertaining and fascinating stories and information.

There was even a news-making moment - a private conversation between elected officials -which Dan Harrie capitalized on in his blog the next day.

Senator Karen Mayne and Representative Jim Dunnigan shared stories and insights from the recent legislative session at our legislative wrap-up. We appreciate their hard work during the 45-days of hectic decision-making, and are grateful for their expertise on issues that seem to increase every year. Mary Buchanan made the arrangements and kept things

PRESIDENT continued on next page ...

Co-presidents:

Joyce Barnes
Phyllis Frankel

Exec. Director

Sandy Peck

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The League of Women Voters of Utah

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2nd VPs
Voter Service
Mary Fogg
Sharon Walkington

Public Relations
Sue Lind

SL Voter
Katharine Biele
Pat Klentzman

3rd VP
Organization
Anne Zeigler

Membership
Carolyn Dunn

Arrangements
Mary Buchanan

Secretary
Ann Wechsler

Treasurer
Stuart Gygi

Unit Meetings Open Minds

If you have wondered what unit meetings are all about, you really should give them a try. You may simply sit and listen OR you are welcome to voice your opinion without the worry of offending anyone.

As members of the League of Women Voters, we pride ourselves on sticking to the subject at hand, on either being for or against, and ultimately on becoming more informed on the topic. It is a most satisfying feeling to know that you can make a difference in someone's life by helping them become better informed. We do not have to agree, but we must come to the table with an open mind and a willingness to listen.

On the last page of this *Voter*, the unit meetings and their times are listed. You are welcome to attend any of the days and times that are convenient for you, as the subject matter is the same at each. If you have questions as to the location, feel free to contact the unit leader.

Please note our new unit for the 50 and younger group. Be sure to tell your kids and they could bring a friend. Let them see how it works, and let them decide whether to join. How could they resist us!

Please give me a call if you have any questions.

— *Anne Zeigler*
944-4163

...*PRESIDENT* continued

running smoothly as usual. She's one of the great quiet and efficient people who seldom get thanked and are embarrassed when they are thanked.

April's unit meetings focus on direct election of the president with our own Ann O'Connell providing the information and making it understandable for those of us who are novices in that arena. I truly believe there is no one more capable than Ann to help us with the complicated issues and difficult decisions faced by policymakers in Utah and elsewhere.

The Annual Meeting is on June 9 at the Girl Scout Headquarters. More information to come. We will plan the program for next year, elect a new board and enjoy great food and conversation. Due to legal restrictions, we can't have wine (but the accommodations are free) this year. We appreciate the Girl Scout leaders for their generosity; one unit meets there regularly, too. If someone wants to donate \$50 for space in another location next year, we can have wine; our budget is restricted—no surprise!

The National Convention in June is generating a lot of interest. If you've never attended you have missed a great experience. Call the office or any of the board members to get more information. Portland, Oregon will be beautiful then and we've been assured the weather will be cooperative. You don't have to be a delegate to attend; in fact you'll have a lot of fun watching the proceedings without having to make difficult decisions.

There are funds to help those who go—the operative word is “help” and the amount per person will depend somewhat on how many decide to go.

— *Joyce Barnes*

HOTEL INFO:

Hotel:

HILTON Portland &
Executive Tower
921 SW Sixth
Avenue
Portland, OR
97204-1296

Use Group Code: LWV

PH: 503-226-1611
or 1-800-445-8667
FAX: 503-220-2286

Room Cost: \$145

Room rate is subject
to applicable taxes,
currently 12.5%.
Rate for additional
person is \$20.00.

Room

Preferences:

Single or Double
Smoking or
Nonsmoking*
King Bed or
Two Double Beds

Biennial Convention Coming Up

The news of the candidates for the president is in the paper every day. We are all starting to think about that election and the impact it will have on this country.

The members of League of Women Voters know that they also have impact on elections and on other national issues. Every two years all the members from all the states are invited to the convention. This year the National convention is in the West — Portland, OR. The dates are June 13-17.

