



VOTER
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARKANSAS
Political . . . Nonpartisan ... Local . . . State . . . National

Volume 55

February 2009

Number 1



From the Desk of the President of the League of Women Voters of Arkansas

The League of Women Voters of Arkansas is making its mark on voter education and public policy. As communities across the state moved towards local, state and national elections, local Leagues and Members at Large registered voters and then turned to connecting candidates to voters through forums, debates and programs. We tackled the amendments giving voters a non-partisan view of issues to be determined by the citizens of Arkansas.

As far as public policy, as more gas drilling takes place throughout Arkansas, more and more people turn to the League for accurate information in the hope that destruction of personal and community property and the environment can be prevented. We continue to learn more about the impact on our health, our precious water, our land and individuals who are impacted. And, to think this all began with members of Fairfield Bay crying out at the LWWAR State Convention in Jonesboro in 2007 and informing us of our responsibility to learn more, create a consensus and inform voters as well as advocate. This year we tackled conservation easements and now have a consensus that we can use to advocate for a fair and balanced approach to conservation. And, to think that this came about with multiple organizations gathering on Mount Magazine and pooling their expertise to move forward. We all are impressed with the League advocacy to protect the Lake Maumelle watershed taking place in Little Rock. It was also great to protest the building of more coal plants with League members from throughout the state at the State Capitol.



League members now have the opportunity to get together for another State Convention, this time in Fayetteville on April 25 and 26. This is truly a Convention not to miss. We will be extending our knowledge on watershed issues and the impact of toxins used in drilling on health- watch for a national speaker on this one! Advocacy and training for officers and board members throughout Leagues in the state is also scheduled. All this will take place with the usual discussion, caucusing and engagement so special to League events. The Hall of Fame recognition, fellowship, meals and gatherings should be enjoyable for all so get your registration in now.

My appreciation to the officers and board of directors who continue to keep us on target with program study, a balanced budget, Government in Arkansas, Guide to Elected Officials, a new office in the same building and training of two new board members, Diane Burl and Laura Hamilton.

See you at the State Convention! Mary Alice

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Call to Convention 2009

All members of the League of Women Voters of Arkansas and interested non-members are invited to the 29th State Convention to be held in Fayetteville on April 25 and 26.

You will not want to miss this convention which will celebrate another group of LWV Hall of Fame honorees, focus on the impact of public policy or the lack of public policy on our health and the environment, advocacy and the how to's of leadership in the League.

Knowledge Leads to Impacts on Policy
29th LWVAR State Convention
Saturday, April 25, 9:15 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.
Sunday, April 26, 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Please register by completing the following and mail to LWVAR Treasurer, Joyce Hale, 285 W. Cleburn, Fayetteville, AR 72701

Name _____ Local League or MAL Affiliation _____

Address _____ E-mail: _____

City _____ Zip _____

Registration:

Members

All programs plus meals \$50.00
Saturday program, lunch only \$25.00
Saturday program, diner only \$30.00

Non-Members

All programs plus meals \$55.00 x _____ = _____
Saturday program, lunch only \$25.00 x _____ = _____
Saturday program, diner only \$30.00 x _____ = _____

Total enclosed: _____

Please make checks payable to LWVAR.
Questions? Call Libby Wheeler, Local Chair, 479 521-1158
Reservation deadline: March 30, 2009

Hotel and other options: LWVWC members would enjoy hosting members from other parts of the state and help reduce the costs of attending convention. For members who prefer to stay in a hotel, call the Cosmopolitan Hotel, located just off the Fayetteville Square, at 479 442-5555 for reservations. Be sure to identify yourself as a LWVAR Convention participant to get the rate of \$89 plus tax per night and reserve your room by March 20.

If you prefer to stay with a League member, please indicate here _____ and you will be contacted by your host by April 11.

**Preliminary Schedule for the League of Women Voters of Arkansas' 29th Convention
April 24-29, 2009
Fayetteville, AR**

Knowledge Leads to Impacts on Policy

Friday Afternoon, April 24th, 1-5:00 – State Board Meeting

Saturday, April 25th

In honor of Earth Day, two program sessions are being planned with emphasis on the environment, which should be of interest to Leaguers all over the state. Morning and afternoon events will be at the Fayetteville Public Library.

