



The Utah Voter

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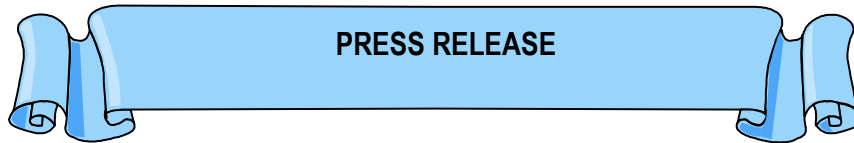
Voter Editor: Nanette Benowitz

The League of Women Voters of Utah is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy

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Important Dates:

- Primary Elections – June 27, 2006



League of Women Voters of Utah announces 2006 Web-based Voters Guide *Trusted citizen’s guide now available electronically*

SALT LAKE CITY, UT (June 17, 2006) – Citizens who in the past have relied on the League of Women Voters of Utah printed Voters Guide can now log on at their convenience to the League of Women Voters of Utah Web site for the same information and more. Says Sandy Peck, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Utah, “We began putting our Voters Guide on-line in 2004. Since then we’ve been improving our website so it’s easier than ever for both voters and candidates to use the 2006 edition. The League of Women Voters of Utah has been producing the Voter’s Guide for over 50 years and citizens have come to rely on it to compare

candidates' solutions to critical issues such as education, health care and the use of natural resources." The Voters Guide also has information on how to register to vote, how to vote by absentee ballot, maps to help voters determine which district they are in and contact information for County Clerks' offices.

The League of Women Voters of Utah Web site address is www.lwvutah.org The Web site contains not only the Voters Guide, but an extensive section on Utah Legislative activities, including a wrap-up of the Legislative general session as well as many other helpful links for Utahans of all ages.

Said Peck, "The League of Women Voters of Utah encourages all citizens to vote and provides the Voters Guide and the League Web site to help voters understand the issues and make informed decisions. We hope citizens will go to our web site and find the information they need to prepare them for both the upcoming primaries as well as the November general election. Candidates from all parties have been asked to participate and we are very pleased at the response."

The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 and has been active throughout the state of Utah ever since, informing voters, studying public policy issues and working with elected officials at local, state and national levels.

About the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. There are 900 state and local Leagues across the U.S. and in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong. To learn more about the League of Women Voters of Utah, visit www.lwvutah.org

Here is a sample of the 'Voter Guide' Home Page:



Voter Information

■ [How to register to vote](#)
■ [How to vote by absentee ballot](#)
■ [Offices up for election](#)
■ [Election Dates](#)

■ [County Clerks offices](#)
■ [U.S. House of Representatives district map](#)
■ [Utah Senate district map](#)
■ [UtahHouse district map](#)

■ [DemocracyNet](#)
■ [Why don't people vote](#)

The following questions are included in our 2006 Voter Guide

U.S. Candidates

For US Congressional Races:

1. **Do you think the present ethics laws are adequate in providing open and honest government, if not how should they be changed?**
2. **What steps should be taken by the federal government to address the problem of global warming?**
3. **The United States is the only country where business is expected to carry the high cost of healthcare. This impacts businesses ability to be competitive in the global economy. Do you feel it is appropriate for the federal government to address this issue, and if so how?**
4. **What points if any do you feel are important in the possible reform of US immigration laws?**

State Candidates

1. **There is a public perception that substantive and complex issues are not given adequate debate during the legislative session, how would you address this issue?**
2. **What can the legislature do to improve the future quality of Public Education in Utah?**
3. **What can the state legislature do about the cost of healthcare?**
4. **What suggestions do you have to limit our present and future use of natural resources?**



The League, Election 2006 and “inconvenient truths”

This week I saw *An Inconvenient Truth*, the documentary featuring Al Gore and his education efforts about global warming. Three things remain with me:

