



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.

In This Issue

| | |
|---|----|
| Mark Your Calendar | 1 |
| President's Message | 2 |
| LWVCO Sustainability Study | 2 |
| Why We Must Have Health Care Reform... Quick Facts..... | 3 |
| Follow what is going on in the Legislature..... | 3 |
| League Publications | 3 |
| League Legislative Conference..... | 4 |
| Educational: LWVUS Arms Control Task Force..... | 4 |
| Advocacy: LWVUS & Joe Leiberan..... | 4 |
| 2010 Ballot Issues Are Already in the News! | 4 |
| 2010 Census Key Dates..... | 5 |
| Census 2010 and Redistricting..... | 5 |
| December Holiday Potluck at Llois Stein's Home | 6 |
| Program Planning Recommendations?..... | 6 |
| Membership Briefings..... | 7 |
| Join Us..... | 7 |
| Spread the Word..... | 7 |
| New Members..... | 8 |
| THINK BEFORE YOU INK | 8 |
| Calendar | 10 |
| Board | 11 |
| Have you sent in your membership renewal? | 11 |

Mark Your Calendar

Jan 11, Monday

10:00 a.m. Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center.
11:00 a.m. General Public Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center. Census 2010 distribution of material and discussion of League "Concurrence" for Sustainability Study. Brown Bag OK.

Jan 23, Saturday

Great Decisions Discussion Group organizational meeting, Dolores Library, 10:30 am. 2010 Topics.

Jan 25, Monday

Great Decisions Discussion Group organizational meeting, Mancos Library, 10:30 am. 2009 Topics.

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 New Year is coming at us quickly! With what is planned for our League, we'll have a busy year. I'm always surprised by other unplanned events and activities that come our way for consideration. A Leaguer's plate can be quite full and it is a lesson to learn to successfully say "no, not at this time"

We provide Montezuma County a different kind of non-profit organization and it's important our League thrives in this County!

I think our League will find the LWVCO's Sustainability Study thought-provoking. It is so timely for our County! Montezuma Climate Action Network(M-CAN) has partnered with 4Core in Durango, an organization that contracted with Governor's Energy Office to help five Southwest Colorado counties develop a county sustainability plan. It is this plan that will provide a baseline for further funding. Many Leaguers are on M-CAN's 8 member Steering Committee – Chris Foran, Susan Thomas, Betty Janes and myself that there will definitely be synergistic energy and shared information on the "Sustainability" front.

The proposal to EPA is just about ready for public announcement. All 4 state League Boards have endorsed our efforts and LWVUS is excited and supportive. As the Navajo Nation has recently undergone leadership re-alignment, we have had challenges in contacting the appropriate Navajo personnel about our EPA proposal, and we want to do so before we actually approach EPA.

Many thanks to all the members who have renewed their memberships. We're still missing a few so please remember to renew. We do miss you!

As a Census 2010 partner our League's efforts will be primarily to educate and to advocate citizens to participate in completing their Census 2010 forms. To this end we will be running a

series of articles about the Census in this newsletter; sending similar articles to newspapers and other community organization newsletters; assist in displaying and distributing Census promotional materials; help sponsor community events to promote the Census, and issue a public endorsement for the 2010 Census.

Why all this fuss? Every year, more than \$300 billion in federal funds are awarded to states and communities based on census data. Census data guide local decision-makers in important community planning efforts, including where to build new roads, hospitals and schools, and it affects your voice in Congress. The census determines how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives as well as the redistricting of state legislatures, county and city councils, and voting districts.

Our League is initiating two (yes two!) Great Decisions Discussion Groups. The Mancos Library Group will study the 2009 Topics and the Group meeting at the Dolores Library Group will study 2010 topics. The groups are meeting at different times and some of you might want to attend both groups. See the accompanying flyers for topic reviews. Please print several flyers to post when you shop.

Happy New Year!

— *Jodi Foran*

LWVCO Sustainability Study

The LWVCO program committee has compiled already nearly twenty articles and papers to stimulate the state's study on sustainability. Summary goals of the study include:

1. Review sustainability definitions and what sustainability means to us
2. Examine sustainability examples in communities, business, government and social and environmental policies

3. Determine how League positions use sustainability, and how we can fit the definition of sustainability into League's action program.

Should we take into account the principle of sustainability when studying and reaching a position on any governmental policy and legislation?

Is representative democracy sustainable given the enormous funding of lobbyists at all levels?

The proposed League definition is "Sustainability is a way of life which seeks a balance in meeting current environment, economic and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the same goal. "

We will begin our local study at February 8 meeting (11am at the Colorado Visitor's Center). It is important that participants in the study read the papers prior to the meeting so that we have the same knowledge base and vocabulary. Only League members can participate in the March consensus discussion. Go to www.lwvmontezuma.org to read or download the papers.

Why We Must Have Health Care Reform... Quick Facts

• The Battle is not Over

- Americans spend twice as much as any other country on health care: \$2.1 trillion in 2007.
- The US is ranked 37th in quality health care – we're not getting our money's worth.
- Health insurance premiums are increasing more than four times faster than the increase in wages.

- Last year more than 47 million Americans did not have health insurance and the number is rising.
- The US is the only major industrialized country in the world that does not guarantee affordable health care for its citizens.

League of Women Voters of Piedmont Triad, NC

Follow what is going on in the Legislature

Colorado provides its residences an informative website to follow legislative bills: hearings, posting of the bill's progress. In addition, LWVCO has a part time lobbyist and a cadre of dedicated and well-informed volunteer Leaguers, most from the eastern slope who keep us informed on League interests.

Keep informed of issues League supports and what is happening with bills in the State Legislature by accessing them at www.lwvcolorado.org Go to the menu button, "League Positions" and click on Legislative Letters.

League Publications

Both the League of Women Voters US and the League of Women Voters of Colorado published booklets detailing the positions taken at the respective League level. New members receive copies of both. The new LWVUS ***Impact On Issues 2008-2010*** Includes the official statements of position for each program area, briefly traces significant past actions and achievements, and

indicates links among League position statements and background. This 86 page publication can be downloaded from www.lwv.org or ordered from national. The LWVCO booklet is not on line and must be ordered from the state office. See Jodi first who has a couple of extra copies.

League Legislative Conference

If you are in the Denver area Monday, January 25, consider attending the League Legislative Conference, 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m., with lunch included in fee of \$26.

VENUE: Colorado History Museum, Boettcher Auditorium, 1300 Broadway, Denver

Seating is limited to 150 people and you must register by January 13 – contact the state office.

An Education Panel considers the topics of charter schools, Fiscal Policy Issues, Reapportionment 2010 and League Lobbyist Update of Legislation

Educational: LWVUS Arms Control Task Force

Over the past months, the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force has been reviewing the League's 1983 Position on Arms Control for "relevance, usefulness and practical application." While the Task Force has been working to identify and review a number of specific issues, it has also been writing informational papers. There are two new papers on the LWVUS web site. Go to www.lwv.org, click on the *For Members* section, then click on *Projects and Programs*.

Advocacy: LWVUS & Joe Lieberman

As part of its advocacy efforts surrounding health care reform and the public option, the LWVUS has launched a new campaign urging Senator Lieberman (I-CT) to reverse his stance and support the public option. With money from an anonymous donor, the League has developed a radio ad to air on selected stations in Connecticut. A similar campaign is also on the League's facebook page and at www.lwv.org

2010 Ballot Issues Are Already in the News!

Colorado is known for the numerous ballot initiatives that are voted on in even numbered years. Many of the initiatives are financed primarily from out of state because Colorado is a bellwether state for many policy initiatives. Petitioners are already hard at work to get approval for their 2010 issues. Three proposed ballot issues that severely limit the state's ability to spend and finance public services have been submitted to the Secretary of State's Office with more than the required number of signatures. These measures are severe in their limitations and could push Colorado fiscal policies back by 10 years or more. The LWVCO and the Colorado Bar Association have reviewed these issues and have voted to oppose them along with The Bell Policy Center, the Colorado Education Association, the Colorado Municipal League, Great Education Colorado. LWVCO volunteers are following the process of the initiatives being on the 2010 state ballot.

2010 Census Key Dates

February – March 2010 Census questionnaires mailed to households.

March – April 2010 Census questionnaires are available at select public sites for individuals who did not receive one by mail.

April 1, 2010 CENSUS DAY

May – July 2010 Census takers visit only households that did not return a questionnaire by mail.

Dec. 31, 2010 By law Census Bureau delivers population counts to the President.

March 2011 – By law, the Census Bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to states.

Our League received a \$2900 grant from Census 2010 to purchase cloth shopping bags and to distribute them in January and February to Montezuma and Dolores county residents to promote an effective response to Census 2010. Hopefully, this year our County will respond better than it did in 2000 with a 45% compliance in completing household questionnaires. We will partner with social service agencies and churches to distribute the bags and flyers and will speak to local groups to emphasize the need to complete the April 1 Census questionnaire. We will not be visiting homes and conducting surveys. The bags have the League logo swash and our League name along with the slogans of Census 2010 “**It’s Easy**”, **It’s Important**”, **It’s Safe**”. Look for them. Leaguers who attend the January and February meetings will receive a bag to promote Census 2010 efforts.

Census 2010 and Redistricting

Why does the Constitution requires a decennial census and how do the numbers impact reapportionment, redistricting and federal funding? You know that the reason to be sure to send in your census form is to enable the county, tribe, state, etc., to get as much money as possible back from the federal government for certain programs. As a Census 2010 Partner our efforts will be primarily to educate and to advocate that citizens participate by completing the questionnaire.

Every year, more than \$300 billion in federal funds are awarded to states and communities based on census data. That’s more than \$3 trillion distributed over a 10-year period. Census data guide local decision-makers in important community planning efforts, including where to build new roads, hospitals and schools.

Census data affect our voice in Congress. The census determines how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives as well as the redistricting of state legislatures, county and city councils, and voting districts.

The Census Bureau will provide promotional materials, regular updates and data assistance to us in this effort. Together, through this partnership, efforts can ensure the 2010 Census message is delivered to every corner of the county. **The Goal is to achieve a complete and accurate 2010 Census.**

There are many ways our League can get involved and support the 2010 Census:

- Use 2010 Census drop-in articles, messages and logos in newsletters, mailings, and other in-

house communications (e-mail, Web site, etc.).

- Encourage residents to complete and mail their questionnaire.
 - Display and/or distribute 2010 Census promotional materials.
 - Provide volunteers for census promotional events
 - Put the 2010 Census on the agenda at meetings
 - Sponsor community events to promote participation in the 2010 Census.
 - Allow the Census Bureau to post your League" name on the 2010 Census Web site.
 - Link to the 2010 Census Web site from our Leagues' Web site.
 - Use and distribute Census 2010 educational materials.
 - Participate in a speakers bureau for the 2010 .Census.
 - Issue a public endorsement for the 2010 Census.
 - Place 2010 Census articles in your newspapers.
 - Write census editorials.
 - Highlight key 2010 Census operational events in newsletters or other publications.
-

December Holiday Potluck at Llois Stein's Home

There were lots of laughs and camaraderie at the holiday December potluck dinner at Llois' home. In spite of large and numerous snow flakes falling at the scheduled time many folks attended and brought an abundance of food. We shared interesting conversation and the season's good will.

Thank you, Llois. You were a wonderful hostess.

Program Planning Recommendations?

The League of Women Voters is a grassroots organization. At the local, state and national League levels, action on public policy is taken only after member study and consensus or, alternatively, member concurrence, has led to a position. With this in mind, this is the time of the year to initiate the process of program planning at all levels. Our local positions are reviewed and can be expanded annually. On a National Level, this happens on the even numbered years, so 2010 is our year.

I am a list server participate of "Program Planning" and for several weeks Leagues across the country have been asking for support of a national study on the following new topics to be considered at 2010 convention in Atlanta:

- Study of federal role in education
- Civics education (pretty much relegated to an action item)
- Cabinet Department of Peace

- Update of arms control position (an LWVUS task force is working on this now)
- Election of Senators (to fill vacancies)
- Nuclear energy and waste

At our January 11 General meeting at 11 a.m. we'll discuss current state and local League positions. We can decide to retain, discontinue, and undertake updates and/or action on certain issues. We will discuss proposals for any new study a member may wish to present. The results of this meeting will determine our local program for 2009–2010, given Board approval.

Please review the LWVUS publication, *Positions in Brief, Impact on Issues* that can be downloaded from www.LWV.org. and come with your ideas as to what we should study during the next biennium.

Last year LWVMZC decided it would not suggest new studies for 2009, and would continue with those we were involved with. In regards to new local studies, we talked about the need to be more in touch with efforts at the county level – County Observer Corp! New topics were not adopted for study at the local level. It was the consensus that we continue to study the following topics: 1) Health Care Reform, 2) Climate Change, 3) State fiscal policy. Since then we are participating in the LWVCO Sustainability Study. Do we want to change any of our priorities at the January meeting?

Membership Briefings

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter we need your membership renewals. Whether you're an inactive, sustaining member, able to

attend monthly meetings, or want to take the next step and get involved in a study or committee, NOW is the time to write your membership check if you haven't for 2010.

We're not where we want to be in numbers of League supporters and members. We welcome both active and inactive members recognizing that many folks are very busy these days. Thanks to all who have continued to renew their membership for 2010! For those of you who have yet renewed, please do so. Your support is needed and always appreciated!! Thanks, too, to those who have contributed more funds than dues required.

Join Us

Join the League of Women Voters to help make your community a strong, safe and vibrant place to live. The League offers a different way to dialogue in Montezuma County!! Help shape the important issues that affect you and your family.

Memberships are still \$50 per individual; \$80 for households. For more information call Betty Janes at 533-1051, info@lwvamontezuma.org, use the form on our website or in this newsletter. Please send your dues to Denis Boon. We count on your support and appreciate your contributions. See our website and complete the membership form if you are new!

Spread the Word

Our LWV Board issues a special challenge to our League members –

bring a new member to League.

How can we do this?

- LWVUS reminds us that there are lots of places we can put out the welcome mat for League membership:
- Think about the personal gatherings you attend or other groups you belong to (e.g., book clubs, investment groups, issue groups) and share stories about the LWV and its value to you and the community.
- Don't forget to ask individuals to join – even those with already busy schedules. Remember the adage, “If you want something done, ask a busy person.” It's true! **Let them decide if they have the time and resources to support the League.**

New Members

We welcome to new members Tonia Gurnea and Denise Reib.

THINK BEFORE YOU INK

The following has been published before in our newsletter, but it is a timely reminder.

LWVCO is encouraging the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative petitions.

Voters will be asked to sign a variety of initiative petitions “just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it”. The League is

telling voters: **“Your signature is very valuable,** considering that far fewer signatures are required to qualify a petition for the ballot than voters to pass it on the ballot. **Only sign an initiative petition that you believe belongs on the ballot.”**

In 2008 the largest number of initiatives, 16, appeared on the ballot. This number could go even higher in 2010.

Consider six questions voters can ask themselves to help determine whether or not to sign an initiative petition:

Is it complex? Some issues can be decided by a simple **yes** or **no** vote. Complex issues may need to be thoroughly examined and debated in a legislative arena.

Is it confusing? Some initiatives are not well written or contain conflicts that may require court resolution or interpretation. This costs the taxpayers additional money to resolve these issues.

Does it belong in the Constitution? If an initiative amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Is it a fundamental law that should be protected from change? Correcting a constitutional amendment requires another constitutional amendment – another vote of the people – and is cumbersome and costly.

How will it be funded? Is it an “unfunded mandate” that would require the Legislature to take funds from other essential programs? Consider the effect on the overall flexibility of a government budget with

already limited revenue. An initiative should generally create its own revenue source, and not earmark, restrict or obligate a specific percentage of the General Fund revenues.

Who is behind it? You can find out who are the real sponsors and opponents of a petition drive. Contribution and expenditure reports are available through the Election Center at the Secretary of State's Office at 303-894-2200 or at <http://www.sos.state.co.us>.

Before you sign, ask to see identification of the signature gatherer. All signature gatherers are now required to wear a badge that identifies them as a "volunteer circulator" or a "paid circulator". If the signature gatherer is a paid circulator, his/her badge should also give the name and phone number of who hired him/her. If the petition signature gatherer is not wearing a badge, do not sign the petition.

The League of Women Voters of Colorado is a grassroots, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government in order to build better communities statewide. More information can be found on the website at www.lwvcolorado.org

–Marge Fisch,
LWVCO Communication Director

Calendar

| January | |
|-----------------|--|
| Saturday,9 | Climate Change & Ethics by Carol Curtis, Cortez Cultural Center 2 pm. Mancos Library 7 pm |
| Monday, 11 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Monday, 11 | General Public Meeting, Census 2010 distribution of material and discussion of League "Concurrence" for Sustainability Study. Brown Bag OK. |
| Saturday, 23 | Great Decisions Discussion Group organizational meeting, Dolores Library, 10:30 a. 2010 topics to be discussed. See www.lwvmontezuma for more information. LouAnn Burkett and Janet Chaney will facilitate. |
| Monday, 25 | Great Decisions Discussion Group organizational meeting, Mancos Library, 10:30 a. 2009 topics to be discussed. See www.lwvmontezuma for more information. Kate Kearns, Assistant Librarian and Jodi Foran will facilitate. |
| Monday, 25 | LWVCO Legislative Conference |
| February | |
| Monday, 8 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Monday, 8 | General Public Meeting, First part of Sustainability Study. Brown Bag OK. |
| Sunday, 14 | Happy 90th Birthday League!! |
| Saturday 20 | Legislative Lowdown with Senator Bruce Whitehead, Representative Scott Tipton and Representative Ellen Roberts. |

| March | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, 3 | LWVCO Board Meeting, Denver |
| Monday, 8 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Monday, 8 | General League Meeting for members only, Second part of Sustainability Study when "Concurrence" is voted upon. Brown Bag OK. |
| April | |
| Thursday, 1 | Census 2010 |
| Monday, 12 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Monday, 12 | General Public Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 11:00 a.m. View and discuss. |
| May | |
| Saturday,1 | Annual Meeting, |
| Wednesday, 5 | LWVCO Board Meeting |
| Monday, 12 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Friday – Saturday, 21-22 | LWVCO Council, LWV Estes Park |
| June | |
| Friday – Tuesday, 11-15 | LWVUS Convention in Atlanta |

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..... | |
| 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 |
| Hospitality | Marcia Boon 565-7668 marciaboon@msn.com |

Have you sent in your membership renewal?

We need every one of you...

**Call Betty Janes, 533-1051
ejanes@frontier.net.**

Send the membership form to Denis Boon.

Our goal is 27 members for 2010



League of Women Voters of Montezuma County 2010 Membership Form

Name _____
 Date _____
 e-mail _____
 Phone [h] _____ [w] _____ [cell] _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

The \$50 membership fee supports the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Colorado for their studies, voter education and advocacy on your behalf.

Dues are payable in September and renewed each year.

| Dues Amounts: | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Regular dues..... | \$50 _____ |
| Additional household member(s)* ... | \$30 _____ |
| TOTAL..... | \$ _____ |

Please give names and email addresses of the other members of your household who are joining:

Please make checks payable to “**LWVMZC**” and mail with this form to:

Denis Boon, Treasurer
 LWV of Cortez-Montezuma
 14030 Road 21
 Cortez, CO 81321