



IRVING VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF IRVING

Winter 2011

vol. 17 Issue 1 ★ Voter Editor Judy Smith 1802 Puritan Dr. IrvingTX 75061 (972) 251-316 (972) 785 - VOTE

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



A Few Words from Your President

It's time to begin thinking about our Local Elections in May for Mayor, City Council, and School Board. No, it's not too early. My wish is that all voters would become acquainted with the candidates, learn about their goals and concerns, and then vote informed. **Please do**

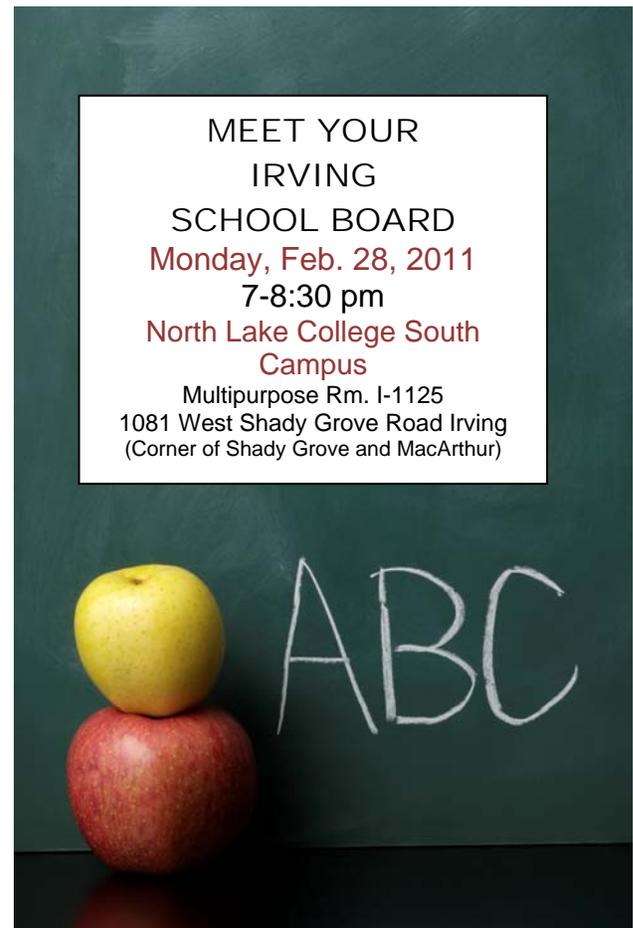
your part! In April we'll do our part, as usual, by having a Candidate's Forum and publishing a *Voters Guide*.

We just completed a very informative study on homeless kids in Irving, learned some dismaying statistics about the kids, and we can now update our 1997 Kids at Risk position. This will allow us to take action to alleviate some of the problems. Upcoming meetings include the opportunity to meet our current Irving School Board Trustees and to learn about the State LWV study about our water resources and concerns. Stay tuned for details. **Please** attend meetings, share your concerns and solutions to problems, and bring prospective members.

We are in the midst of our fundraising campaign, and we need your support. Please respond to the letter from our fundraising committee and be generous. Also, please let us know if you are aware of an organization that would be interested in supporting the League's goals.

Mona Wyatt
President - Irving League of Women Voters

Meeting Alert



Note Up-Coming Dates

- March** Beginning of the LWVTX **Water meetings.** Jan Killen will guide this study in Irving.
- April** **Local Elections** (Filing dates begin February 14 and will end on March 14) Your Irving League will offer our traditional **Candidate's Forum.** Details TBA **Local Convention** Details TBA
- June** **Summer Seminar** organized by the State League



NEWS FROM NATIONAL

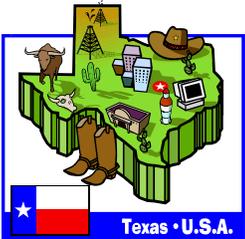
As the country approaches the 2012 elections, the board has appointed committees to focus on work in order to more effectively implement core competencies across the 50

states. Over the next few months, the **Privatization of Government Services Study committee** will be doing research and defining the scope of the study.

Finalization of the study scope is anticipated by June 2011. The board also adopted the following LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011. They are, Clean Air Defense; Health Care Defense; Money in Election (campaign finance reform); Voter Registration and Election Administration. The Legislative Watch list *is as follows: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women); Climate Change; Ethics; Immigration; and Sate Drilling and Mining ("Fracking").

The Watch List means that if an opportunity arises on these issues and does not interfere with action on an advocacy priority, the LWVUS may take action if it appears we can make an impact.* The US League also joins various Leagues on their positions on Education and Elections (they have joined the **Texas League and others on battling Voter Photo ID Bills.)