1. I did not find 90 minutes of Mr. Gore boring—and I am troubled by the role that the press plays in politics, thinking of two other candidates/ politicians, Jimmy Carter and Edmund Muskie—who were issue-oriented and ridiculed by the press.
2. The survey presented in the movie that none of the scientists in the *peer-reviewed* scientific journals have doubted that the earth is experiencing global warming but that 57 percent of the articles in the popular press have expressed doubt about it, is worrisome to me. And even more distressing is a US Senator’s citing of science fiction novelist Michael Crichton’s scientific footnotes in his recent novel as reason for inaction on global warning. (A recent column in the American Physical Society’s *News* points out the inadequacy of Crichton’s claims.)
3. Both Gore in the film, and Ted Wilson (former Salt Lake City mayor and director of the Hinckley Institute, who spoke before the showing of the movie) emphasized personal actions as a remedy and that any political accomplishments must come from the grassroots. Two nights later I listened to David Sirota, author of the new book *Hostile Takeover: How Big Money and Corruption Conquered Our Government -- And How We Take It Back* who talked about some inconvenient truths concerning the energy crisis, health care and immigration and how the debate is shaped by money in politics. His remedy – ‘turn the incumbents out at the ballot box.’ But he also talked about grassroots participation, more than the ballot box, and wondered about changing things at the local level (really the only level he felt that citizens could be truly effective). He asked what would happen if 20-30 citizens demanded to speak with their policymakers? (I wonder what might happen if that many regularly turned up at candidates’ meetings!)

Another inconvenient truth has been echoing more loudly in my brain—the growing gap in the US between the rich and poor. (The gap is the largest of any advanced country.) My father, born in 1917, was fending for himself at the age of 12. He told me several times that “he had so much more than he ever expected.” Will the fate of my grandchildren be that they will have less than their parents? The June 17th issue of *The Economist* points out that several new studies show “parental income to be a better predictor of whether someone will be rich or poor in America than in Canada and much of Europe.” We should all be aware of the importance of the middle class and democracy but most policy makers (and citizens) remain unconcerned. Is there a connection between the growing gap and the dramatic jump in the crime rate?

We know that Utah has some Utah-specific inconvenient truths to add to their own lists, but that is another conversation for another time.

How do these inconvenient truths relate to the League and the 2006 Elections? The League is always most visible to the community at election time. We are known for our Voter Service work and for our issue-oriented information. I have two voter service tasks for League members this year. I am always intrigued by the difference between most of the media’s approach to candidates and the League’s *Voters Guide*. This year’s VG questions, as always, are substantive rather than “sexy” and are on the on the *Voters Guide* on the web, www.lwvutah.org. For the first time, we have primary candidates featured. Thanks to the Web Team (Nanette Benowitz, Pat Klentzmen, Kathy Biele and Sandy Peck) and Voter Service (Kathy Dorn, Sharon Walkington, Mary Fogg and Nancy Wingelaar) for their tremendous efforts. Leaguers’ task: **refer citizens to the web site**. If you have friends or colleagues who will vote in the June 27 primary, tell them about the League web site.

The second opportunity for League members in voter service is to help people vote **by being an election judge**. With the new voting machines many counties need help. My neighbor who took the training reports that many long time election judges are backing out, intimidated by the machines. We need to do everything we can to encourage citizens to participate in government and to make the process efficient.

Thanks to the Davis County League, particularly Peggy Carrico, Nancy Cooper and Nelda Bishop, for hosting a great State Council. Roger Tew, our luncheon speaker, gave an informative speech on Utah tax reform, explaining clearly why Utah citizens got money for roads in the 2006 legislative session but not for public education or dental care. I am sorry that all League members weren't there to hear him.

Gigi Brandt, President

Peggy Carrico



Nancy Cooper



Roger Tew



"I swore never to be silent whenever wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim.

Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometime we must interfere."

"As long as one dissident is in prison, our freedom will not be true. As long as one child is hungry, our life will be filled with anguish and shame....."

"Our lives no long belong to us alone; they belong to all those who need us desperately."

From Elie Wiesel's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in Oslo on Dec. 10. 1986

COUNCIL 2006 – hosted by The Davis County League



The Davis County League hosted the May 20, 2006 meeting.

Officers elected for 2 year terms are:

- Janice Gygi-VP/Program/Local League Liaison
- Sue Kirkham-Treasurer
- Peggy Christensen-Co-Director/Legislative Action
- Ann O'Connell-Co-Director/Legislative Action
- Kathy Dorn-Director/Voter Service
- Nancy Wingelaar-Director/Development

The continuing officers (term expires in 2007) are:

- Gigi Brandt-Acting President
- Marelynn Zipser-Secretary
- Sherilyn Bennion-Director/Communications
- Nancy Cooper-Nominating Chair
- Marilyn Odell will replace Georgia Beth Thompson on the Nominating Committee.

Financially, the Utah League is in the black. There is great need for a grant-writer to obtain Education Fund money. There was no discussion of raising State PMP.

