



League of Women Voters of Montezuma County

VOTER

Montezuma County, Colorado

www.lwvmontezuma.org Total Membership: 26

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, promotes informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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Mark Your Calendars

Monday, 10

Board meeting **CANCELLED**

Saturday, 15

Verde Fest in Cortez City Park,
Volunteer now! Call Betty Janes

See full calendar on last page as
well as online at

www.lwvmontezuma.org

Join the League!

Anyone of voting age may join the League. Discounted household memberships are available. Call Betty Janes at 533-1051 for more information

President's Message

The summer is passing quickly! It began League-wise when Eleanor Kuhl and I attended the LWVCO State Convention in Golden in mid-May. How energizing it was to be in the same room with a hundred highly focused Leaguers desiring to make a difference! "Sustainability" was adopted as a state study topic, and is being driven by east slope volunteers who are able to meet often. We are kept in the loop by emails from Alice Ramsey, LWVCO VP of Program, who is coordinating the group. Health Care Reform was also a topic of conversation at the state convention. A resolution to LWVUS to include and lobby for "single payer" in the national discussion was passed by the Colorado Convention as well as by other state conventions. (The LWVUS Board, however, issued statement of not doing so which is included elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Mid June, Chris and I attended LWVCO Leadership Retreat held in Frisco. I had not ever attended and the meeting and the fast paced twenty-four hour experience was well worth our time. We enjoyed the mountain drive in June, too! I've shared with our own Board members several of the handouts we received. In addition to most LWVCO Board members being present, LWVUS membership coordinator, Cheryl Graeve, made several informative presentations as well as helping us to feel more a part of the national organization. Her handouts included many helpful tips in organizing local league efforts from membership and fund drives to media publicity. The Leadership Retreat is subsidized and very cheap for members to attend. I encourage you now to put June 25 -26, 2010 on your calendar. It will be a worthwhile experience for you and

for our League. Chris and I made a presentation on the use of the Google calendar and googles shared document capability.

Via the LWVUS list serve on natural resources, our League has asked to be informed about the progress of a LWV of Pennsylvania study of shale oil and gas drilling and extraction. (The industry is moving east into PA and NY.) Also connecting with Pennsylvania Leaguers, are Texas and Arkansas Leaguers who have enlarged the network. It is important that our League help the residents of Montezuma County understand the issues of drilling for natural gas in shale and that we insist upon appropriate monitoring of the process from drilling to delivery.

I emailed each of you a copy of the LWVAZ's fifty-eight page document it published entitled "Health Care Issues Behind Health Care Reform". Read it and send it on to help folks understand the issues that are not being addressed in general national media. A link to the document is on our web site. Several issues are not being discussed in the general public realm such as cost containment – end of life costs; drug costs; cost of specialty care; cost of legal suits as it often relates to "unnecessary prescribed tests", procedures that have not be shown to be effective. How does the nation contain these costs? Liability reform is needed. Overhead costs because of the variety of insurance companies with which a provider must interact are exorbitant in the health care world. Technology and standardized electronic medical records will help to standardize information and processes that will eliminate some costs. Eliminating for-profit managed care insurance and eliminating the variety of payers with which

health providers must deal will help reduce overhead costs that now are running as much as thirty percent.

I hope many of you will be able to attend the League meeting, Thursday, August 27 when another Hot Topic film about health care will be shown and discussed. It will be held in the Calvin Denton Room at Empire Electric Association, 801 N. Broadway, Cortez.

LouAnn Burkett has agreed to research the possibility of our League hosting and facilitating a Great Decision Group. Please consider joining the 2009-2010 effort – there are eight different issues to be discussed as outlined by the Foreign Policy Institute. I talked with many League members at the state convention who were very pleased with the program and said the program helped to recruit new members to the League.

Eric Janes and I continue to work with the LaPlata League and San Juan Citizens Alliance on a project regarding the EPA presence in the Four Corners Area. More next newsletter!

Verde Fest is happening in the Cortez City Park, Saturday, August 15 from 10 am – 4pm. It's a sustainability fair sponsored by Montezuma Climate Action Network (M-CAN). Come and participate as a volunteer. It will be fun. Phone League member Betty Janes for how you can help.

The Mountain Studies Institute is hosting an Air Quality Forum August 26 at FLC in Durango. Phone Jodi Foran if interested in carpooling to attend. The Forum last year was very interesting.

— *Jodi Foran*

Annual Meeting 2009

By President Jodi Foran

LWVCO President Margie Beal and President elect Patty Cordova spoke briefly at our Annual Meeting on May 11 as part of their string of visits to local LWVs in SW CO. Jodi Foran summarized our LWV's activities. We voted to re-adopt our present study areas. A bylaw change was necessitated, as Eleanor Kuhl the president elect was not able to assume the office of president for 2010-11. Jodi Foran was elected President and Eleanor for the President elect. Officers and Directors listed elsewhere in the newsletter were also elected.