On Friday the 13th, there are workshops on the national study proposals. One proposal is “The advisability of using the National Popular Vote compact among states as a method for electing a President.” The other two relate to healthcare and education. The opening session is on Saturday and they continue daily til Tuesday. There will be votes on program, budget, and new officers.

Most exciting is meeting and talking to other League members. The energy and excitement of members from all over the U.S. is awesome! Everyone has their own slant on things and is willing to share information readily.

After looking at other hotel prices and realizing that many early and late meetings occur in these few days, we decided to stay at the Hilton (*see information on the left*). We will share rooms. My personal experience is that you are so tired after the long days you will have little trouble sleeping, and a glass of wine with friends at the end of the day is a great unwinding.

I am working with Sandy Peck to get all the voting credentials to which we are entitled. If you need help with a roommate, let me know and I’ll work on that too. Please advise the office if you are planning to attend, so we can be together for meals, etc. In the sessions, we sit with the others from our state.

Please if you decide to go, let the League office know so that we can be in touch with each other about flights and meals and sharing the information about caucus and other information.

As of the end of March the list includes, Sandy Peck, Alice Steiner, Nancy Melling, Ann Ziegler, Mary Fogg, Joyce Barnes, Tina Hose, Ann O’Connell, Nanette Benowitz.

Hope you will consider joining this group on this educational adventure!

—*Kathy Dorn*

277-0897

**2008
PRESIDENTIAL
CAUCUS/
PRIMARY
SCHEDULE**

April 22
Pennsylvania

May 6
Indiana, North
Carolina

May 13
Nebraska
(primary),
West Virginia

May 20
Kentucky,
Oregon

May 27
Idaho (R)

June 3
Montana, New
Mexico (R),
South Dakota

NPV Compact Under Scrutiny

In April, we will be discussing a proposal to devise a way around the Electoral College to ensure that the president is the choice of the majority of the voters. Background materials can be found in several places. Those who receive the *Salt Lake Voter* by mail will have a four-page summary. Readers of the electronic version of the *Voter* will have links to the four-page paper and a more detailed presentation of 10 pages. You can also find all of this material on the League of Women Voters of Utah website (www.lwvutah.org). You may also go to the website of the League of Women Voters of New York (www.lwvny.org) for even more background. I recommend the paper on the history of the Electoral College.

We are not trying to reach a consensus so you are free to choose the questions that most interest your unit, or follow your own inspiration. Do instruct your scribe to take lots of notes, especially if you are going to the LWVUS Convention in June or want to do a follow-up study.

Ann O'Connell

801.352.9046; occonnell@xmission.com

**Discussion Questions
for National Popular Vote Compact**

1. What presidential election difficulties could be solved with a national popular vote?
2. What other benefits might result from a national popular presidential election? Do you have any personal frustrations with the current electoral college system? Do you benefit from it in any way?
3. What are the difficulties with the NPV Compact System we are considering? Are the counter-arguments in the materials adequate? If not, why? Why have reformers chosen to work for this state compact system?
4. The New York State League of Women Voters chose to exclude any discussion of arguments in favor of the electoral college system from their study because the National League already supports direct election of the president. Political scientists who favor retaining some form of the electoral college contend that it reinforces the two party system which they in turn argue supports compromise and stability in our diverse and fractured society. What are your thoughts on this question? Would you like the LWV of Utah or Salt Lake to discuss the positive and negative aspects of the two party system? (We might do a series of unit or general meetings on similar questions such as balance of power between the executive and legislative branches in the state and federal governments.)
5. Do you feel sufficiently prepared to vote for or against a National Popular Vote Compact Study at the LWVUS Convention in June?

Join Up On-Line Soon

Now you can join the League of Women Voters by a simple click online. We're excited to be going in this direction to add an easy and convenient way to join the League and support our efforts.

I have talked with many people who are interested in supporting us and they were pleased to hear they could join online and use their credit card. We are looking at the web as another tool with which to network and spread the word about the League.