The studies of Hate Crimes and Redevelopment approved at 2005 Convention will have materials for presentation in the 2006-7 year and will be available on our web site under 'Publications' (<http://www.lwvutah.org/publications.html>)

Luncheon Speaker: Roger Tew, former Utah State Tax Commissioner, spoke about Tax Reform. He reported that former Governor Walker opened the reform issue during her brief time in office. Previous tax reforms had occurred during 1973 and 1987. Governor Walker relied on BYU experts. Gov. Huntsman has adopted tax burden as a factor in interstate competition for economic development.

Taxes:

- Sales Tax—favored by local governments, but not imposed on the service sector, and not uniform throughout the state
- Income Tax—needs to be stabilized for an assured stream of revenue for education
- Property Tax—one of lowest burdens in the US—increases with structural growth

The Task Force created by the 2005 legislature was a disappointment. -Modification of sales tax was difficult politically (taxation on medical services was a non-starter). The sales tax on food was reduced by 2% effective Jan. 1, 2007. -Modifying the income tax to be flat (at one lower rate) with no deductions attracted the opposition of proponents of large families, the real estate industry and the LDS Church (charitable deductions) as well as others concerned about the effect on low income and retired taxpayers. -Plans were being developed by various legislators almost weekly and the Tax Commission was expected to keep up with them with an insufficient

staff of economists. Inevitably glitches arose in the fiscal note and income tax reform for this year died. -The House championed lowering the food tax and the Senate promised to support it if the House voted for the flat income tax. However, signals got crossed—the Senate approved the sales tax revision and the House did not go along with the income tax, creating animosity.

Mr. Tew told us that comprehensive tax reform can take place only when a revenue surplus is large enough to minimize the hit and thus buy off those who would be hurt by reform (or conversely when a revenue deficit makes it impossible to pay for adequate services.) Those conditions may not be present now. Only \$70 million of the surplus is left, which could fund modest reform. Low income and retired people appear to receive tax increases while the wealthy get a decrease under the Governor's plan. The Governor needs to explain the rationale for lowering the 7% top rate to 5%. Although 7% may seem high, the effective rate is lower because in Utah, unlike most other states, state tax is not paid on part of the income that goes to pay federal income tax.

The Salt Lake League will host Convention 2007.

Marelynn Zipser, Secretary

League of Women Voters of Utah Officers



President: Gigi Brandt

Gigi joined the League in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1967. She has been a local and state study chairperson (education, public transportation, water and energy), working on local, state and *national (energy)* study committees, and Voter Service chair, a board member in Massachusetts and Utah, and Salt Lake president. She has edited the Salt Lake *Voter* for what she describes as “too long.” Gigi served on two LWVUS committees, the energy study and the nominating committee. For the past 15 years she has worked for the Salt Lake School District as a computer lab manager in an elementary school. She and her husband have two adult children and two grandchildren and provide after school care for their kindergartener grandson. She belongs to two book groups, and enjoys knitting, sewing and gardening. Lately gardening has consisted of ‘zeriscaping’ their front yard. She enjoys spending summer time at the family cabin in Wyoming outside Yellowstone Park.

Vice President (Program): Janice Gygi

Janice was born in Salt Lake City and graduated from Highland High School. She has lived in the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington, DC, and taught for six years in the marketing department at the University of North Texas, just outside Dallas, before returning to Salt Lake. She has taught principles of business and marketing at Utah Valley State College, where she is currently Interim Dean of the School of Business. Beginning in July she will be Associate Dean, then vice president in charge of programs. A member of the Utah League since 1984 (except for the six years in Texas) she has served as secretary of LWV Salt Lake and treasurer and president of LWV Utah. Janice and Stuart have three children and seven grandchildren.





Secretary: Marelynn Zipser

Marelynn has been LWVUT secretary since 1999. She says the job is much simpler now that almost all Board members have e-mail, and it has been a wonderful way for her to use the experience she has gained in almost 40 years of membership in Colorado, Texas, and Utah. Marelynn is interested in conservation issues. She fears we will not leave a healthy legacy if our policy makers do not give conservation stronger weight in their decision-making

Treasurer: Sue Kirkham

Sue is currently the Deputy Director of Salt Lake Valley Health Department which serves all municipalities and the unincorporated portions of Salt Lake County. She has had a 28 year career in public health working at both local and state health departments. She has a BS in Community Health Education and a Masters in Public Administration. A Salt Lake native, she divides her time between Salt Lake and Moab where her husband tends their two cats. She longs for the time when she can actually complete one of her many hobby projects such as spinning, knitting, basketry and beading. In the meantime she is happy to again be involved in League activities.