- 8:30 – 9:10 – Visit to Fayetteville's Farmers Market on the Square (optional)
- 9:15 – Registration at the Fayetteville Public Library
- 9:45 – Opening Session and Greetings from Fayetteville's Mayor
- 10:15 - **Program/Workshop I** – Watershed Protection (U of A Agricultural Engineer, Dr. Marty Matlock, is being contacted as speaker. He's good!)
- 11:30 – Tour of the Library with emphasis on its green and sustainable features
- Noon – Catered Luncheon at the Library **Hall of Fame** Recognition
- 12:45 **Major S Hall of Fame** Recognition
- 1:30 – Break
- 2:00 **Speaker session**, which will be open to the public. Nationally known chemist, Dr. Theo Colborn will address the impact of chemicals that we are adding to the environment on humans, especially contaminants in the womb. Dr. Colborn will provide a DVD and consultation by conference call.
- 3:15 Break
- 3:30 Business Meeting
- 4:45 – Free time
- 6:00 – Wine and Cheese Party at the Fay Jones home of Sandy Edwards
- 7:00 – Catered Dinner at the Edwards' home. Social and Caucusing evening.

Sunday, April 26th

Morning events will be at the U of A Extension Service building.

- 7:30 – Presidents' Meeting (for local League presidents)
- 8:30 – Breakfast with Carolie Mullen, our National League Liaison
- 9:15 – **Two workshops**: Choose one
 - Understanding the League of Women Voters (for new officers and new members)
– Led by Carolie
 - Advocacy – (LWVWC members Mary Dillard, author of Winning Campaigns has been invited to lead this session)
- 10:30 – Business Meeting
- 11:30 – Local League direction to the Board of Directors
- 11:45 – Adjournment

**League of Women Voters of Arkansas
Proposed 2009-2010 Budget**

EXPENSE	Budget 2008 2009	Budget 2009-2010	INCOME	Budget 2008 2009	Budget 2009 2010
Board of Directors			Allocation from Ed Fund		
Copying	\$25.00	\$25.00	Citizen's Info Guide	\$0.00	\$0.00
Meetings (Travel)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Government in Arkansas	\$0.00	\$0.00
Postage	\$25.00	\$25.00	GTAE0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Publications	\$0.00	\$0.00	Office Support	\$0.00	\$0.00
Telephone	\$300.00	\$150.00	Voter Education Grants	\$300.00	\$300.00
President	\$100.00	\$100.00	Total	\$300.00	\$300.00
Secretary	\$10.00	\$10.00			
Treasurer	\$40.00	\$40.00	Allocation from Gov. in AR	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total	\$500.00	\$350.00			
			Book Sales		
Organization			Government in Arkansas	\$4,000.00	\$2,400.00
Budget Committee	\$25.00	\$10.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
Nominating Committee	\$25.00	\$10.00	Total	\$4,000.00	\$2,400.00
Development	\$300.00	\$300.00			
Membership Brochures	\$50.00	\$50.00	Contributions		
Membership Service	\$200.00	\$200.00	Members	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00
PMP's for MAL's	\$600.00	\$512.00	Non-Members	\$500.00	\$500.00
Voter	\$1,000.00	\$400.00	Total	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00
Total	\$2,200.00	\$1,482.00			
			Endowment Trust Interest	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Program & Action					
Advocacy	\$500.00	\$250.00	Grants/Fundraising	\$3,815.00	\$1,138.00
National Convention/Council	\$0.00	\$0.00			
State Convention/Council	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	Local Leagues		
Program & Action	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	Pledges	\$100.00	\$100.00
Publication by LWVAR	\$100.00	\$0.00	PMP's	\$2,500.00	\$2,415.00
Voter Services	\$300.00	\$300.00	Total	\$2,600.00	\$2,515.00
Citizen's Guide	\$600.00	\$0.00			
Government in Arkansas	\$500.00	\$500.00	Mal Dues	\$1,120.00	\$724.00
GTAE0	\$500.00	\$500.00			
Office Support	\$0.00	\$500.00	State Council/Convention	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
			All Other Income	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total	\$5,000.00	\$4,550.00			
			TOTAL INCOME	\$17,935.00	\$13,177.00
State Office Operations					
Salaries	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00			
AESD	\$20.00	\$20.00			
FICA	\$300.00	\$300.00			
Capital Expenses	\$1,065.00	\$200.00			
Insurance	\$800.00	\$150.00			
Postage	\$100.00	\$50.00			
Property Taxes	\$30.00	\$15.00			
Rent	\$3,960.00	\$2,400.00			
Supplies/Copying	\$100.00	\$100.00			
Telephone/Internet	\$1,500.00	\$1,200.00			
Banking Fees	\$60.00	\$60.00			
Accounting	\$500.00	\$500.00			
Total	\$10,235.00	\$6,795.00			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$17,935.00	\$13,177.00			

Natural Gas Drilling Update

Joyce Hale

February, 2009

The League continues to receive requests for information on the Fayetteville Shale Play and the Arkoma Basin gas drilling operations. The LWV Washington County web site has updated the Fayetteville Shale materials and may be seen at <http://www.lwvarwc.org/fayshalestudy.htm>. In spite of environmental concerns over non-disclosed chemicals used in the drilling process, protective legislation has not been forthcoming in the current legislative session. The need to remove the Federal exemption of oil and gas from the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act may be possible now with the new Administration. The Secretary of Interior, Ken Salazar from Colorado, has first hand knowledge of the gas drilling problems experienced in his state. Stronger protection at the federal level could help prevent industry from playing one state's regulations against another.

