



The League of Women Voters of Washington County, AR

www.lwvarwc.org

November-December, 2010 VOL. 57, ISSUE 6

Calendar

NOV. 6, Sat., 9:30 am – 4:30 pm LWVUS Membership Recruitment Initiative, Courtyard Marriott, 600 East Van Asche Drive, Fayetteville (Pre-registration required)

NOV. 8, Mon., 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, Joyce Hale's home 285 W. Cleburn.

NOV. 15, Mon., 11:30 am, Legislative Luncheon, Washington Regional Education Center at Pat Walker Center for Seniors, 12 E. Appleby Rd., Fayetteville. **Reservation info on Page 4.**

DEC. 6, Mon., 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, Joyce Hale's home 285 W. Cleburn.

**DEC. 15, Wed., 6:30 pm, Consensus Activity for Child Poverty Issues PLUS
7:00 – 8:30 pm, HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**, "The Lodge" at Butterfield Trail Village, 1923 E. Joyce Blvd., Fayetteville. (Location directions are in article on Page 3.)

From Joyce's Desk

In January I began looking at early suffrage history so that I could write something each month to honor our LWV 90th Anniversary. Learning that our first state president, Florence Cotnam, was a featured speaker at the very first LWV Convention in Chicago on February 14, 1920 motivated me to search through her papers, which remain in the University of Arkansas's Special Collections. Also speaking at that important organizational landmark ninety years ago was the dynamic leader Carrie Chapman Catt. She described the purpose of the new organization in the following way:

"The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage. Are the women of the United States big enough to see their opportunity?"

Are we big enough to take on the challenges of child poverty, climate change, equal access to health care, money's influence in elections, immigration reform, and arms control? It will take all of us. Your participation is needed to develop programs, take part in consensus activities, speak out as an advocate, and bring new people into League membership. As you think about renewing your membership or consider individuals to invite, remember those who are already working on or concerned about these important issues. Ask them to join forces with us and include the respected voice of the League with theirs as a way to make a difference.

Big Child Poverty Rate Increase is a Wake-Up Call

The League's Oct. 20 meeting included a public forum titled "Rising Child Poverty in Northwest Arkansas," which highlighted the rapidly increasing poverty level for children in our region. The newest Census figures from the American Community Survey show that the child poverty rate in the 3rd Congressional District grew from 20 percent to 25 percent in just one year, from 2008 to 2009. Rich Huddleston, executive director of Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, traveled from Little Rock to discuss his work as co-chair of the Legislative Task Force on Reducing Poverty and Promoting Economic Opportunity.

Ananda Rosa, social work coordinator at Fayetteville Public Schools, and Melissa Fink, principal at Jones Elementary in Springdale, discussed the challenges that poor children face every day in our county. While Rosa and Fink made clear that families in poverty are most often good and loving parents, they face challenges from lack of medical care and insufficient transportation to their own lack of education. Laura Kellams, LWVWC board member and Northwest Arkansas director of Arkansas Advocates, served as moderator. She reported that despite our region's reputation as relatively wealthy, our congressional district now has more children living in poverty than any other in the state.

About 45 people attended, and a reporter from Northwest Arkansas newspapers, Rose Ann Pearce, covered the event with a front-page story.

The committee, which worked on this program, will be meeting to develop consensus questions so that the LWVWC membership can include a section on the needs of children in poverty in our Program for Action. Consensus questions and information about the consensus activity will be sent to the membership.

Arkansas Advocates for children and Families will outline several of its legislative agenda items, as well as the Task Force recommendations, at a conference on Nov. 18 at the Jones Center for Families. League members, as well as the general public, are welcome. Registration is free and is available at <http://aacf.eventbrite.com>.



Panelists from left to right:
Melissa Fink, Ananda Rosa, and
Rich Huddleston

How YOU Can Help the Fayetteville Schools Address Childhood Poverty

Contributed by Ananda Rosa, Social worker coordinator for the Fayetteville School District

I feel blessed everyday to be living in Northwest Arkansas and to work for the Fayetteville Schools. There are many resources available to help our children and an even larger number of people who genuinely care about children. With that being said, there is still a large amount of need in our District and many meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Part of Fayetteville Schools Social Work Services is the “Outback”. It is a food pantry and clothing closet, which is free to all Fayetteville students and their families. There are many opportunities related to the Outback. Volunteers can be utilized for donations of clothing, coats, hygiene supplies, cleaning products, and, of course, food. In addition, volunteers can be helpful in managing and organizing donations. During the holidays we will also be depending on volunteers to help secure donations and fill Holiday baskets for over 400 families.

