



IRVING VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF IRVING

Spring 2012

Vol. 20 Issue 2  Voter Editor Judy Smith 1802 Puritan Dr. Irving TX 75061 (972) 251-3161 (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. The League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes candidates for office at any level of government, nor any party.

OUR PRESIDENT



It's election time, and the League of Women Voters encourages you to vote informed, please think beyond the National and State offices. Our local officials will lead our city, improve our schools, and touch our lives in a very up-close and personal

way.

So, what can you do???

1. Attend candidate forums – April 23, City Hall – 7 p.m. – City Council and School Board
2. Get to know the candidates, and
3. Read about the candidates in the Voters Guide on our website: lwvirving.org.

As State Convention (April 13-15) and Local Convention (May 12) plans are being made, "tell us what" YOU wish the League would do," How LWV of Irving and the State League can become better leaders, distributors of information, and more fun. Contact us on our website: lwvirving.org.

Many, many thanks to Julie Esstman and Carol Huntley Little for organizing the very successful **2012 State of the Voter** fundraiser, Drs. Cal Jillson (SMU), James Riddlesberger (TCU), and Allan Saxe (UTA) informed and entertained us, and Moderator Collette Vallot (TXU) efficiently led the discussion. Good food, great information, generous supporters!

As always thanks to Paulette Austin and her team, who register hundreds of new citizens every month

at the USCIS (United States Citizen Immigration Services) center here in Irving. You could volunteer, you'll be glad you did. Sign up at lwvirving.org.

Especially, I thank all the officers, directors, and faithful members of the Irving League. You keep us on track, enthusiastic, and eager for more.
Happy Spring - Mona

April 23, 2012

Candidates Forum

Irving City Hall - 7 PM

Featuring candidates for: Irving City Council and IISD. Candidates for Carrollton - Farmers Branch and Coppell ISD Districts will be introduced.

MAY 2012 ELECTION

Irving voters will have choices in every race but one in the **May 12** city and school board elections. All candidates named below in ballot order for their race .

The following candidates are running for **Place 4**, a single-member district: **Phil Riddle**, **Fran Bonilla**, and **Joe Putnam**, and **Phil Riddle**, with no incumbent in the race. Bonilla was previously a Council member, while Putnam has been both a Council member and a Mayor. Other City Council candidates include the following: newcomers **Brad M. La Morgese** and **William "Bill" Mahoney** are competing for **Place 6**, a single-member district, with **no incumbent** in the race. In the race for **Place 8**, an at-large district, **there is no incumbent**, but the two candidates **Tom Spink** and **Richard H. Stopfer** have both served as Council members for other districts. In the race for **Irving Independent School District Board of Trustees**, three people are competing in the race for **Place 3**,

vacated by the incumbent. Running are **A.D. Jenkins, Alicia Fernandez-Mott, and Larry Stipes**. Jenkins was previously a board member. In the **Place 4** race, incumbent **Valerie Jones** is in a race with challengers **Norma C. Gonzales** and **Dinesh Mali**.

Irving voters will also choose trustees for the school boards of **Carrollton-Farmers Branch** and **Coppell**. In C-FB ISD, **Randy Schackmann** and **John Mathews** are competing for **Place 3**, and **Richard Fleming** is uncontested in his bid to retain **Place 4**. In **Coppell ISD**, **Carrie Clark** and **Judy Barbo** are competing for **Place 6**, which is being vacated by the incumbent while **Charlie Biggurs** and **Tracy Fisher** are competing for **Place 7** with no incumbent in the race.

The last day to register to vote in the May 12 election is **April 12, 2012**. **Early voting** will be held from **April 30-May 8, 2012**, in the following locations: City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd., Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd., and Valley Ranch Public Library, 401 Cimarron Trail.

Voters will need to bring their voter registration card with them when they go to vote. Additional picture identification will not be required. The law requiring an additional picture identification that was passed by the Texas legislature and signed by Governor Perry in 2011 has been held in abeyance by federal court.

Irene Jackson
Voters Guide Director

VOTER SERVICE

Volunteers are **always** needed to help register voters at the United States Immigration and citizenship Center, so please take this opportunity to serve your League. It will be only a matter of passing out cards unless you are a deputy registrar who can provide assistance to the new voters.

