



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

Wednesday, 2

“Colorado’s Budget Crisis”

Noon, Cortez Elks Club

Monday, 14

Board Meeting 9:30, Visitors Center

Saturday 26

League Day, Denver

Oct 8

Four Corners Air Quality and Health Forum, 7-9, 130 Noble Hall, FLC

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

At the May LWVCO State Convention Carol Hedges of the CO Fiscal Policy Institute spoke about the fiscal state of Colorado's budget. As with every other states' budgets Colorado is having a very tough time making ends meet. The legislature that met last Spring made tough decisions and will undoubtedly be making even tougher cuts 2010. So what is up with Colorado's budget? The shortfall has forced cuts in state employees and for some it has meant forced days not to report to work. Social Service programs are suffering. Four day school days? Will times get worse before they get better? Where if any, will additional revenue come from?

Carol Hedges is a dynamic speaker who will provoke thought and questions. Our League along with Montrose and LaPlata Leagues are sponsoring her visit to SW Colorado, where she will speak about these Colorado state government fiscal challenges.

Join with the Cortez Business Club noon Wednesday, September 2nd at the Cortez Elks Lodge to hear Carol. This is a public kick-off meeting of our 2009-10 year for our League. A buffet lunch is available – no reservations needed. You can order from the menu, brown bag, or eat elsewhere. Bring yourself and your questions! **We need good League representation** – several of our members will be out of town unfortunately and will miss this Fall Kickoff meeting. I look forward to seeing you there! Bring a friend with you as this is a good introduction to the kind of speaker League brings to Montezuma County!

Eric Janes and I attended the Mountain Studies Institute Air Quality Forum recently where Eric spoke briefly on the initial

workings of LWVMZC and LWVLPC and San Juan Citizen Alliance Project. Forum attendees supported our efforts to achieve a greater US EPA focus in the Four Corners Region. The next day I also attended the Four Corners Air Quality Forum in which members of our League have participated actively in the past. There was some overlap in the meetings, but the latter focused heavily on understanding the model that predicated improvement in air quality based on mitigation efforts that came from earlier Task Force reports.

I had an opportunity to speak with Senator Bennet in Durango recently regarding health care reform. He met with several folks at Mercy who deliver services in LaPlata and Montezuma County. SWMH physicians and senior leadership as well as two Board members spoke and Senator Bennet listened well to our comments. A photo of several of us from Montezuma County and accompanying article made the front page of the Herald. If you've already contacted our representatives - John Salazar, Michael Bennet and Mark Udall - contact them **again** !!!

— *Jodi Foran*

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. Subsequent expansion of the study will result in a request from the Committee for our League to help gather local information. If you would like to help gather sustainability information for LWVMZC, contact Eric Janes or Jodi Foran.

The following is from the LWV of California Study that LWVCO will probably leverage heavily

<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/issues/suscomm/suscommmap.html>

The concept of Sustainability is implicit in the Principles of the League of Women Voters. League positions are in compliance with the fundamental principle of sustainability, recognizing the interdependency among issues of public policy, and the impact of current decisions on the global welfare of future generations.

"Sustainable thinking" calls for integrating the goals of the separate League program areas. As a result, the problems or issues to be resolved may be seen in a different light, and new means of resolution may be indicated.

Definition

Sustainable communities recognize their interdependence with the global community and seek to meet current economic, environmental, and social demands through equitable and democratic means without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In sustainable communities, levels of pollution, consumption, and population size are in keeping with regional carrying capacity; their members share an ethic of responsibility to one another and to future generations; the full social and environmental costs of production, provision, and disposal of goods and services are acknowledged; their systems of governance and leadership encourage democratic deliberation; and their systems of urban planning enhance neighborhood livability and preserve ecological integrity.

GENERAL STATEMENT

Sustainability refers to the dynamic among ecological, economic, and social systems on a global scale. It demands consideration of the interactions among positions in different program areas. League positions speak of preservation and conservation, of stewardship, of considering long-term benefits and meeting future needs.

Principles of sustainability are reflected in most League program areas, although often they are implicit rather than explicit.

With respect to **government**, positions support policies that promote equity, flexibility, and responsibility so that democratic government is encouraged and protected.

With respect to **natural resources**, positions support protection and wise management in the public interest to promote an environment beneficial to life.

With respect to **social policy**, positions promote the equity, justice, education, and nurturing essential to a sustainable society.