Communications Director: Sherilyn Bennion

Sherilyn has been active in League for 30 years. She has been co-president in Eureka CA and currently serves as secretary for the Salt Lake League. Her special interests are education and environment. Having retired from her long time position as journalism professor at Humboldt State University in California, she now finds time to enjoy traveling, hiking in the nearby mountains and catching up on her reading.

Development Director: Nancy Wingelaar

Nancy is a native of Sacramento, California who came to Utah in 1979. She was a member of the Park City League from its inception. She has served as local League president and state League treasurer, three terms as state development director, and most recently voter service director. After moving to Salt Lake City, then to Grand Junction Colorado, Nancy returned to Park City where she was instrumental in reorganizing and recruiting League members there as a unit of LWV Salt Lake before moving back to Sandy. She has worked as a dental hygienist for more than 20 years and has a son and three step-children. She enjoys reading, hiking, skiing, biking and gardening.



Voter Service Director: Kathy Dorn

Kathy has resided in Utah since August 2003, when she and her husband Ken were transferred here with Ken's company. She lived all of her adult life in Illinois where she joined LWV in 1980, after working on a preschool availability study in her area. She worked on the Early Childhood Intervention position and took it to National League convention with Jean LaBlonde. It is the current national

position. She served as President of her local league in 1996. Although that has since disbanded, she still counts Leaguers among her dearest friends. She's currently completing a very successful term as LWVUT legislative action director. Kathy's undergrad work was in business (1968) and social work (1995). She has a life long interest in education at all levels (and two daughters who teach). She and her husband have 6 grands, which are her hobby and take her out of Utah several times a year. She says she is interested in figuring out Utah lawmakers, education positions and lots of other stuff and looks forward to continuing to work with all of us and learning our stories.

Legislative Co-Directors: Peggy Christensen and Ann O'Connell

Peggy was born in Logan, Utah, then moved to Salt Lake City. She was schooled in the Granite School District, earned a B.A. (French, English, Education) from the U. of Utah, M.S. (Child Development and Psychology) from BYU and "met" the LWV while living and teaching in southern California. With a family (two children) and a career she looked to the League for exposure to community, state, and national issues. She admires the nonpartisan approach to issues and the ability, awareness, and commitment of members. She retired from teaching elementary school and returned to Utah in 1993. As a member of the LWV lobby corps at the State Legislature, she's been attending Revenue and Taxation Committee meetings, possibly because it appeals to her rational mind without the emotional pain she feels regarding environmental issues. Her passion for justice sustained her activities in Beyond War during the 80's, Northwest Earth Institute which supports her environmental concerns and led her to voluntary simplicity, and the Positive Futures Network that builds her awareness of economic globalization. Peggy says she grateful to LWV as a group of people with whom she can share local and global concerns and possibilities. Her passion is deep, top priority being ecological sustainability. She doesn't tend to "fight" for issues but says she occasionally comes up with a meaningful perspective to share. Her thinking can be "fringe-y", and even more so in Utah than in southern California! Her energy is intermittent and the issues facing us today can be so depressing that she's learning to play bridge as an escape!!



Ann was born in Baltimore and grew up in Seattle. Her educational background includes Stanford University and Vassar College, plus a degree in biology from the University of Utah. Ann is a long time Salt Lake League member who has chaired the nominating committee and been on the population study committee as well as serving as co-president and natural resources director. She has also chaired a study of seven alternative election methods such as instant run-off and proportional voting. Ann is particularly interested in growth, environmental and transportation issues. After retiring from Rowland Hall, where she taught life sciences and physical sciences, she was a lobbyist for the Audubon Society for several years. She likes to hike.

Off-Board Positions:

Executive Director: Sandy Peck

Voter Editor: Nanette Benowitz

Web Design: Nanette Benowitz, Pat Klentzman, Kathy Biele, Sandy Peck, Marie Irvine

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF UTAH PROGRAM 2005 - 2007

I **ACT to promote election process reform.**

- A. Participate in the implementation of the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA).
- B. Act to improve the election process, including voter registration and election procedures, election equipment, and redistricting for federal and state candidates.
- C. Complete and implement consensus on the Utah League Study of Election Systems.
- D. Act to promote campaign finance reform, with a primary focus on campaign contribution limits for candidates for state offices, personal use of campaign funds, and lobbyist gifts and contributions.

