

Denton VOTER

*The League of Women Voters of Denton, Texas
Established 1961*

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

February 2009

Sue Smith, President
Sondra Ferstl, VOTER Editor

www.lwvdenton.org

CALENDAR

Thursday, February 19, 7 p.m. Denton Property Maintenance Codes. Environmental Education Science and Technology Building, Room 176 on the University of North Texas campus, Hickory at Avenue C. Get your hang tag from Peg La Point before parking.

Sunday, March 1, 3 p.m. Board Meeting.
Home of Peg La Point, 1900 Highland Park Circle.

Thursday, March 12, 7 p.m. Year-round school for the Denton ISD: how it could work. This is an added general meeting for us.

Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m. Redistricting.
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PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODES

The city is currently creating a new set of codes to govern the maintenance of property in Denton. This has been a subject of some debate and contention. Although the proposed codes have not yet been approved by the Council, the League needs to hear some of the specifics of the proposals.

The speaker at our February 19 meeting will be Lancine Bentley, the City of Denton Neighborhood Services Supervisor. She will help us become familiar with primary aspects of the proposed new regulations.

Peg La Point, Program VP

LEAGUE CONSENSUS ON CITY COUNCIL TERM LIMITS ANNOUNCED

The Board of Directors of LWV-Denton has reached consensus on clarifying certain issues dealing with Article II, Section 2.01, c, of the City Charter. The charter currently reads:

All members of the council and the mayor shall be elected for two-year terms and shall not be eligible for election to more than three (3) consecutive two-year terms, such terms to commence with the first two-year term to which such member or mayor is elected after the adoption of this section.

The League offers the following clarifications:

A councilperson may serve a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms in a single position.

A councilperson who has served the maximum of three consecutive two-year terms may then serve a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms in another position.

The mayor shall be elected for two-year terms and shall not be eligible for election to more than three consecutive two-year terms. (Continued next page)

(Term limits from previous page)
Prior service as a council member shall not count toward the term limits of the mayor.

Denton should retain two-year terms, single-member districts and at-large positions.

There was no consensus reached on the other issues discussed at the January meeting.

PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

Thanks to all who attended our January general meeting on Term Limits for City Council. Peg La Point led us through all the questions in her usual efficient manner and the board approved the consensus given elsewhere in this issue of the Denton VOTER.

Once again Byron Witmer did an outstanding job on our January, 2009 *Your Elected Officials* brochure. Sondra Ferstl organized the distribution of the 1,200 copies that were printed. Kevin Carr posted the document on our web page (www.lwvdenton.org). Ken Ferstl added the second fold to all of the copies and distributed bundles of the brochure to area libraries. Members at the January meeting took bundles for distribution to their acquaintances and to various locations in the community. Sondra and Ken prepared the mailing to members not at the January meeting and elected officials listed in the brochure. One correction should be made. Councilman Christ Watts' email address should be chris.watts@cityofdenton.com.

Our February 19 general meeting on Denton's property maintenance code should prove to be quite interesting. This is a subject overlooked by the majority of the citizens who may not know exactly how much the code affects them.

At our December meeting, there was interest in further discussion about year-round schools. Therefore we have added a second March meeting on Thursday the 12th. Maggie Dodd contacted Dalton Gregory to be our guest speaker. Watch for more details in the March VOTER.

Our March 26 meeting will be on LWV-TX advocacy campaign: An Independent, Bipartisan Redistricting Commission. If you are interested in working on this, I will be happy to forward pertinent information to you. Barbara Coe will be contacting civic leaders and organizations and I will contact the *Denton Record-Chronicle*. LWV-TX is making a concerted effort on this and we certainly want to do our part.

In case you missed the 25 Years Ago column in the Tuesday, February 3 issue of the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, our meeting in February, 1984 on public transportation was included. The last sentence was particularly interesting. Guest speaker Adlene Harrison said, "No matter what system may be decided, the public must be involved." Very appropriate words for the League.

Sue Smith, President

CORRECTION TO HANDBOOK

Maisie Kashka's email address is mkashka@verizon.net.

FEBRUARY IS FINANCE DRIVE

We are in the month of February and that means LWV Finance Drive. We did quite well last year and in spite of countrywide economic problems, we need to do even better this year. That is quite a challenge but if we all pitch in, we will succeed.

I am presently preparing the letters to be mailed to members and friends. We will be mailing our new copy of *Your Elected Officials* to prospective donor friends of the League. Members already have their copies.