DIRECTIONS - The United State Citizens Immigration Services (USCIS) center is located at 6500 Campus Circle Drive East, Irving, TX 75063.

The easiest route is to get to the Belt Line and 114 Intersection:

When **approaching the intersection from the south**, turn right onto the south 114 service road and stay to the right (towards Bush toll way). At Longhorn Drive, turn right, go 100 yards or so before making a left turn into the large USCIS parking lot. When **approaching the intersection from the north**, cross over 114 and turn left onto the south 114 service road. Stay to the right (towards Bush toll way). At Longhorn Drive, go 100

yards or so before making a left turn into the large USCIS parking lot.

After parking, enter the building through the front doors. You will have to go through security to gain entrance to the large assembly room where the ceremony takes place. Tell the security guards you are there to assist with voter registration of the new citizens.

If you would like to receive training to become a Deputy Registrar, here is your chance.

Paulette Austin
Voter Registration Director

Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training Schedule

The Dallas County Elections Department's VDR training schedule has been set and will offer a total of 9 training classes for April and May.

All training classes will be conducted here at 2377 North Stemmons Freeway on the 6th floor.

The schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, April 3,

7pm - 8pm

Thursday, April 5

7pm - 8pm

Saturday, April 14

9am - 10am

11am - 12pm

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Tuesday, April 17

7pm - 8pm

Thursday, April 19

7pm - 8pm

Wednesday, April 25,

7pm - 8pm

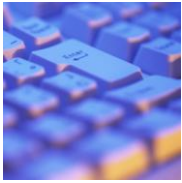
Tuesday, May 1

7pm - 8pm

This schedule will take us up to June 2012 and until it gets closer to the Presidential Election, we will have a basic training schedule of one Saturday morning and two weekday evening classes each month and staff will still continue to deputize at our Voter Registration counter **Monday - Friday 9am - 3pm**.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Rivelino Lopez
Dallas County Elections Department
214-819-6300 (phone)
214-819-6301 (facsimile)
rlopez@dallascounty.org



League Website up-date lwvirving.org

The website has been fairly quiet over the past few months, but with elections around the corner, it will become the place to visit. The process of loading the Voters Guide for all the local election is in process with a target completion of April 2. Our website, in addition to the VOTE411 site, will provide **candidate information for the Irving City Council race and the Board of Trustee races for Irving ISD, Coppell ISD, and Farmers Branch-Carrollton ISD.** Of course, general election information remains available including the national election in November of this year. The site will continue to provide an easy method for volunteers to find a date and time when they can assist new citizens with voter registration at the US Citizenship and Immigration Services Center.

Phil Smith - Webmaster



Suspense thrills, surprises, fun and a nice brunch awaits you in the Vault.

Saturday morning MAY 12

If you wish to submit your name to serve on the Board of Directors or nominate someone to serve, please contact Debbie Fleck, Chair of the Nominating Committee at dfleck@dallasnews.com



Convention Handbook will be reserved for attendee's only however you will receive a copy of all reports that will be given at convention by e-mail.

MEETINGS IN REVIEW

January 23, 2012

State Highway 183

The League hosted a noon meeting focusing on the progress of construction of State Highway 183 on Monday, Jan. 23, 2012. City of Irving Director of Traffic and Transportation Dan Vedral presented information on the status of SH 183, including right-of-way acquisition, the design, as well as the timeline for completion. He added as a bonus to the audience an update on the DART Orange line. Mr Vedral noted that while the expansion of SH 183 is a State of Texas project, it is a team effort that includes our Federal, State and Local elected representatives, the Greater Irving/Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce, and the City. Many departments of the City have been involved in the development of the plans and the City has funded a portion of this huge project which will expand this thoroughfare from 10 lanes to 18 lanes which includes the access roads and four *Managed Lanes*. He noted that the City has insisted on above standard sound walls that are now under construction. They should be complete by October of this year. The City also works with the state in the acquisition of land parcels for the right-of-way although it is the state's responsibility for this part of the project. He stated that the current status of this acquisition is.....