II **Review current Utah League tax positions to resolve inconsistencies and to determine their adequacy for current tax policy issues.**

Review the report of the 2004 Individual Income Tax and Corporate Franchise and Income Tax Task Force and former Governor Walker's 2004 tax recommendations.
Monitor the 2005 Tax Reform Task Force.

III **Review current Utah League education positions to determine their adequacy for current education issues. Review current public education funding sources.**

IV. **Act to promote community awareness of the issue of health care for the uninsured.**

- A. Review LWVUS positions on health policy.
- B. Monitor the 2005 Privately Owned Health Care Organization Task Force.

V. **Act to implement League consensus positions regarding nuclear waste.**

VI. **Act to implement League consensus positions regarding the Utah corrections system.**

VII. **Study hate crimes legislation.**

The Utah Legislature failed to pass effective hate crimes legislation once again in 2005, for the 9th year in a row. Even though it is a topic of heated discussion, clarification and updating is needed because its content and form have changed over the years. A group of LWV lobby corps members proposes that the League of Women Voters study hate crimes legislation, including: a history of the legislation, what other states are doing along with the level of effectiveness of their legislation, and concerns from different Utah factions such as the Sutherland Institute and the ACLU. The intent is to use the information to decide if the League of Women Voters will take a position on the issue.

VIII. **Act to protect Utah's citizen initiative process.**

IX. **Study Redevelopment Agency law**, looking at current Utah statutes, recent changes and the thinking behind these changes, the impact of Redevelopment Agencies on taxes of other entities and on property rights, some examples of current uses of redevelopment agencies, and monitoring what governmental entities use as alternatives to RDA during the coming year.

X. **Provide information about Montana's Silver Bullet Legislative Rule to the public and the Utah legislature.**

Montana has a legislature evenly split between Democrats and Republicans. Each party has 12 silver bullets allowing it to force an issue out of committee to be voted on by the entire body. It has been used 3 times to date.

LWVUS Convention Summary 2006



Delegates: Pat Nielson, Ann O'Connell, Kathy Dorn, Anne Zeigler, Patti O'Keefe

The following articles were written by the Utah delegates to convention. Each gave their own perspective of the events and a few words about workshops and caucus' they attended.



NATIONAL PROGRAM DEBATE: by *Sandy Peck*

Welcome, Wonder Women. That was the heading of an editorial in the *Minneapolis StarTribune*, the day the 2006 LWVUS Convention opened. Made us feel appreciated. So did the remarks of Garrison Keillor at our banquet. He recalled entering a League-sponsored essay test as a boy and the thrill of winning a prize of \$15.

I've been fortunate to attend many National Conventions since I became a League member in 1971. They're always exciting, mainly because our program issues and the speakers who illuminate them are exciting and timely. (Well, I suppose if you don't care anything about politics and the future of our country you might be bored.)

My favorite moment was at the Detroit convention where former Secretary of State George Schultz spoke. One caucus was promoting "global security," the idea that real security for the U.S. depended not just on military arms but on protecting economic and environmental well-being around the globe. To make our point we handed out big yellow balloons that said "Global Security" to everyone who entered the ballroom. As Schultz spoke, the balloons drifted up to the ceiling and some popped on the lights. Finally he remarked rather wistfully, "I like these balloons; could I have one for my room?" Hope he got one.

This year in Minneapolis the theme was "Meeting in the Middle" and a key issue was Checks and Balances. Keynote speaker Thomas Mann of the Brookings Institution called Congress the Broken Branch (the title of his new book with co-author Norman Ornstein) saying it has become ideologically polarized, with little cooperation between the parties, holding no serious mark-up sessions or hearings on legislation, and unwilling to check the power of the executive branch. Delegates also heard a panel of experts on the Courts discuss pressures on the

independence of the Judiciary from the media, the appointment process, partisan elections, unregulated campaign contributions, and out of state interest groups.

When it came time to vote on programs, here's how the delegates voted.

1. Adopted a resolution to elevate restoration of our System of Checks and Balances and Separation of Powers to a top priority by adding it to the LWVUS Democracy Agenda for advocacy and education, denouncing the erosion of this system and the resulting damage to our constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties, and calling upon Congress to assume its vital role for oversight and as a co-equal branch of government responsive to the citizens its members represent. Proponents of the resolution pointed out that the Constitution defines the powers of the President very generally. Congress has established more and more programs that shift power to the executive branch, and the current administration claims "unitary executive" power with few presidential limits.