Using League Positions

Sustainability has many definitions with a common theme: meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. In focusing on the complex interrelationship among Earth's systems, the concept ties together many League positions and reiterates League program goals.

- Sustainable development depends on the integration of social, economic, and environmental goals.
- Sustainable governing policies and practices recognize the interdependence of environmental, social, and economic impacts, and provide for long-term protection of natural and social resources. These interrelationships are reflected in the use of "*full-cost accounting*" that assesses all direct and indirect economic, environmental, and social costs of production and programs.
- Sustainable governance decisions are based on comprehensive information and evaluation, and encourage public and individual responsibility for maintaining a

healthy ecology.

- Democratic sustainable governance relies upon public participation in decision making.

Integrating League Positions

For purposes of clarity and depth, League studies have traditionally focused on specific, and deliberately narrowed topics. The resulting positions often omit consideration of interrelationships or, at least, leave them unstated. Action decisions, therefore, may involve examination of a number of relevant positions and consideration of overlapping issues and impacts. It may be necessary to set priorities and make choices among competing near-term objectives. Long-term goals should not be in competition.

History of the Concept

1972: The UN held the first conference on Human Development in Stockholm. The concept of sustainable development emerged from concerns of developing countries about the overconsumption and waste in developed countries.

1987: The UN convened the World Commission on Environment and Development which wrote the report, "Our Common Future" (also referred to as the Brundtland Report). This report emphasizes the links between growth, economics, technology, and the environment. Sustainable development is recommended as a solution to worldwide resource degradation and the resulting threat of economic collapse. The Brundtland Report was the first to define sustainable development.

1992: The UN Conference on Environmental Development met and addressed the gross

inequities that still existed between developed and developing nations and declared that the capacity of the Earth's ability to provide resources and handle wastes was fast approaching its limits. The Earth Summit created "Action 21," a plan for the 90's and beyond which included strategies to halt environmental degradation and to promote sustainable development in all countries.

1995: The U.S. President's Council on Sustainable Development made policy recommendations that included the education of citizens about consumer practices that lead to more sustainable lifestyles.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development identified goals or "shared aspirations" necessary for achieving sustainability and organized them into ten categories:

- Health and the Environment
- Economic Prosperity
- Equity
- Conservation of Nature
- Stewardship
- Sustainable Communities
- Civic Engagement
- Population
- International Responsibility
- Education

The Council warned that these categories "are truly interdependent and flow from the Council's understanding that *it is essential to seek economic prosperity, environmental*

protection, and social equity together. The achievement of any one goal is not enough to ensure that future generations will have at least the same opportunities to live and prosper that this generation enjoys: all are needed."

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?

The LWVMZC has invited Carol Hedges, Senior Fiscal 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.

Four Corners Air Quality Group Update

The focus of the Four Corners Air Quality Group (4CAQG) meeting August 27 was the report of the modeling of five ozone mitigation scenarios drawn from recommendations of the 4CAQ Task Force's

2007 report. The full modeling report is available at www.4cornersair.org. The purpose of the modeling was to determine whether various types of controls on nitrogen oxide (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) emissions from power plants and oil and gas production units would reduce amounts of ground level ozone and/or improve visibility at Mesa Verde. The sophisticated modeling used emissions and meteorological data from 2005 and projected results for 2018 including a do nothing scenario. Results showed that the mitigation scenario using controls on power plants and oil and gas production for both NOx and VOCs would likely bring down ozone levels slightly, keeping us under the current EPA limit of 75 ppb. A significant problem is the large base amounts of ozone not within our control, coming from outside our area and/or from wildfire, etc. Another confounding factor is that not only is ozone produced by NOx and VOCs reacting in heat and sunlight, but NOx also cannibalizes ozone in some circumstances, so as you reduce NOx, you can inadvertently increase ozone levels, creating hotspots. Visibility was slightly improved but not so much that the naked eye would notice it. There is no doubt that the issue is very complicated and that as we struggle to stay within attainment for ozone, we don't have much flexibility due to the large amount of ozone resulting from factors outside our control. On the other hand, state officials now dealing with ozone nonattainment in the Front Range assert that even bringing down ozone levels by 1-3 ppb is very significant.

—Marilyn Brown LWVLPC

HELP? HELP!!!

We still need: a Voter Service co-chair and a Public Relations chair.

Help is needed with:

Education Forum Planning with Dick Hoover in late Fall.

Health Care Hot Topic meetings with Eleanor and Jodi in early Fall.

