

# The Voter

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Plano/Collin County

February 2007

## Election News

By Jan Sand

There will be a Plano Independent School District Board (PISD) election May 12, 2007. There will NOT be a Plano City Council election OR a Collin County Community College Board of Trustees election. Duncan Webb, PISD Board, will seek re-election for a 4<sup>th</sup> term in Place 1. All members are welcome to submit questions for candidates. Mary Beth King will run again for Place 2. The filing period for all candidates is Feb. 10—March 10.

## The League of Women Voters

Plano/Collin County and Richardson  
Present a Public Forum

### "Assessing the Assessment: TAKS Testing In Our Public Schools"

**February 27, 2007 - 7:00 P.M.**  
**Carpenter Recreation Center**  
**6701 Coit Road**  
**Plano, TX**

Panel participants:

James Ashby - Director of Assessment and Accountability - PISD

Patti Kieker - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum - RISD

Lee Holcombe - Director of Evaluation & Special Projects - UTD

Erica Castille - Principal, Parkhill Jr High - RISD

## Calendar

### February 2007

27 - "Assessing the Assessment: TAKS Testing In Texas Public Schools", 7 pm, Carpenter Recreation Center, 6701 Coit Rd., Plano

### March 2007

29 - Program on Water Planning

### April 2007

18 - 7 p.m., LWVP/CC Board Meeting

### May 2007

19 -10:15 a.m., Annual Meeting

*All board meetings are open to all members and are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM.*

## LWVP/CC Nominations

By Charlotte Mills

Annual meeting is coming up soon on May 19<sup>th</sup> and, with it, the nominees who will run for offices in the League. We have the following offices: President (or co-Presidents), Secretary, Treasurer, Program VP, Organization VP, Fundraising, Voter Service, Bylaws Chair, Nominating, Web Site Manager, Action Manager, VOTER Editor, Membership, and Publicity. I will be checking with those in office now to see if they are willing to continue. Then I will be calling the rest of our members with the hope that they will be willing to fill the vacancies. I think you'll agree that this has been a great year for the League. We have many accomplishments this year and I think the Board deserves a round of applause for their leadership.

Call, or e-mail, me if you have a burning desire to serve.

Charlotte Mills, 972-208-2434 - [cbmills@aol.com](mailto:cbmills@aol.com)

## Sympathy

Our sympathy to Board member Nancy Machen after the death of her mother in January.

## Legislator Interviews

Thanks to LWV volunteers who interviewed legislators locally for LWVTX before the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. Janice Schieffer, Jan Sand, Tom Jones, Donna Bening, and Jackie Fleschman interviewed the legislators.

### When You Go To Austin By Janice Schieffer

The LWV-TX announced that their new brochure, "When You Go To Austin; A Guide to the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature" has been printed and is available to be picked up or shipped to local Leagues. Printing was delayed until legislative committee assignments had been completed. We expect to have them on-hand for distribution to Plano/Collin County libraries, the community college campuses, and available at our meetings.

Look for more information through your local league or via e-mail, [lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org](mailto:lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org).

## Thanks to LWV Volunteers

Diane Eberly provided decorated Christmas Trees and members sold raffle tickets for the drawing December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mick and Pat McBee hosted the December Social Gathering for members at their home. We missed those who could not attend and enjoyed those who came. A special "Thank You" to Mick and Pat McBee.

## Naturalized Citizens By Jan Sand

Your LWV Chapter helped about 50 newly naturalized citizens register to vote at the Naturalization Ceremony at the Plano Center February 1<sup>st</sup>. Many thanks to Pat Lawson, Rosemarie Petrich, Charlotte Mills, and Jan Sand who helped in the registration. The next ceremony is scheduled for May 22, and more League members are encouraged to go to McKinney to be deputized. The Elections Office is at 2010 Redbud, phone 972-547-1990. The next election will be May 12 for Plano Independent School District (PISD) trustees Places 1, 2, and 3. The trustees have overlapping terms of 3 years, so there is an election every year. The school district will have its own candidates' forum on April 24, at 2700 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, for the public. We will make a decision later as to whether to have a candidates' forum of our own. We will definitely post responses to our questions for School Board candidates on our website. We invite members to submit suggestions for questions in time for Board approval February 21.