Colorado's Budget Crisis - September 2nd Presentation

New information this summer indicates that sales and income tax collections for Colorado are far short of projections made in early 2009 resulting in an estimated \$384 million deficit by July 2010. Grim news! Governor Bill Ritter requested cuts in the 2009-10 budget before it even took effect on July 1st.

Where are cuts in budgets to come from? Transportation? Education? Social Services? Will we have to increase taxes?

LWVMZC has invited Carol Hedges, Senior Financial Analyst with the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute in Denver, to speak at the Cortez Business Club luncheon. She will address Colorado's perpetual budget crisis,

how we got there and what might be done to fix it.

Consider this meeting a kick-off of League activity in September.

Cortez Business Club meetings are informal and open to the public. Join a group of business and community leaders and League members for an informative talk and a lively discussion on the first Wednesday in September – September 2nd noon at the Cortez Elks Club on Hwy 145 and Road L. A buffet lunch is available and no reservations are required. Show up for an interesting and informative discussion of an important topic. For more information, please contact Jodi Foran.

Forum on the County's Three School Systems

Dick Hoover who served on a school board in New Jersey for seventeen years is very interested in the League holding a Forum of Superintendents and Board Chairs of the three County school districts. The initial forum will focus on financial areas and attendance data. Subsequent meetings might highlight curriculum and performance data.

Dick is planning the forum for November and would welcome members to help him with the planning. Phone Dick (see directory).

Global Climate Change Impacts

Many Colorado rivers peaked almost 3 weeks early this spring. Higher temperatures accompanied by far too many strong dozen dust storms caused early snowmelt.

In fact, recent warming in the Southwest has been among the most rapid in the nation according to the White House report published mid-June: **Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States**. The report focuses on climate change impacts in nine different regions of the U.S. and on various aspects of society and the economy. It discusses affects on human health, agriculture, coastal areas, transportation and water supplies. In the Southwest, we will see our water supplies becoming scarcer and increasing temperature, drought, wildfire and invasive species transforming our landscape.

Climate change is already reshaping the United States and “major disruptions” are taking place. The key findings in the report are:

1. Global warming is unequivocal and primarily human-induced.
2. Climate changes are underway in the United States and projected to increase in magnitude.
3. Widespread climate-related impacts are occurring now and will to increase.
4. Climate change will stress water resources.
5. Increasingly challenged are crop and livestock production.

6. Coastal areas are at increasing risk from sea-level rise and storm surges.
7. Risks to human health will increase.
8. Climate change will interact with many social, political and environmental stresses.
9. Thresholds will be reached and lead to large changes in climate and ecosystems resulting in a loss of diversity.
10. Future climate change and its impacts depend on choices made today.

To read more about these findings, to look specifically at the Southwest projections, or to access the full report, logon to www.globalchange.gov.

Leadership Retreat

LWVCO was one of the first state Leagues to initiate a leadership retreat to train local members in how to lead League's activities and to help new members understand the way the League works. Presenters had lots of experience in local, state, and national League work. One of the principal presenters was Cheryl Graeve from LWVUS. She was a wealth of good information on best practices and how the national League can help local members. Much of her presentation focused on membership, including how to increase it, how to retain it, and how to energize it. For someone new to the League Retreat presents an opportunity to hear from the "old hands" about how a League operates - like separating advocacy from education and the "League way" of coming to consensus and defining a position. As with all the League meetings I've attended, there was lots of

cross-pollination of ideas and suggestions, but even more so at Retreat. We learned of the successful activities of other local Leagues. The most rewarding of Leadership Retreat was talking and listening to many of the talented, impressive members of LWVCO locals - an opportunity I recommend to all of our members

— *Jodi Foran*

Why Aren't We Actively Supporting A Single Payer Health Insurance System?

Many League members throughout the US are frustrated about LWVUS not supporting a Single Payer Health System, which prevents state and local Leagues to advocate such as organizations. Remember, we cannot act on a national issue (like healthcare) without agreement from LWVUS, and the National League is not currently voicing support for single payer. To quote LWVUS President, Mary Wilson:

"First, the LWVUS health care position as stated in Impact on Issues has not changed. The League favors universal health care to be provided through a national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums, commonly known as the "single payer" approach. But, the League's position is much more expansive than just favoring the single payer approach". Click [here for the League's health care position](#):

(also found in Impact on Issues, p. 69).

Many think the LWVUS is correct in not pushing for single payer right now for political reasons. *However, LWVUS is in favor of the Public Plan Option as can be*

seen in this recent excerpt from the LWV web site: "Health care reform legislation must guarantee quality, affordable health care to all U.S. residents. It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system, and all Americans must have health care coverage, including the choice of a quality, affordable public insurance plan."