Individual schools have many opportunities as well. Each one has unique needs and can offer guidance regarding the best way to help. Washington Elementary invites volunteers to read to the children while ALLPS (our Alternative High School) welcomes volunteers to provide one on one tutoring for students in Math, Social Studies, and other subjects. Sometimes willing participants are needed to help with transportation for special evening events, such as Holiday programs or band or choir concerts, when bus service is not available. There are also students who wish to participate in extra-curricular activities or sports and do not have transportation to and from practices. This scenario and many others provide great opportunities to make a real difference in children’s lives.

(Note: While this invitation only mentions the Fayetteville Schools, every school would be grateful for interested individuals to step forward and help with the many needs that are not met for lack of attention and/or resources. It takes a village. JEH)

Consensus Activity & Holiday Celebration

In recognition of the concern about the rising childhood poverty rates in Arkansas, LWVWC will conduct a short consensus activity to conclude our local study. This action will establish a position for our Program for Action. A holiday social will follow where non-members are welcome to attend. These activities will take place at The Lodge, a new feature of Butterfield Trails Village. Volunteers interested in helping with this activity are asked to contact Libby Wheeler at 521-1158.

Detailed directions to “The Lodge”: Turn off Joyce Blvd. into the Butterfield Trails Village entrance. Take an immediate right then left to follow the side street in front of the duplexes. You will be headed south. You will then come to a stop sign. Proceed and then take the next left into the Lodge parking lot.

Legislative Luncheon

League members will have an opportunity to hear Washington County Legislators discuss the upcoming session of the Arkansas Legislature on November 15, 11:30 – 1:00 at the Pat Walker Center for Seniors. Here is your opportunity to hear what your representatives are thinking will be the hot issues. It will also be the first chance for newly seated legislators to hear the League's top interests and concerns. Feel free to invite non-members to attend this luncheon and participate in the question and answer session.

A catered lunch will be available for \$10.00 to those making reservations. A box lunch will be provided by Southern Hospitality Catering with a vegetarian choice available on request.

Clay's special chicken salad with walnuts, green apple, & lettuce croissant sandwich
or

Smoked gouda and Swiss cheese with lettuce and tomato croissant sandwich
Sun chips Fresh fruit cup Chef's choice pastry Ghirardelli chocolate squares

Call Joyce Hale at 527-2777 or email joycehale43@gmail.com BEFORE WED., NOV. 10 to make your reservation and meal choice.

Dizzy, Daffy and Disorderly

The League of Women Voters of Washington County takes great pride in member Laura Kellams role as a co-emcee with her husband Kyle for the 2010 Northwest Arkansas Gridiron. We are so proud of her contributions to roast local, state and national politicians for our sister organization, American Association of University Women and the organization made up of people we want to influence, the Society of Professional Journalists. Laura and Kyle presented themselves as George and Gracie Allen but we didn't buy that. They called out all the politicians in the audience with gusto and made sure that everyone knew that being in politics is just plain old fun. So glad that Laura could introduce "The Supremes", our three female supreme court justices, "Sarah's Signin' at Sam's" and "Votataxavengerin", a Tea Party intoxicant for the masses. Laura made us proud of our ninety years of the right to vote – just look how far we've come!

MANY THANKS to Our Candidate Forum Volunteers!

When viewing the television interviews of LWVWC Candidate Forums, the many volunteers behind the scenes are not known. A special thanks goes out to Bootsie Ackerman, Nancy Allen, Lois Alward, Jo Bennett, Judy Carey, Mary Dillard, Genie Donovan, Anna Jacob, Misty Newcomb, Susan Rausch, Ann Rosso, Mary Alice Serafini, Barbara Taylor, Janice Torbett, and Libby Wheeler for helping make this contribution to an informed public possible! A special thanks to Kristie Spielmaker for her hours of organizational efforts and Bettie Lu Lancaster for heading up Voter Services.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

If you still need to renew, please provide the information requested below. As you may be aware the national LWVUS has increased our Per Member Payment (PMP). In an effort to keep from raising local dues, the LWVAR Board voted to reduce the state's charges from \$10.00 per member to \$5.00. This will allow the local Leagues to keep their dues at the same level this year even with the LWVUS increase.