The Global Democracy Program is considering applying for a government grant that would enable the national office to provide pass through grants to local Leagues for the purpose of providing English language and U.S. history and government classes to legal, permanent residents preparing for the naturalization test. The program is calling on local Leagues whose members are currently carrying out citizenship and English language instruction for the naturalization test.



NEWS FROM THE TEXAS LEAGUE

The LWV-Texas Board selected three key issues on which to concentrate their lobbying efforts for the 82nd Texas Legislature. They will be as follows:

Redistricting, Campaign Finance and a balanced approach to the state budget. Other issues they will lobby for are several items under each of the following categories: Government, Administration of Justice, and Social Policy/Human Resources.

For details www.leaguetexas.com

LOBBY DAYS IN AUSTIN

The 82nd general session of the Texas Legislature signals discussion and action on key issues facing our state. League members can play a crucial role by advocating and lobbying our legislators on Lobby Days.

All League members from throughout the state are cordially invited to participate in **2011 Lobby Days** in Austin on **Monday and Tuesday, March 7 and 8**. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the Capitol, network with fellow League members, learn about advocacy and lobbying, and talk with your respective state representatives and senators.

LWV-TX will provide training for advocating on our priorities as well as a packet of tools to assist with lobbying efforts.

Specifics about costs and arrangements:

- Open house at the state office, 1212 Guadalupe #107, 10 a.m.-Noon, Monday, March 7.
- Lobby Days registration, 12:30 p.m. March 7, at the Capitol, \$10 per person which covers advocacy materials.
- Making Democracy Work Dinner, 6:30 p.m. March 7, honoring the Center for Public Policy Priorities, \$50 for League members and guests or \$60 for non-members. Deadline for reservations is February 22.
- Drury Inn & Suites Austin North, located at 6711 IH 35 North (Exit 239B) is the host hotel. Room cost is \$92.95 for either a single or double room, plus tax. The double can sleep two, three or four. Make reservations directly with the hotel by calling (512) 467-9500 and identifying yourself as an LWV-Texas member or by going online to <http://www.druryhotels.com/Reservations.aspx?groupno=2109982>. If others will share your room, please let the hotel know their names so that lodging space can be maximized.
- Deadline to reserve a room and receive our group rate is Saturday, Feb. 19. Reservations made after this date will be subject to prevailing rate and availability.

Additional information can be found on the [schedule and reservation form here](#), and on our website, <http://lwwtexas.org>.

We look forward to seeing you in Austin March 7 and 8!

Sincerely,

Karen Nicholson, President

Legislative Newsletter from LWV-TX notes as expected, the budget was the first issue to be addressed by the Legislature. The Comptroller predicted a \$27+ billion shortfall. The Senate and the house have begun discussions on different proposed budgets but neither proposals calls for any use of the rainy day fund or added revenue sources. See www.infor@lwwtexas.org for additional information.

MEETINGS IN REVIEW



- **October 14, 2010**
The Candidates Forum was held at the Irving City Hall. It was well attended by candidates as well as interested voters.
- **November 29, 2010**
The final meeting was held expanding the Kids at Risk Study to homelessness. Attendees were asked what they thought caused homelessness. Answers included economics, lack of safe affordable housing, education, extreme poverty, decreasing government supports, changing demographics of the family, challenges of raising children alone, domestic violence and fractured social supports. Also the gap between housing costs and income continue to widen and housing foreclosures places more and more families and their children at risk. A power point was shown to the group, a reviewed of Material that had been shared at previous meetings. The Advocates for Homeless Teens were introduced. They include **Mary Oberlin, Cynthia Faust** and **Judy Smith**, who are League members, and **Sharon Johnson** and **Dr. Lori Davis**. They covered issues such as Types of housing needed for homeless children, the McKinney Vento Act, how Irving IISD is involved, activities for homeless sponsored by the Homeless and Poverty coalition, The Buena Vida House, and the Main Place which provides clothing for kids. Attending were members **Mona Wyatt, Tom Burhoe, Dorothy Leibensburger, Paulett Austin, Norma Stanton, Janice Carroll, Julie Esstman, Ann Ouzts, Phil Smith, Carol Bell, Lely White, Jan Killen** and **Anne Pfaff**. Visitors were also in attendance.

- **December 6, 2010** **Annual Holiday Party** hosted by Ann and David Ouzts. Again, a big thanks to our ever so accommodating and charming hosts.