- Total Parcels 342
- Total estimated cost \$260 M
- Acquired to date 221 (64%)
- Cost Paid to date \$160 M
- Remaining parcels 121 (36%)

Mr. Vedral further explained that the total cost of the project to the City can be broken down as follows:

- City 10% portion of ROW cost \$26.0M
- City water cost \$20.3M
- City sewer cost \$9.3M
- City total project share \$56.0M
- Less total paid to date (\$12.4M)
- Total city portion 43.6M
- Future Drainage Improvements \$15.0M
- Undergrounding \$14.0M
- IFCD #1 – Twin Levee Issue \$20.0M

He advised that the state must receive from the Federal Government a "FONSI" (Finding of No Significant Impact) and that the state will conduct a hearing on February 21, 2012 on the project. (*That*

hearing has been conducted and over 120 residents attended. The State hopes to receive the FONSI in early April.)

Janice Carroll
Program Vice President

February 29, 2012

“Learning English in our Public Schools – Part 2



In February, the League presented **Part 2** in a series of meetings about “**Learning English in Our Public Schools.**” The goal of this meeting was to present the side for the use of a form of “immersion” to integrate non- English speaking students into our school curriculum in lieu of the standard bilingual programs used in the public school systems. The speaker was James Golsan, an Education Policy Analyst for the Texas Public Policy Foundation located in Austin Texas. This foundation commissioned a study titled “Does Bilingual Education Work: The Case of Texas” by Christine Rossell in 2009. (This study can be found on our web site.) Mr. Golsan introduced the subject by noting that funding for education in Texas is the main issue as it is the second largest portion of the state’s budget after Medicare. Bi-lingual education programs are costly; although, that is not the primary reason that immersion is favored by many as the best way to educate our students. He noted that revenue generators for education as well as how it is distributed to the individual school districts will be hot topics when the state legislative session convenes in 2013.

While Mr. Golsan did not review the study in detail, he did state that the foundation advocates sheltered immersion as the default model as early as possible and this will give more choices to the parents of English Language Learners. He also mentioned the move from the TAKS testing to the STAAR testing and noted that we have yet to see the impact of this testing on our students. He urged open discussion of this issue in the community, and

there was a lively discussion following his talk. Many educators were present that told of their experiences not only in the classroom, but their personal experiences as first generation Americans. They were advocates for some form of immersion as the best way for students to gain language skills to carry them through to high school graduation. Also present were educators that spoke in favor of bilingual education.

To present in this brief article any of the positions would be difficult and unless it was done as a straight quote, there would be a possibility of misrepresenting the message. However, the fifty plus people that attended heard enough facts and personal experiences to give them much to think about as we all continue to explore this subject that is so important in our world of education today.

Janice Carroll
Program Vice President

March 14, 2012

State of the Vote Fundraising Event

A fundraiser to benefit the **League of Women Voters of Irving** included an informative discussion on 2012 elections by three political science professors. After lunch was served at **Las Colinas Country Club**, **Collette Vallot**, community relations senior manager at TXU, introduced the professors and moderated the discussion.

The professors were: **Cal Jillson**, chair of the Political Science Department at **Southern Methodist University** and author of a new book



called *Lone Star Tarnished*; **James Riddlesperger**, chair of the political science department at **Texas Christian University**; and **Allan Saxe**, Associate Professor at the **University of Texas at Arlington’s Political Science Department**. They talked about the influence of Super PACs, redistricting in Texas, voting demographics, presidential power and the 2012 election. All three predicted Mitt will be the

Republican nominee and his first running mate candidates may be **Marco Rubio of Florida**, **Bob McDonald of Virginia** or **Susanna Martinez of New Mexico**. They also predicted Obama should win in November.

In talking about social media, Riddlesperger said his students don't read newspapers--the Internet is their source of news.

Guests asked questions about women's health care issues, and also about Obamacare, which Riddlesperger said is a complex program. But all three advocated an informed democracy where citizens learn more and get engaged. And especially at the local level, they said, where an impact can be made.