Conservation Tax Credits Consensus and Legislative Report

The state study on State Tax Incentives for Land Preservation experience good participation with consensus reports from LWVBC, LWVFS, LWVFB, LWVPC, and LWVWC. The widely diverse opinions indicated good participation and input. However, the consensus overall did support a state tax incentive with more restricted eligibility than currently allowed by the Federal government, an acceptance of the permanence of the transaction, and need for competency on the part of stewards receiving conservation easements and professionals involved in assisting the landowner.

Comment accompanying the individual reports stated: This tax program is premature at this time until professionals are adequately and appropriately trained in dealing with conservation easements. Greater emphasis on trails was desired. Historic preservation was considered very important by some. Changes in circumstances related to the use of land over a long period of time are a concern. - Concerns that regulation more strict than those of the Federal Government would make property harder to qualify. - Some questions have problems with wording. Who would develop the educational curriculum for professionals?

[ANNOUNCING A WIN FOR CONSERVATION!!!](#) League supported HB1577 passed both the House and Senate without an opposing vote and has gone to the Governor for his signature. It will add conservation tax credits to the Wetland and Riparian Zones Tax Credit Program, broadening landowners' options for protecting water assets and increasing the likelihood of their voluntary participation. Strong testimony was given by Rep. Lindsey - Lead Sponsor, Randy Young - Natural Resource Commissioner, Scott Simon - Director of The Nature Conservancy, and Joyce Hale representing the League.

Proposed Position on State Tax Incentives for Land Conservation to be added to State Finances and Taxation Section of Where We Stand

F. State Conservation Tax Credits

1. Arkansas should offer state tax incentives to protect:
 - a. farmland with significant agricultural production value,
 - b. forestland valued for timber production and/or watershed protection,
 - c. watersheds that have significant impacts on water quality and quantity,
 - d. wildlife habitat needed to provide stability for threatened species, and
 - e. historic sites with cultural significance.
2. Arkansas should establish a land conservation tax incentive program but one with stricter eligibility than those required by the Federal government.
3. Persons or organizations eligible to hold donated conservation easements must demonstrate transaction transparency, the capacity for competent stewardship and some level of accreditation before receiving approval for tax credits.
4. Instruction approved by professional licensing boards should be required for Certified Public Accountants, attorneys, real estate brokers, financial advisors, estate planners and land appraisers before they are permitted to advise clients regarding the use of conservation easements.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A LOCAL LEAGUE STUDY

I. DETERMINING THE STUDY SUBJECT

Selection and development of a local programming study subject should address the following criteria:

- A. Subject should be of importance and general interest in the local community.
- B. Subject should not be a problem that requires state or national action.
- C. Subject should be addressed by governmental or institutional action
 - 1. through ordinance by city council or quorum court action or
 - 2. by a community institution by
 - a. publishing a booklet or pamphlet or
 - b. enacting a new policy or revising an old one.
- D. Subject should not be one which is already being solved by some other organization, but it could be a subject where the League's particular talents would be complimented through a cooperative effort with another group. When working with this group, care must be taken to see that the League positions are not assumed to be a total reflection of the cooperating organization. In particular, non-partisan standing is essential.

II. FORMATION OF STUDY COMMITTEE AND THEIR STUDY PREPARATION

Establish a working committee with a chairperson and at least one board member acting as liaison to the full board. Evaluate the topic for broad participation by League membership or combined effort with a compatible group or organization. The following items will help begin the study process and should be assigned to a working committee:

- A. Develop a history on the subject with key players, contact names, timeline of events and current conditions.
- B. Monitor public meetings or activities that have a bearing on the issue and report these happenings to the committee.
- C. Collect related news stories and magazine articles. Search the Internet for reports by authorities on the subject.
- D. Include differing opinions or points of view.
- E. Define the key problems and what authority has the responsibility or power to improve the situation.
- F. Determine how similar problems are resolved and find model programs, policies or ordinances that are successful.