Our members have always been a great source of financial support for the League. It is your dollars that make it possible for us to print brochures, voters guides, newsletters, etc. Unlike some organizations, we have only one fundraiser and that is our Finance Drive. So once again I am asking you to respond with your usual generosity. We had many new voters go to the polls this year and we like to think that our voters guides were useful in helping them to select candidates. Please help us continue to provide nonpartisan educational materials that enable citizens to cast informed votes.

We also need the names of persons that you know who might be willing to support the League. Send names and addresses to lmccadams@verizon.net. You may also contact me if you are willing to help with addressing, stuffing, and sealing envelopes.

Linnie McAdams, Organization VP

AN INVITATION TO LEAGUE MEMBERS

The LWV-Denton has received an invitation from the LWV-Plano/Collin County to attend a Luncheon Celebrating Women on Saturday March 28, 2009, 12 noon. The luncheon, a celebration of the 35th Anniversary of the Founding of the LWV-Plano/Collin County, will be held at Ralph & Kacoo's, 401 Central Expressway S, Allen TX 75013. The cost for the event is \$22 per person and reservations should be made by Friday, March 20. Make your check payable to LWV P/CC.

Let President Sue Smith know you are interested in attending (940-3871016 or lwvdenton@earthlink.net). This invitation was sent on February 8 by Sue to Denton League members for whom we have an email address. The email contains the reservation form.

MEMBERSHIP COUNT UP FOR LWV-D

Every January local Leagues across the country report their membership numbers to the national organization. This year LWV-Denton reported 56 members. There are 40 individual members, 7 first household members, 7 second household members, 1 national member, and 1 student member.

Last year we reported 52 members.

Sondra Ferstl, Treasurer

Cap and Auction Will Tackle Global Climate Change

It is critical to pass strong federal legislation as soon as possible. We must reduce our carbon emissions 80% by 2050 in order to avoid the worst impacts of global climate change. If we don't succeed in passing a strong bill this year, it may be impossible to make up for lost time. Environmentalists are struggling to use the "first 100 days" of the new administration to get this legislation through Congress.

Energy efficiency is a source of energy like coal, gas, or nuclear – except instead of drilling for it or blowing up mountaintops to get to it, we can tap into this clean energy source by using ingenuity to do more with the energy we generate: we can work smarter, not harder. The fastest and best way to encourage efficiency and innovation is through legislation that makes waste too expensive to ignore.

What is Cap and Auction, or Cap and Trade?

Cap and trade refers to:

- the establishment of an emissions cap that would limit and reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions in a certain set of economic sectors;
- the creation of a system that turns emissions reductions into equal economic units (generally one ton) that can be then traded like a currency.

Basics

- The most likely mechanism for tackling global warming is a so-called "cap and trade" system, whereby a declining cap is put on total emissions with individual emissions permits being traded amongst emitters. Depending on how it is designed, such a system can be heavily tilted toward the interests of the planet or, as some would prefer, the interests of polluters.
- Right now the carbon industries are lobbying to get a cap and trade deal that would give away carbon permits free of charge to existing polluters, which would bribe the sluggish to do nothing, and slowing down innovation.
- The design of a cap and trade program is critical to its chances of success. Permits to emit carbon must be used for public benefit, not private windfalls. All allowances should be auctioned or otherwise used to benefit the public, not to generate windfall profits for polluting industries. Free allocations, if any, must be limited in size and restricted to a short transition period.
- Revenue raised by permit auctions should be used to promote a clean energy future by investing in the highest-value solutions for emissions reductions first. These funds should not be used to perpetuate dirty, expensive, outdated technologies like coal burning. Allowances and auction revenues should be used to accelerate deployment of the clean energy technologies we have today and to develop the ones we need for tomorrow.
- Auction revenues should also be used to protect low- and moderate-income citizens from rising energy costs and other negative economic impacts, create new jobs, ensure fair treatment for affected workers and their communities, and drive technology transfer to help achieve emissions reductions around the world.

- Enforcement of the rules is essential. Polluters must be strictly held to both short and long-term goals. There must be careful inventory of present pollution levels and accurate measurement of reductions. There must be no loopholes that allow continued releases while making claims of reductions.
- For complete success in a global climate change mitigation plan, any cap and auction program should be carried out in conjunction with the establishment of regulatory programs in 3 areas: a renewable electricity standard, a utility energy efficiency standard, and increased fuel economy standards. A complete solution to global warming is comprised of initiatives in all sectors.

*(adapted from a Dave Hamilton memo, and from Carl Pope's essay here:
<http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2008/2/14/95124/2187>)*

Submitted by Peg La Point, Program VP

LEAGUE LOBBY DAY and STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

Monday, March 9, 2009
State Capitol – Austin

For more information, contact Sue Smith (lwwdenton@earthlink.net)