2. Adopted the LWV Illinois Death Penalty position by concurrence on the Convention Floor. The position now reads simply "The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty." Arguments for abolition were the number of death row prisoners who have been exonerated, the disproportionate number of poor and minority prisoners executed and higher costs of execution compared to life without parole.

3. Adopted a three-year study of immigration policies. The scope of the study will be determined by the study committee and Board.

4. Adopted a resolution on voter-verifiable paper ballots directing that the LWVUS position on Citizens' Right to Vote be interpreted to affirm that LWVUS supports only voting systems

- that have a voter-verifiable paper ballot or other paper record that is the official record of the voter's intent, that the voter can verify while in the process of voting;
- that is used for audits and recounts;
- that can be used by an independent hand count to verify vote totals;
- that can be used in routine, published audits in randomly selected precincts in every election

The vote was Yes 439, No 269. Some points made in debate, in caucuses (all open of course) and during direction to the board were that: technology changes, we need flexibility, and several Leagues have had good experiences with electronic voting for as long as 6 years. The Maryland LWV for example participates on Election Day in the parallel testing of machines used to detect possible tampering. Unfortunately, the short time frame in the Help America Vote Act has led to hasty equipment decisions and too little time to work out problems in some states. Since all voting systems have had problems over the years, ballot security and maintenance, training of election workers and education of the voters are needed with or without paper trails. Printer jams, battery failures and lack of poll worker training on basic procedures may well be greater problems than computer glitches or tampering.

In the end, the majority of delegates decided, as have 26 states including Utah, that a voter verifiable paper trail is needed, although indications are that hand counting paper records would be extremely time-consuming without scanners. Some Utah counties have invested in special storage facilities with security cameras and wiring that keeps batteries charged. Extra poll workers who will be trained to use the touch-screens and can guard against tampering are authorized for each precinct. The most urgent problem is probably recruiting those workers, especially since some longtime judges are finding the new process difficult. We urge League members to serve. It would be helpful also for state election officials to provide some expert independent oversight and especially to inform and reassure voters, as much as they can without compromising security, about the machines and procedural safeguards.

5. Adopted a resolution that the LWVUS support the concept of Internet neutrality by calling upon Congress to protect equal access to the Internet. Most of us had never heard of this until caucus. There we

learned that one bill has gone through the U.S. House without including neutrality guarantees, and another is before the Senate that might ensure (or deny) equal delivery of content on the Internet for consumers and business interests. Network operators including large telecom and cable networks would be prohibited from charging some companies for first and faster delivery of their content to consumers over the internet or favoring certain content over others.

Proponents say they want to protect small business, innovators and equal treatment of all ideas. Bell companies and some major cable companies are the main opponents and have argued that they have First Amendment rights, so they can't be compelled to promote speech they disagree with by providing equal access. Competition for profits from growing use of the Internet for telephone and video transmission is part of the controversy.

Failed motions:

A. Defeated a motion to add to the proposed program “the update of apportionment - or redistricting - including examination of ways to make legislative bodies more representative and accountable”. Defeat of this motion was especially disappointing considering the theme of the Convention and the large majority of Congressional districts that are redistricted to be “safe” for one party or the other, as well as Utah delegates' support of alternative voting methods. For more details, see Ann O'Connell's Musings on the Convention in this *Voter*. You can also read LWV Salt Lake studies on election systems at www.lwvutah.org/publications

B. Rejected a resolution that the LWVUS give a high priority to educating Leagues and the public on health care reform. One reason for the defeat may have been that LWVUS already has a detailed position on health care reform, which state and local Leagues can use to advocate at the state level with permission. We received lots of material that should be useful here in Utah. Several committees in the Utah Legislature now are working on reform, so we do expect legislation in January and we need to inform ourselves and voters.

B. Rejected a resolution that the LWVUS Board give energy and climate change a high priority on its action agenda, work to inform its members and the public, and insist that the issues be addressed in debates of candidates in local, state, and federal elections. Like health care, this issue is already receiving a lot of attention. And please note that LWVU's Primary Voter Guide now on www.lwvutah.org does indeed have a question for Congressional candidates on global warming.

C. Rejected a resolution that the LWVUS support requirements that governmental bodies protect a “Citizens’ Right to Know” by requiring that cable and telecommunications companies broadcast public affairs programming as well as provide support and capacity for public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access to community media. The use of community cable by citizen groups can be a useful tool. LWV Salt Lake has worked with Salt Lake Community College, using their cable channel for candidate debates.