We plan to send a letter to potential members informing them of the opportunity of joining on-line. If you know of someone who might be interested in the League, PLEASE let me know.

We are living in a time when communication takes on many forms, and we are lucky to be able to utilize them.

— *Anne Zeigler*

944-4163 or azeigler@xmission.com

DONORS ROLL CALL

Kathy Dopp

Pat Nielson

Barbara
Browning

Bonnie
Fernandez

Sue Lind

Dana Cook

3451 Bernada SLC 84121; 597-2342

Dana is a construction administrator for commercial glass and glazing company. She likes to spend time with her family and travel, boating and camping. She joined at the suggestion of her mother-in-law, Sue Gordon. She also wants to learn more about political issues.



Ellen Hartz

130 S. 1200 East, SLC 84102; 359-2659

GIVE A LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP!

The gift of membership to the League of Women Voters is an excellent way to introduce friends and family to issues that matter to everyone living in the Salt Lake City area. The League of Women Voters believes that an active and informed populace is vital to the health of democracy. Help support the League's mission by giving a membership to someone you care about.

Simply fill out the coupon below (or go on-line) and return it to the League office with dues payment of \$50. We'll take it from there!

Recipient Name _____

Recipient Address: _____

City: _____ State _____

Your Name: _____

Your phone: _____ email: _____

HINCKLEY FORUMS

Held in Orson Spencer Hall, Room 255 and broadcast weekly on KUER FM 90.1. All forums are free and open to the public and are sponsored by the Hinckley Institute of Politics and The Sam Rich Program in International Politics (select forums). Check out the online audio, podcasts, video on demand, pictures, and media coverage of past Hinckley Forums.

Hinckley Institute Presents ...

**Fri April 4
10:45 a.m.**

A Utah Political Perspective: Five Decades of History

Dan Jones, Professor Lecturer, Political Science Department, U of U; President, Dan Jones and Associates. Hinckley Institute of Politics Fellow

**Tues April 8
10:45 a.m.**

Turkey: A Force of Stability in a Challenging Region

Hakan Tekin, Turkish Consul General in Los Angeles

**Tues April 8
3 p.m.**

A Nonviolent Solution to Terrorism

Bart Gruzalski, Author, *The Eradication of Terrorism: Why Nonviolent Policy Works and Military Action Fails, On the Buddha and On Gandhi*; Professor Emeritus, Northeastern University

**Thurs April 10
10:45 a.m.**

The Primacy of Power: Realism & U.S. Grand Strategies, 1940-present

Jeffery Taliaferro, Associate Professor, International Relations, Security Studies, Tufts University; author, *Balancing Risks: Great Power Intervention in the Periphery*. Co-sponsor - The John and Marcia Price Lecture Series in American Foreign Policy and the Foreign Policy Studies Club.

**Fri April 11
10:45 a.m.**

Congressional Update

Congressman Jim Matheson (D-UT)

**Tues April 16
3 p.m.**

Why Both Big and Small States Need an Effective UN

His Excellency Lars Faaborg-Andersen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations, and during 2005-2006 to the Security Council

**Thurs April 17
10:45 a.m.**

The Rule of Law

The Honorable Christine M. Durham, Chief Justice, Utah Supreme Court Dean Hiram Chodosh, J.S. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah

**Fri. April 18
11:50 a.m.**

Hierarchy in International Relations: Rebuilding America's Legitimacy after the Iraq War

David Lake, Professor, Political Science, University of California, San Diego. Co-sponsor - The John and Marcia Price Lecture Series in American Foreign Policy and the Foreign Policy Studies Club

VOTE BY MAIL LAWS

Currently, 29 states allow universal absentee voting, which permits any voter to request a mail-in ballot without providing a reason for the request. However, voters in 21 states and the District of Columbia must provide a qualifying "excuse" in order to vote by mail. H.R. 281, the "Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act," would give all voters the choice of voting by mail in federal elections by eliminating the unnecessary, burdensome, and often intrusive requirements that some states impose on voters requesting absentee ballots.

www.aclu.org

Vote-by-Mail Program Questioned

Kathy Dopp, a mathematician living in Park City, and a League member, has been sending emails referencing the flaws in Diebold's voting machines for some time.