- **January 24, 2011** – Kids at Risk Consensus Meeting. League members were given consensus questions based on previous meetings and were ask to submit their opinions during the meeting. If they couldn't attend, they were asked to reply by e-mail. The answers will be compiled by the executive committee, and submitted to the board for approval. This will position the League to be able to lobby their elected officials or make public statements regarding what places kids at risk and what should be done to help eradicate



the problem. Those participating in person were **Mona Wyatt** who facilitated the meeting, **Carol Bell**; meeting recorder, **Judy Smith**; resource, **Carole Shlipak, Phil Smith, Janice Carroll, Tom Burhoe, Anne Pfaff, Jan Killen, Eileen Kensinger, Genevieve Ramos, and Julie Esstman**.

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



Jan. 11, 2011

- Policy revision approved
- Discussed up-coming meetings
- Kids at Risk questions reviewed
- Finance Development plans reviewed
- YEO (Your Elected Officials) report
- Local elections discussed
- Membership plans discussed
- Voter articles requested
- Voter Registration plans discussed

February 8, 2011

- Evaluation of Kids at Risk meeting and position statement
- YEO (Your Elected Official) Developments
- Finance Report
- Up-coming meeting needs discussed
- Membership, VOTER, Observer Corp and Voter Registration reports



Your board at work

Pictured: Front to let to right. **Janice Carroll, Anne Pfaff, Paulette Austin, Genevieve Ramos, Julie Esstman, Mona Wyatt, and Carol Bell**. Not available were **Phil Smith, Irene Jackson, Carole Shlipak, Kathrine Pennington, Carol Huntley Little, and Carole Larkin**. *Photo by Judy Smith*



Pictured in photo: League member Paulette Austin and two new naturalized citizens

LEAGUE MEMBERS REGISTER NEW VOTERS

Among the most moving events conducted at the Citizenship & Naturalization Center are the monthly naturalization ceremonies that swear in thousands of new citizens. These gatherings celebrate the constant renewal of our American democracy.

At the conclusion of these events, League members are often on hand to explain and inform the new citizens of procedures related to the voter registration process. The applications are then turned over to county employees in an effort to speed up the process or are mailed in by the applicants as appropriate.

The League of Women Voters (LWV), is a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government through education and advocacy. We publish the Voters Guide to inform voters of the qualifications of candidates in local and statewide elections and sponsors debates between candidates. As a nonpartisan organization, the LWV does not endorse or oppose candidates or political parties. As a result, the LWV was deputized as the organization vetted to cover the monthly naturalization ceremonies. This function is coordinated by the Dallas LWV.

Genevieve Ramos and **Paulette Austin** received the required training and orientation and were officially deputized as voter registrars on Tuesday, January 11, 2011.



According to the recent population projections, Texas, the second largest state, grew by almost 20 percent, to nearly 25 million people. In the expectation that new voters will form a large portion of this growth, it is incumbent of the LWV to continue to include voter registration as one of its priority issues. The Irving League is expected to actively contribute to the mission of ensuring the enfranchisement of new citizens

Your VOTER Editor would like to add that according to recent statistics, Texas women are ranked at the bottom of the list for voting in America.

FINANCE DRIVE IS WELL UNDERWAY



Carole Shlipak, who serves as a member of the Finance Development Committee, has mailed letters requesting financial support to League members and our League friends. Donations are arriving and are reflecting increases from some

individuals from the year before. **Anne Pfaff**, Director of Finance Development and **Julie Esstman**, Director of Special Events, will mail requests to new prospects and make calls on business and corporations

Do you know someone who is a decision maker for a business or corporation? If so, contact Anne Pfaff at anne@locknest.com or Julie Esstman at esstman@verizon.net

**Please show your pride in the Irving League...
By making your contribution today...
Which will ensure a robust year.**

LEAGUERS MAKE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

I shall search for all my ancient League material and deposit it at the Irving archives. **Betty Miller**



My resolution could be stated as..... Continually adapting my response to the query, "What is it that is mine to do?" **Jan Killen**

Anita Tipping-Wheeler has been getting rid of old paperwork.....from my tax boxes. I think I even have my 1st 1040...ha, from NY. I'm thinking cleaning out files. Could have been her New Year's resolution?

Carole Little doesn't make resolutions. When asked why, she said she probably wouldn't keep them.

Congratulations to **Carole Shlipak**. Her son, Michael, MD, MPH was promoted to Professor of Medicine at the University of California Medical School, San Francisco (UCSF). Dr. Shlipak graduated from Irving High School and was valedictorian of the Class of 1986.