What about the National Popular Vote to Elect the President? The LWVUS position on the Electoral College has been for 35 years that it should be abolished, largely because it violates the principle of one person/one vote by giving more weight to votes from citizens in small states. But small states like this extra clout and are not likely to approve amending the Electoral College out of the Constitution.

At convention we heard about an alternative - the National Popular Vote Plan. State legislatures, who have the Constitutional power to award their electoral votes as they choose, could join an interstate compact by deciding to award all of their electoral votes to the candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide. The plan would take effect only after states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes - 270 of the 538 - had joined. This would make every vote equal and ensure popular election of the President (a concept polls say is supported by 70% of the public). Bi-partisan proponents say the plan would bring candidates to small states that are now ignored and increase voter turnout in states where one-party domination now discourages many voters.

What do you think? To learn more, visit www.NationalPopularVote.com

Final words? From the *Minneapolis StarTribune* editorial were “Hail to the League.” Thanks, Minneapolis!

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDRAISING: by *Anne Zeigler*

As this was a first National Convention for me, I was quite overwhelmed with the whole scene. With over 1000 women and men attending, the caucuses and workshops, speakers, discussions, from 7:30 AM until 10:00PM, voting, reading all the material that was passed out, it was a most stimulating, interesting and awesome experience. One could not help but feel proud to be part of an organization of such caring, intelligent and active people who thoroughly believe in what they do, and do something about it. I was very impressed with the staff at the LWVUS and the Board and officers – what a dynamic group of women.



Membership was the workshop I chose to attend. LWVUS has developed a new approach to bring a diverse group of new members into the League. A one-year pilot project by National will involve five leagues across the country to test strategies and tactics to learn what's most effective and most efficient at drawing in new members. They plan to target women/men ages 50-65 (i.e., of retirement age) who have expressed some interest in civic affairs. We look forward to working with National on this effort. Suggestions for contacting this group are certainly welcome.

Fund Raising was another workshop that proved quite interesting. Based on a study by AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy Giving, 75.6% contributions are from individuals, 4.8% from Corporations, 11.6% from Foundations, and 8% from Bequests.

RE individuals:

1. Percent of population who give - 75.1%
2. Percent of givers who give but do not volunteer – 36.1%
3. Percent of givers who give and who also volunteer – 63.9%
4. Average person/family gives to 11-14 causes

Many suggestions were made for a fund-raising program such as:

- each Board should have a fund-raising committee;
- letters for fund-raising should be available on line;
- participate in parades, state fairs, etc.;
- distribute local/state league fliers in real estate, newcomers, etc., packets;
- register voters for large companies, new companies in the area; important to keep records of contacts made;
- thank-you notes are important.

IMPRESSIONS FROM CONVENTION: by *Patti O'Keefe*

How would you describe the experience of participating (even as a non-voting observer!) in the 47th annual LWV-US Conference? Try these few words:

- Exhilarating! How could you *not* be exhilarated being part of over 1,000 dedicated League women (and men!!) coming together from almost every state in the Union to actively engage in five days of high intensity networking, dialogue and debate?



- Pride-inducing! (Clumsy “word” but at least it’s grammatically consistent!) You could not help but feel a sense of pride in belonging to an organization capable of commanding the respect and attention of a major American city. Opening day of Convention, we were welcomed with a public proclamation from the mayor of Minneapolis acknowledging the impact and accomplishments of the League of Women Voters. That Friday was officially declared “LVW-US Day”. (Even though I never received my personal set of keys to the city, everywhere we went we were welcomed and honored as if we had them pinned to our lapels!)
- Fascinating! If you are fascinated with the “machinery” of well run organizations, you would have enjoyed observing the Convention Plenary sessions. Each day, passionate discourse and debate between several hundred Alpha females (& yes, males) was productively channeled into important collaborative decision-making through the scrupulous application of Roberts Rules of Order.
- Inspiring! If you are my vintage, you’ll remember the old advertising slogan made famous by the 3-M Company, “Better living through chemistry”. After the address by our new LWV-US President, Mary Wilson, a new slant on the old slogan came to mind, “Better *Leagu*ing through chemistry” (sorry! I couldn’t help myself!). Think of the dynamic units that can be developed if we create “chemistry” through application of Mary’s new 4 M’s: Members, Message, Media & Money.