In the course of her work, Dopp discussed some unusual, Utah election laws. For instance, under current Utah law it is not possible to examine and recount actual ballots to verify the recorded ballot count — the actual numbers of votes cast in the polling place for a particular candidate. The ballots are placed in sealed containers and the containers may not be opened. It is only possible, if a "recount" is in order, to check the recorded counts in various polling places to make sure the total votes were added up correctly.

Utah's permanent vote-by-mail program brings up an additional problem with the way the current law is written. When one votes by mail, one receives a ballot to mark by hand. The ballot is inserted into an envelope that carries the voter's identification in two places: (1) on a large, easily removed, flap; and (2) in the area under the flap, where the envelope body is pasted together. When the clerk removes one's ballot from the envelope, it is easy to see that second name and address of the voter and the content of the ballot at the same time.

Ballot privacy can easily be assured by the addition of one envelope, which would be sealed with the completed ballot inside, then placed into the voter-identifying envelope. The voted ballot in its sealed envelope would be placed in the ballot box only after the election clerk opens the identifying envelope and checks the name, address, and registration against the list of voters. The anonymous envelope would be opened when all ballots are counted, thus ensuring a secret vote.

This double envelope technique for secrecy is used in other states. Mail voting often increases voter participation rates, so it is worth pursuing if it can be done in accord with federal privacy laws. When people are comfortable voting by mail, some local elections can be conducted, very cost effectively, entirely by mail.

Our democracy is protected by and based on our ability to cast secret ballots that are fairly counted, and are entirely private so we are without fear of reprisal or discussion of how we vote. Fair counting and secret balloting are integral to the system. Among the problems with the machines, which are widely recognized and accepted; the inability (by law) to recount by verifying actual ballots in individual polling places; and the lack of secret ballots in mail voting, it would seem that Utah election law is a worthwhile subject for League to investigate further.

—Linda Johnson

Concerned about Public Education in Utah?

We all should be! Utah consistently ranks highest in school age population and lowest in per pupil spending in the nation. Add to this the impending crisis of a large bump in student numbers (according to some estimates, Utah schools will have to find space for approximately 160,000 new students over the coming decade) while our legislative leadership continues to maintain an aversion to providing adequate funding for education.

Your League of Women Voters Lobby Corps has been staunchly advocating for public education on the Hill; speaking out for bills that improve public schools and against those that attempt to undermine public education (remember Vouchers?!). Unfortunately, we are suffering under a handicap. Our position statements – the basis for the League’s ability to address legislation – are woefully out of date. The last major LWVU education study, “Crossroads in Education”, was conducted in 1982.

As legislators try to address the looming crisis in public education, many crucial decisions with far reaching consequences will be made. In order to better prepare ourselves to participate effectively in the discussion, we must begin to provide specificity to our basic education position: “The League of Women Voters of Utah supports adequate financing of the public schools to ensure quality education”. Our key study question must be: What are the characteristics of quality education and what is adequate financing necessary to ensure it?

We need YOU – your help, ideas, suggestions – to begin this important effort. If you are willing to assist in any way (meet once or twice to define the parameters of the study, identify other League studies on this topic, do on-line research, etc., etc.), please contact Patti O’Keefe, Ed. Director, LWV-SL, at msok@earthlink.net (my Spamblocker will initially block you but, don’t despair...it will let you in!).

– *Patti O’Keefe*

Demographics Study

If you haven’t already, you should read Dr. Pamela Perlich’s study, “Utah’s Demographic Transformation: Implications for Education and Workforce”, which she presented first to the 2007 Council of Councils in October last year. Dr. Perlich is our keynote speaker for the League’s Community Luncheon. You can download her report at: <http://www.bebr.utah.edu/Publications.html>

PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

You may be interested in reading a recent report from the Utah Foundation, “Utah’s Educational Funding Effort: Update and Historical Perspective.” Download it from:

http://2004.utahpriorities.net/issues/public_education.html

LOVE A PARADE?