Helping plan Great Decisions Meetings with LuAnn Burkett which we hope to begin in 2009-2010. To begin in October or November.

Contact Jodi Foran, jodi@foran.net or 882-2401 if you can help us out. The League has wonderful support for leadership development in these areas. You don't go it alone!

Health Care Update

If you've already contacted our representatives: John Salazar, Michael Bennet and Mark Udall, contact them again !!!

As with any legislation, the more constituents they hear from, the more they are influenced to vote a certain way. Let them know we *have* to have reform now: the status quo is unsustainable financially. We must have access to quality, affordable care with a *public plan option*. *The legislation must* address cost containment. State some of the issues of rural health care ie not having enough primary care physicians and that rural providers and hospitals need grants to keep up with technology.

Jill Patton, LWVLPC, has identified Kaiser Family Foundation site: <http://healthreform.kff.org>

that provides a good description of all aspects of the debate. From the main page, you can read a side-by-side comparison of the various proposals. LWVUS has provided white papers that you can link to from our website www.lwvmontezuma.org.

League Day – September 26, 9- 3 in Denver

Let's carpool to attend this stimulating meeting and connect with Leaguers across the state! We will understand better the value of the state League.

Four exceptional speakers have been scheduled for League Day in Denver and will cover some priority topics of the League:

Allison Eid - CO State Supreme Court Justice, judicial issues and diversity in the judicial system;

Alicia Archibald - Pueblo Sustainability Planner, community sustainability;

Irene Aguilar, M.D. - president, Health Care for All Colorado, understanding CO healthcare financing and reform

Maranda Pleau - from the Governor's office, on Federal Stimulus money, where it is going, how it is monitored and its effect on the state budget.

The session will be held at the Holiday Inn Select in Denver.

New Papers from LWVUS Health Care Committee

"The Evolution of the Health Care System in the United States"

"The Impact of Preexisting Conditions on the Individual and the Community"

www.lwv.org click on Health Care (left margin), then Get Informed under Background Papers (right margin)

Report surveys Four Corners air quality

By Susan Montoya Bryan The Associated Press
Posted: 07/22/2009 12:00:00 AM MDT

ALBUQUERQUE — A new study shows that reducing emissions from coal-fired power plants and oil and gas operations in the Four Corners region would help lower ozone pollution levels.

The air quality modeling study was prepared for the New Mexico Environment Department as part of a long-term effort to inventory pollution sources and develop strategies for managing the region's air quality.

Environmentalists on Tuesday pointed to the report as evidence that the region — where New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Utah meet — should focus on trimming emissions and developing renewable energy sources if it wants to continue to meet federal air quality standards.

"This report confirms that dirty energy is taking a dangerous toll on clean air and public health in the Four Corners," said Jeremy Nichols, director of WildEarth Guardians' climate and energy program.

The report shows that power plants and oil and gas operations account for most of the region's ozone which cause pollution. Ozone, the primary component of smog, can irritate the respiratory system, reduce lung capacity and aggravate asthma. It's formed when nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds react with sunlight.

While northwestern New Mexico has been on the verge of exceeding the federal ozone standard of 0.075 parts per millions, ozone levels have been exceptionally low so far this year, said Josephine Ball, quality assurance manager with the Environment Department's Air Quality Bureau.

Cooler temperatures and moist weather have played a role keeping the levels in check, and Ball said there's anecdotal evidence that less industrial activity in the region may have resulted in fewer pollutants being emitted.

The report also considered five scenarios for improving the region's air quality, including controlling nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants and limiting nitrogen oxide and volatile organic compound emissions from oil and gas operations.

The most promising scenario — a combination of limiting emissions from both the power plants and oil and gas — would reduce the ozone level by 5 to 10 ppm depending on the time of year, according to the report.

The Air Quality Bureau recently proposed changing New Mexico regulations in an effort to meet the federal ozone standard. The proposals include requiring operators to reduce emissions from compressor engines and other equipment at oil and natural gas well sites.

State Newsletter Sent to You Via E-mail

A reminder that 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 with which you are affiliated.

Calendar

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
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	
Thursday, 8	Four Corner Air Quality and Health Forum, 7-9 p.m. 130 Noble Hall, FLC Sponsored by LWVLP and LWVMZC
08/12/09	Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 9:30 a.m.

Board

Membership	Betty Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net
50 Year Member	Llois Stein 565-9565 llois@msn.com
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