Oh, and did I mention....

- Exhausting! With five days of caucuses, workshops and plenary sessions often running from 7am to well past 10pm, Convention can be demanding! But somehow there was always time to get to know your Convention team members better, to meet and exchange ideas with Leaguers from across the country.

With the 2008 Convention scheduled for Portland, you have ample time to start planning to attend now. So mark those calendars for the second weekend in June, 2008, and we’ll see you in Portland!

ALTERNATIVE ELECTION SYSTEMS AS A NATIONAL LEAGUE PRIORITY:

by *Ann O’Connell*

Musings on the 47th National Convention- This report is one narrow view from the Convention. The delegates elect officers and a board, pass a budget and decide upon program (including action) for the next two years. None of this is simple for a democratic, grass roots organization but I want to focus on one set of issues that will tell you about some of the substance and process of a League Convention.

The Salt Lake League submitted alternative election systems as a priority study item for the National League. The different forms of proportional representation would be part of such a study. Delegates from like-minded Leagues had arranged for a series of caucuses on this and the related topic of a national popular vote plan (which would involve an interstate compact of states who agree to cast all their electoral votes for the presidential candidate who wins the popular vote nationwide). They were well attended; indeed at one, the audience spilled out into the hall.

During and apart from these caucuses, a core group plotted on the best way to convince Convention delegates to add alternative voting systems to the next biennium as a study item. The strategy was to present this study as an update of the National League’s position on redistricting. The Arizona League can attest to the fact that their



system of a well-balanced and independent redistricting commission that drew fair districts has not resulted in competitive or representative districts. The Arizona League worked long and hard for these reforms, was sorely disappointed in the ultimate results - the status quo of safe districts, and suggests proportional representation as a possible cure.

This election systems study failed to be adopted by convention delegates. More and more League members are either enthusiastic about proportional voting or believe the League should certainly study the topic. However, many others do not yet understand what is being suggested; and more important, immigration was the hot button issue of the Convention. The League has only so much money and energy to allocate during the two years between conventions. It was clear from the beginning that immigration would be the subject the Convention would choose over topics such as election systems, global warming, healthcare, and others. (In fact LWVUS president Kay Maxwell said so to us this spring.) However, the process for Convention floor debate left many supporters of these discarded issues disappointed if not disgruntled. Each issue was given nine minutes to be evenly divided between pro and con sides with one minute per speaker. This is not much time to explain a complex issue and often it was diminished further by amendment or points-of-order. By Convention rules a delegate can call for an amendment or point-of-order and the chair must call upon that person. The time taken is removed from the nine minutes. It is a very rude and ungenerous tactic and it happened in the election systems debate, leaving only 3 ½ minutes of real discussion.

The good news is that the next LWVUS Convention will be in Portland, Oregon. That is a strategic location for big state supporters of an election systems study and wonderful for the Utah League. Our delegates can drive by way of one of the scenic routes to Portland. The Convention hotel will be in exciting downtown Portland but I bet a number of us can stay with relatives and take mass transit.

We should start immediately to raise money to defray Convention expenses so we can send a full Utah delegation.

MEMORIAL FUND

The Memorial Fund, a joint savings account for both the State and the Salt Lake Leagues, has a current of principal of \$5000.00, which is used for office supplies and/or equipment. Stuart Gygi, the Salt Lake League Treasurer, is the chair. In addition both Salt Lake and State have two representatives. The Memorial Fund Committee meets whenever the office has a need for equipment. For example, the fund recently purchased a copy/fax/scan/printer and a new DSL modem.

This fund is available for contributions from members or non-members in memory of League members who have passed away.

The League of Women Voters of Utah would like to thank:
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Join the League of Women Voters of Utah, a respected, national grassroots organization that acts on important issues that affect you, your community and our nation. You can make a difference on the issues! Membership forms are available on line at <http://www.lwvutah.org/form.html>

We are –

- *Empowering millions of voters to protect their right to vote*
- *Working to ensure that ALL votes are counted and all voices are heard*
- *Preserving our constitutional rights by safeguarding civil liberties*
- *Acting as a force for positive change in our communities and in our democracy*

We believe that sensible, responsible, civil discourse and action based on substance, rather than partisan battles is essential if we are to avoid polarization and get something done. We believe that American democracy is at risk and that now is the time to act.

Donate to the league. Your tax-deductible contribution will provide important support for advancing our critical work to safeguard the vote. Contribute today!