New Member or Renewal Application & Interest Survey Form

Name _____ Date _____ New/Renewal _____

Address _____ City/Zip _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail (Please print carefully) _____

**Dues: Individual Membership, \$40 Family Membership, \$60 Student, \$20
Please mail your check to LWVWC, P. O. Box 4, Fayetteville, AR72702**

Please check items you might be interested in helping with:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Voter Registration _____ | Provide a Facility/Home for Meetings _____ |
| Help with TV Candidate Forums _____ | Provide Transportation to Meetings _____ |
| Help with Publicity, Displays, or Posters _____ | Attend City Council, Planning Commission,
Task Force, Quorum Court, etc. Meetings
when needed _____ |
| Assist with Mailings ___ or Telephoning _____ | Video Record or Photograph Activities _____ |
| Provide Food for Events _____ | Other _____ |
| Newsletter Writing _____ | |
| Lobby State Legislature _____ | |

I wish to receive calls to action on areas in which I might be interested: Social Policies _____

Voting & Governance _____ Environment _____ Education _____ All League Concerns _____

I wish to limit my membership to receiving the news letter. _____

I do not wish to join, but would like to make a contribution (any amount appreciated). _____

Thank you to our members who have just joined or renewed for the 2010-2011 fiscal year:

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Lois Alward | Joyce Hale | William Schreckhise |
| Wanda Belzung | DeDe Long | Dr. James Scroggs |
| Anita F. Bukey | Ann Mesrobian | Dr. Jane Scroggs |
| Judith Carey | Izola P. Morgan | Phil Serafini |
| Robert Caulk | Mary Bess Mulhollan | Mary Alice Serafini |
| Sara Caulk | Jeanine Neuse | Betty Solis |
| Bethel Cunningham | Steven M. Neuse | Wanda B. Stephens |
| Mary Dillard | Linda Nicometo | Bobbie Nell Templeton |
| Eugenia Donovan | Dr. Janine Parry | Gladys Tiffany |
| Jenni Echols | J. P. Peters | Martha Ward |
| Harriet H. Jansma | Dr. Susan Rausch | Elizabeth Wheeler |
| Sally Kelley | Karen Rollet-Crocker | Amy Wilson |
| Jay Hale | HealthSchneller | Dina Wood |

Transportation Availability for All is Deficient in NW Arkansas

Karen Rollet-Crocker, Transportation Representative and Action Chair, has attended many Ozark Regional Transit and composed a September 21, 2010, letter of support from the League of Women Voters. Joyce Hale signed this "Letter of Support for Achieving an Adequate Funding Level for the Ozark Regional Transit System". As the only regional transit system, ridership has increased substantially (paratransit ridership has risen 62% in the last year). ORT faces possible reduction in federal and local funding in the next two years and needs the support of all Northwest Arkansas communities and residents.

Karen and Sara Cain-Bartlett have outlined the topics and current transit concerns to be addressed in the **LWV April, 2011** program. The elderly, disabled, and low income residents of our area must be guaranteed access to accessible and reliable transportation to meet their needs. Topics to be addressed will include the special needs of the frail and disabled who depend on community transportation resources, the requirements of public transit systems to provide services to the disabled, community resources addressing these special needs, future changes in funding for NW Arkansas public transportation services when the area population exceeds 200,000, current needs identified for additional services, the needs of low income area residents to have dependable and flexible access to public transportation, and the role of NW Arkansas residents to advocate and support these special populations.

Marge Zinke will also be participating as a member of this program committee. Please refer any interested members to Karen to help in research, attend community meetings and in planning the program.

Stream-side Advocacy Needed from LWVWC Members

The City of Fayetteville is proposing a controversial ordinance to protect water quality by restricting activity within 50 feet of streams and creeks. Water quality has been a long-standing priority with the local and state Leagues. Individuals interested in monitoring this issue by attending meetings or writing letters to the editor are badly needed. If willing to help, call Joyce Hale at 527-2777.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
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