WANTED:
Interested
members to
plan a "League
of Women
Voters" Entry
into the
Murray City
4th of July
Parade.

Contact Sharon
Walkington at
583-2284 or
Mary Fogg at
268-4357 or
e-mail Mary at
m.e.clarke
@msn.com.
Then, plan to
come to a
banner
making/pizza
party at the
LWV Office on
May 10
at 10 a.m.

How to Fight That Foreboding Feeling...

Does the future look a little dark, even in these spring-bright days? You can fight your fear of the future's economic and environmental disasters by working to counteract the problems. And you don't need to do much to get inspired. That's what I've found working on League short projects, like the one I'm proposing. We will work with others on a green event for this spring.

If you've seen "An Inconvenient Truth" about the rapidly declining ice formations at each pole, then you know what that can mean. We're at a crucial point. We must either stop carbon dioxide emissions, or cause massive flooding. This is what the national League believes and it has been working on global alerting, since 2005. Now, the League has teamed with the international relief and development organization, Oxfam of America, to publicize the need for immediate action.

Oxfam is responding to the awareness that global warming is already impacting poor people around the globe with worsening weather patterns, quadrupling the natural disasters, that are causing extreme flooding and rising seas, affecting an estimated 248 million people. This is as of 2007 in 11 Asian countries. Africa has had the worst floods in three decades, hitting 23 countries from Senegal to Somalia. Nearly 2 million people were affected between July and October 2007, according to their bulletin called "Change the Climate: An action guide for creating equitable solutions to the climate crisis", 2008.

Oxfam and the national League have given our League a grant of \$850 to spread the word about Global Warming. The grant is contingent on our coming up with an acceptable plan. Options are being developed. To that end, we have formed a committee to brainstorm how we might influence people outside our usual audiences. We have been working with the Utah Clean Air Alliance in the battle against air pollution during inversions, and this partnership is sure to be helpful.

Still, we could use your help, whatever it may be. This is a fun project with a potentially major outcome. May is likely our target month. If we each do what we can to move to a more sustainable lifestyle, and help others get interested, we'll find the right project to educate the public about the need for a better energy approach than depending on coal and oil.

To take the next step, call or email me: polly.hough@comcast.net, 953-1320, or 918-4569.

— *Polly Hough*

P.S. (The national League has erroneously listed our event to be occurring in April at the University of Utah. We haven't planned this yet, so do come help us choose the right option.)

League of Women Voters of Salt Lake
3804 Highland Dr. Suite 8-D
Salt Lake City, UT 84106

Non-Profit Org
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The League of Women Voters thanks



for their generous contribution of Internet services

UNIT MEETINGS

***“NATIONAL POPULAR
VOTE FOR PRESIDENT”***

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Anne Zeigler, Unit Chair
944-4163

April 23
(Wed.)

Bench Bunch
League Office,
3804 Highland Dr.
9:30-11 a.m.
Carolyn Dunn, Unit Chair
278-9409

April 28
(Mon.)

Night Owls
Home of Gigi Brandt
2059 E. 900 So.
7:30 p.m.
Judi Short, Unit Chair
487-7387

April 24
(Thurs.)

Main Library
210 East 400 South, SLC
Conf. (Room D) Level-1
1-2 p.m.
Kathy Dorn & Joyce Barnes
Co-Chairs
277-0897

April 29
(Tues.)

Young Bloods
Home of Missy Larsen
1288 E. Crystal Ave. , SLC
7-9 p.m.
Missy Larsen, Unit Chair
915-9782

April 28
(Mon.)

Girl Scout Headquarters
(formerly Old Farm)
445 East 4500 South

**NOTE:* If you cannot attend your regular unit meeting, please attend any of the units above.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS IS A NONPARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION THAT
ENCOURAGES INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT,