

Denton VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Denton, Texas
Established 1961

P.O. Box 424945 TWU Station
Denton, Texas 76204

January 2007

Sue Smith, President
Ken Ferstl, VOTER Editor

www.lwvdenton.org

CALENDAR

Thursday, January 25, 7 p.m. General Meeting. Speaker: County Judge Mary Horn. Environmental Education, Science and Technology Building, University of North Texas campus. Hickory at Avenue B. Room 176.

Sunday, February 4, 3 p.m. Board Meeting. Home of Peg La Point, 1900 Highland Park Circle. Members are welcome to attend Board meetings.

Thursday, February 22, 7 p.m. General Meeting. Speaker: Mia Price, Denton Independent School District Board President.

HOT OFF THE PRESS: A NEW YEO

An updated brochure *Your Elected Officials* (YEO) for Denton County is included for our members with this issue of the Denton VOTER. Thanks to Kevin Carr who helped Sondra Ferstl research the changes in officials and to Byron Witmer who also did the computer formatting of final copy.

Ken and Sondra Ferstl have distributed YEOs to the three libraries of the Denton Public Library, the academic libraries at the University of North Texas and Texas Woman's University, the recreation and senior centers, the Voter Registration Office, the City Manager's Office, and the Chamber of Commerce. Finance Drive letters will include a copy of this brochure for potential donors to LWV-Denton or LWV-Texas Education Fund.

JUDGE MARY HORN TO TALK ABOUT COUNTY ISSUES

Our speaker on January 25 will be Denton County Judge Mary Horn. We have asked Judge Horn to give us a "State of the County" report and discuss issues which she believes will be of most importance to the County in the upcoming year.

Please join us and come prepared with your questions for Judge Horn.

Peg La Point, Program VP

DECEMBER MEETING ELICITS IDEAS FOR PRESENTATIONS

The League enjoyed a festive gathering, attended by a large number of members. We discussed possible subjects for presentations at our meetings in the 2007-2008 season. Thanks to all who participated and contributed.

The following is a list of subjects of interest to the group. The Board will try to accommodate members as far as possible. If you have an area of interest that is not listed below, please contact a member of the Board.

- An examination of City boards and commissions
- The safety and accuracy of electronic voting machines
- Natural gas wells in Denton County
- Regional water planning

- Denton County Transportation Authority update
- Merit pay for teachers in Denton, with emphasis on “Building 40”
- The impact of new math and science requirements in secondary schools
- A tour of the DISD Advanced Technology Wing

We ran out of time and did not address two questions asked in advance of the meeting. If you can make any suggestions on the following, please contact a member of the Board:

How might we better publicize our activities?

How might we better recognize our non-member contributors?

Peg La Point, Program VP

PRESIDENT’S PODIUM

You will have many opportunities to say “yes” to LWV-Denton in the next few weeks. The first chance in 2007 will be our general meeting January 25 with County Judge Mary Horn who will be speaking on the “State of the County.” Please attend and bring a friend to hear her comments and then participate in the question and answer part of the meeting.

The nominating committee will be meeting soon. If you receive a call from them, please say “yes” and I promise satisfaction guaranteed or your “money” back. I’ve always thought Board members have the most fun.

Last but not least, you will have a chance to make a monetary contribution to the League when Finance Drive letters are mailed in February. We literally could not operate without your support.

Sue Smith

FEBRUARY IS FINANCE DRIVE MONTH!

Why February? Because, according to the LWV-Texas, February is the month of the founding of the League of Women Voters but better than that, February is the month of LOVE and we all LOVE the LWV!

With that in mind, you will be receiving a solicitation letter during February and we ask you to give generously. As you recall, we adopted a 2006-2007 budget of \$6,526. We depend upon the contributions of our members and friends alike to fund our activities. Your contributions enable us to publish *Your Elected Officials* and local *Voters Guides* and to purchase *Voters Guides* from LWV-Texas Education Fund when appropriate. Membership dues also fund our activities, so encourage friends (men and women) to become members of the League.

If you would like to help with the Finance Drive, stuffing and addressing envelopes, writing thank you notes, etc., please contact Linnie McAdams at lmccadams@verizon.net. You can also help by giving us the names of people you think might contribute to the organization..

We deeply appreciate your support of the League of Women Voters of Denton. We cannot exist without your help.

Linnie McAdams and Marilyn Smith,
Finance Drive Co-chairs

IMMIGRATION: MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

LWVUS has adopted a study of immigration policy as a national study for the next three years. In March 2007 our local League will present an educational program for our members and the general public on immigration issues. In the meantime, here’s more food for thought. (See next page)

“Immigration is essential to advancing vital American interests in the 21st century. To maximize the benefits and mitigate the strains caused by immigration, the United States needs a new immigration policy and system for a new era.

Three times in our history, the United states has experienced ‘peak periods’ of large-scale immigration that coincided with transformative economic change. Today, we are living through a fourth peak period, as globalization prompts the United States to complete the transformation from a manufacturing to a knowledge-based economy. With over 14 million newcomers, legal and illegal, the 1990s ranks numerically as the highest immigration decade in American history; the current decade will almost certainly surpass it.”

From the Executive Summary, Immigration and America’s Future: A New Chapter (Migration Policy Institute 2006), p. xiii.

WAR ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The following information was written by Suzanne Wills, Drug Policy Observer, LWV-Dallas, and published in the Dallas VOTER. Peg La Point has condensed the article for our Denton VOTER.

Growers of coca and opium cleared 2.3 million hectares of rainforest to create new fields for cultivation between 1982 and 2002 according to Rand Beers, Asst. Secretary of State. One quarter of all Amazonian deforestation was a result of the illegal drug trade. Remote, biodiverse spots make ideal bases for narcotics production and trafficking.

To destroy these crops the U.S. government has sprayed vast quantities of high-potency glyphosate (a chemical in Roundup) over hundreds of thousands of acres in Colombia’s remote forests, one of the most delicate and biodiverse ecosystems in the world. Ecologists are very worried about the effects of the herbicide. Glyphosate is

alleged to increase the size of colonies of the fungus *Fusarium*, a genus of toxic moulds usually held in check by other microbes. The *Fusarium* mould has been strongly implicated in the death of massive numbers of frogs in Amazonia.

Over 8,000 complaints have been filed over erroneous fumigation of food crops in Colombia. According to the American Medical Association, spraying is causing “widespread illnesses, destroying pastures, destroying foodcrops, poisoning livestock, displacing thousands of small farmers, and killing birds, mammals, aquatic life, and natural plants.”

The U.S. government’s 2006 survey showed Columbia now has more acres of coca in cultivation than when the spraying program began.

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MORE EARTH NOTES (Thanks to Peg La Point for providing these.)

The manufacture and disposal of plastic puts a heavy burden on the environment and can leach dangerous chemicals. Minimize use of disposable plastic containers and cling wraps, especially for warm or hot liquids and in the microwave or oven.

Push back: It requires 16 pounds of grain and 2,500 gallons of water to grow a pound of beef. It requires 49 gallons of water to grow a pound of apples.

Paper is precious. Save it by always photocopying on both sides of the sheet; put used sheets in your printer for drafts; use scrap paper for phone messages and notes; keep your copy to one page; use the lightest possible grade. Always recycle and always buy paper with at least 35% *post-consumer* content.

HOW TO JOIN THE LWV-DENTON

Membership dues are now \$25 for an individual member for the remainder of the 2006-2007 League year (until August 31). Household memberships are \$25 for the first member and \$12.50 for each additional member at the same mailing address. Students may join for \$20. Send a check, payable to LWV-Denton, to P.O. Box 424945 TWU Station, Denton, Texas 76204.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DENTON

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