Montezuma Ozone Monitoring

On the home page of the Montezuma County web site you can access the monthly report of county ozone monitoring. Call the county information department and request all available monthly reports continue to be posted and archived on the website. <http://www.co.montezuma.co.us>

Colorado Air Quality Brochure

<http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/brochure.aspx>

For **real time monitoring of the Cortez site (WOW!)**:

http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/aqi_map_ve.aspx

The Colorado Department of Health has several documents and postings relating to Montezuma County monitoring: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ap/ozone/OZDesignations.pdf>

Checkout Our Updated Web Site

www.lwvmontezuma.org

Our web site is updated with new links to LWVUS climate change white papers. www.lwvmontezuma.org

The excellent booklet on Health Care Issues published by the LWVAZ is also on our web site. Forward the link and booklet to friends who are interested in reading a definitive, non-biased, informational publication about health care issues.

Mountain Studies Institute Air Quality Forum

Topics: Air Quality Planning/Management, Ozone, Mercury

Wednesday, August 26, 2009

8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Durango Public Library, Durango, CO

www.mountainstudies.org

Leaguers are needed to volunteer with Verde Fest

Verde Fest is a happening in the Cortez City Park Saturday, August 15 from 10am – 4pm. Our Leaguer, Betty Janes, is doing a fantastic job of organizing the effort sponsored by Montezuma Climate Action Network (M-CAN).

Leaguers, we need your help with the following for one - two hour shifts. Please phone Betty (see directory) if you can help with the following:

- Kids area & activities
- Greeter / ticket distribution
- Man M-CAN booth
- Betty's gopher

State Newsletter Sent to You Via E-mail

Beginning with the August issue of the state ***Colorado Voter***, members may choose to receive the newsletter electronically or by mail. The electronic version will be sent as a pdf file. Please indicate by which method you wish to receive the next issue. If you wish it to have it sent to you electronically, email info@lwvcolorado.org the following information: Name, mailing address, e-mail address and LWV of which you are affiliated.

LWVCO Sustainability Study

The 2009 LWVCO state convention adopted “sustainability” as a study item for the next two years. One of the big tasks is to define the word “sustainability”. Those who are Committee members working to define the study this summer are defining it broadly and are seeking to balance environmental, *economic, and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet that same goal.* The ultimate goal of the study will be to develop a statement that ties together the interconnectedness of our present League positions on many issues whether they under the heading of government, natural resources, or social policy.

The first phase of the study, projected for this fall, will be to gather information from local Leagues to determine where we in Colorado stand regarding efforts to achieve sustainability in the areas businesses, government, and non-profits. A general meeting is tentatively scheduled for spring to reach a consensus.

LWVMZC members are more observers than active participants in the study at this point. Our League needs several members linking into the Committee as they move forward in the next months. Later the study will expand to a request from the Committee for our League to participate in gathering local information for the Committee. If you would like to participate in gathering information for LWVMZC, we need your help! Contact Eric Janes or Jodi Foran. It will be a very interesting experience for those who participate.

Calendar

August	
Monday, 10	Board meeting CANCELLED
Saturday, 15	Verde Fest in Cortez City Park, Volunteer now! Call Betty Janes
Thursday, 27	Hot Topic Public Meeting film and discussion on Health Care Reform by cardiologist. 7 PM in Calvin Denton Room of EEA
September	
Wednesday, 2	LWVMZC Sponsored presentation by Carol Hedges, Senior Financial Analyst, Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute at the Cortez Business Club meeting, September 2 at noon at the Elks Club. Buffet available. No reservations required
Wednesday, 2	LWVCO and Ed Fund Board meeting, Denver
Monday, 14	Board Meeting 9:30 am Colorado Visitor Center
Friday, 25	Travel to Denver for League Day
Saturday, 26	League Day in Denver
October	
Monday, June 8	Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 9:30 a.m.
Thursday, 8	Four Corner Air Quality and Health Forum, 7-9 p.m. 130 Noble Hall, FLC Sponsored by LWVLPC and LWVMZC

Board

Membership	Betty Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net
50 Year Member	Llois Stein 565-9565 llois@msn.com
Health Care	Eleanor Kuhl 564-0708 ekuhl@frontier.net
Voter Services	Dick Hoover 565-7367 johnhoover@beyondbb.com
Environment	Eric Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net
President	Jodi Foran 882-2401 jodi@foran.net
President Elect	Eleanor Kuhl 564-0708 ekuhl@frontier.net
Secretary	Eric Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net
Treasurer	Denis Boon 560-0404 denisboon@msn.com
Newsletter Ed	Chris Foran 882-2401 chris@foran.net
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