(Guidelines Continued on page 6)

New Edition of Government in Arkansas Coming Out Soon

Editors of the 2004 edition of Government in Arkansas, Dr. Douglas Reed and Dr. Margaret Reed of Ouachita Baptist University, are moving forward with the publication update. In addition to updating current information the Reed's have designed a new page layout to include a reference sidebar with "In This Chapter" and "Terms to Know" A companion teacher's resource CD includes chapter quizzes and study guide questions. Each chapter includes on-line resources for further study and reference. Copies of the 2004 edition are still available in the Educators Book Depository for \$15.00 each. Schools purchasing multiple copies are provided a complimentary Teacher's Guide CD. Order your copy via the League web site.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A LOCAL LEAGUE STUDY

(Guidelines Con't from page 5)

A. Study Guide

1. Develop at minimum a summary report of materials collected during the study preparation that broadly covers the subject and offers references for those wishing to research at greater depths. For complex subjects, divide the preparation between several individuals to make the task manageable. A multi-sectioned notebook may be needed for this.
2. Provide the study guide to the membership as preparation for introductory discussion. If posted only on a web page, a copy should be made available at the public library for those who do not have computer access.
3. Conduct one or a series of membership discussions with a knowledgeable member or invited individual to facilitate. See that all issues in the study guide are addressed. Write a short report of the discussion. If several discussions are held, combine reports into one summary.
4. The study committee should develop a set of consensus statements from the final summary report.
5. Distribute consensus statements among the membership prior to conducting a consensus activity.
6. Conduct a consensus activity that is preceded by a general review of the study for the benefit of those who may have only participated in part. Discuss consensus statements and arrive at unified positions.
7. Report consensus positions to the membership and record it in the group's "Where We Stand" document. Maintain a copy of the full study in permanent records for future reference.
8. Make consensus positions public to the media and in ways that help the public and officials become aware of important information.

B. Forums and Panels

If the study committee does not prepare a study guide, a series of speakers representing the breadth of points of view or experience on an issue may be invited to speak. Care must be made to allow adequate time to cover the topic. If necessary, it should be broken into a series with a brief report made after each. Combine these reports, if more than one meeting takes place, for distribution to the membership. Proceed with steps 3 through 7 as above.

C. Combined Guide and Forum

The study process can benefit from a combination of internal LWV research (Study Guide Design) and outside speakers (Forum and Panel Design). Materials may be simple or elaborate. Public education can be simply done or expensive if printing or advertising is used.

A League of Women Voters study should bring interest and enthusiasm to a group. It can have a unifying value if progress in addressing a problem gains public support. But it can also be divisive if people do not feel they have been represented in the discussion or that a few are able to overly influence the group. There is a great deal of work in doing a study well, but it is one of the best ways to address the LWV mission. Only through applying extra effort to learn more about a subject should a League feel qualified to voice an opinion.

Guide to Elected Officials

The League's Guide to Elected Officials has been recently updated to include newly elected federal and state officers. The Guide includes the email addresses Arkansas' congressional delegation and state legislators for ease of electronic communication. Click on the elected officials email address for direct access to your email server. You may download the Guide for printing at your Local League website.

Hall of FAME Nomination Criteria



Event Purpose: (1) to recognize distinguished leaguers who have made significant contributions (2) to allow supporters to recognize League members through dedicated contributions and endowments (3) to create external visibility. The Hall of Fame Celebration ceremony is held every odd year in conjunction with the LWVAR Annual Convention.

Nomination Criteria: At least 10 members will be recognized (7 current and 3 posthumous). Current members need not be active in current league activities but must have served at least 10 years and have a noteworthy record of service during that time.

Award Categories: Voter Services, Membership, Political Action, Education, Environment, Social Policy, Philanthropy, Leadership

History and Profiles: Nominations must contain a history of the Local League and profile the contributions of the nominee.

Leaguers You Wish To Nominate should be some of your outstanding Leaguers – present and past? Leaguers must have demonstrated significant contributions; those who moved from League to political office or responsible positions in your community and state.

Nominations due by March 14, 2009

Ads for the Souvenir Booklets are due by March 24th

Proposed Slate 2009-2011

President: Mary Alice Serafini
Fayetteville, AR
1st Vice Pres: Stephanie Y. Johnson
Little Rock, AR
2nd Vice Pres: Linda Okiror
White Hall, AR
Secretary: Carol Westby
Fayetteville, AR
Treasurer: Joyce Hale
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Little Rock, AR
Pauline Novak
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Kathleen Velek
Little Rock, AR

VOTER Published by the League of Women Voters of Arkansas

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARKANSAS

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