Debbie Fleck

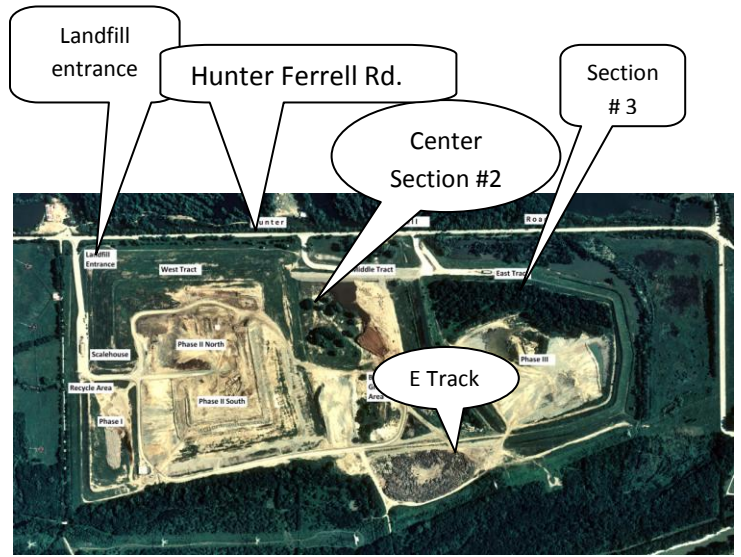
*Article written for the DMN
She is also member of LWV*



Pictured L-R is winner of Dr. Jillson's book, **Carleen Dougett**, Picture with her is event chairs, **Carol Huntley Little** and **Julie Esstman**. **Eileen Kensinger** won Dr. Riddlespergers signed book.

A big THANKS to all who helped put this event on and all who attended! What a treat it was listening to three great political minds....Dr. Cal Jillson from SMU, Dr. Allan Saxe from UTA and Dr. James Riddlesperger from TCU sharing tidbits of insight and wisdom with regards to the upcoming elections. And it could not have been done better or with more skill than Colette Vallot used....I thought I was watching a Sunday Morning political show! FABULOUS. Thanks to everyone who made this happen.

Julie Esstman and Carol Huntley Little
Chairs of State of the Vote event



MARCH 22, 2012

"Talking Trash"
Irving's Landfill



Brenda Haney P.E. Director of Solid Waste Service Department spoke to interested League members about the ins and outs of disposing waste in Irving.

Attending the meeting were guests, **Rosemary Robbins**, **Kay Schecht** and **Genie Mitchell** and members **Carol Bell**, **Janice Carroll**, **Eileen Kensinger** (former Chair of the LWV Study on Recycling) **Jan Killen**, **Anne Pfaff**, **Carole Shlipak**, **Phil** and **Judy Smith** and **Mona Wyatt**.

MEETING EVALUATIONS

Please accept my special thanks to all who took the time to fill out the meeting evaluation forms after each meeting during this program year. Your comments about what worked at the meeting, comments on how we can improve our meetings and ideas for future meetings have been very helpful. Our goal is not only to bring educational meetings to you regarding either current events in Irving or a League study but to maintain our nonpartisan policy. We hope that due to your comments, our meetings will reach your future satisfaction as your board plans its new program year.

Judy Smith
Organization VP



If you desire to ask a question of our candidates for the Irving School Board and the City Council go to **IRVING'S WEBSITE** and submit your questions. www.lwvirving.org

The League of Women Voters of Texas

CONVENTION 2012

Making Democracy Work!

The Hilton San Antonio Airport Hotel

San Antonio, Texas

April 13-15, 2012

News from the State League

VOTE411 for Local Elections



Remember that your League can use **VOTE411 for the May 12 local elections**, as well as the general elections. VOTE411 can handle the entry of races for multiple elections, and you can determine when to "publish" each set of races - i.e., to make them visible to VOTE411 users. For example, you can first publish the races for the local

election, and then publish the races for the Primary Election as soon as the local election is over

Janice Schieffer

State Voters Service Director

League member's Birthdays

April – Happy Birthday to those who might be celebrating this month!

May 19 – Julie Esstman

May 23 – Helen Chaplin

June 2 – Judy Smith

July 16 – Joe Philipp

July 25 – Jane Schwartzman & Mona Wyatt

Aug. 6 – Dorothy Liebensberger

Aug. 10 – Gardy Lopez

Aug. 11 – Ann Ouzts

Aug. 16 – Irene Jackson

Aug. 18 – Christina Gears

Aug. 22 – Carol Huntley Little