## How are we doing on our Goals 2006-07?

1. **Membership:** We will increase our membership.
2. **Program:** We will educate our members and the community.
3. **Voters Service:** We will register voters prior to elections, provide moderators for candidate forums and train moderators for future forums. We will offer more public service announcements.
4. **Community Outreach:** We will work with other community organizations with similar purposes such as AAUW, Asian Americans, etc., and with other area leagues, such as Richardson, to have joint programs.
5. **Program Action:** (Political action on a Consensus Item) We will act in coalition with at least one other organization interested in indigent health care.
6. **VOTER:** We will publish THE VOTER at least quarterly and will diversify the content.
7. **Fundraising:** We will increase the yield on our savings and look for new sources of income.

## LWV of Plano/Collin County Current board members & how to reach us

(Board meetings are held on the third Wed., 7 PM)

Co-Presidents – Pat Lawson, [pat2520@verizon.net](mailto:pat2520@verizon.net)

Donna Bening, [donnabening@tx.rr.com](mailto:donnabening@tx.rr.com)

Secretary Jackie Fleschman, [jfleschman@aol.com](mailto:jfleschman@aol.com)

Treasurer Brenda Levy, [levymediator@aol.com](mailto:levymediator@aol.com)

Fundraising

Organization V.P. Pat McBee [patmcbee@earthlink.net](mailto:patmcbee@earthlink.net)

Program V.P. Erma Spencer [e8839@flash.net](mailto:e8839@flash.net)

Membership Sharon Goldgar, [sharon@goldgar.com](mailto:sharon@goldgar.com)

Publicity Nancy Machen [nancy.machen@ca.com](mailto:nancy.machen@ca.com)

Bylaws Barbara Hotinski,  
[richard.hotinski@verizon.net](mailto:richard.hotinski@verizon.net)

Voter Services Jan Sand, [resand@tx.rr.com](mailto:resand@tx.rr.com)

Website Carol Worthington, [cjrw722@aol.com](mailto:cjrw722@aol.com)

Nominations Charlotte Mills, [cbmills@aol.com](mailto:cbmills@aol.com)

VOTER Editor Grace Morrison, [gracem4@verizon.net](mailto:gracem4@verizon.net)

## 2007 LWVUS Advocacy Priorities

The LWVUS Board voted unanimously at their January meeting to adopt the following 2007 Advocacy priorities: Campaign Finance Reform, Civil Liberties, DC Voting Rights, Election Administration, Ethics and Lobbying Reform, Global Climate Change, and Healthcare Reform. In addition, the Board reaffirmed the League's commitment to maximizing voter education and participation in the months leading up to the 2007 and 2008 election seasons. (from LWVUS President Mary Wilson's message to local League leaders 2-1-07) Please respond to the Action Alerts as LWVUS sends them to local Leagues during the Congressional session.

## Happy 87<sup>th</sup> Birthday LWV

"The League of Women Voters celebrated its 87<sup>th</sup> Birthday February 14. As the League honors the years of work its members accomplished, it is also looking to the future. In 2007, as it has for the past 87 years, League members will continue their commitment to improving communities across the country.

As we celebrate, we remain focused on the future, working to keep local, state and national government strong and healthy. This year the League remains committed to our mission to educate and engage members of the community in their government."

The LWV Plano/Collin County has an active agenda this year including a forum about understanding Texas county government, a forum on immigration policy, candidates forums before the elections, distributing voters guides, registering new voters, an update about indigent health care in Collin County, a forum on TAKS testing in Texas, and a forum about water planning in this region.

The League of Women Voters is the organization where information and advocacy can lead to civic improvement. For 87 years in the U.S. and 32 years in this county, League members have strived to make democracy work for its citizens. Our members work toward that goal every day with voter services, advocacy for natural resources, improving our election systems and holding public forums on government transparency and other important issues.

The League invites anyone who wants to affect change in Plano and Collin County to join us. Call 972-964-3335 or see our website: [www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org).

## LWVUS Immigration Study

The LWVUS Board voted to shorten the LWVUS Immigration Study from a three-year study to a two-year study. Under the new timeline, LWVUS will distribute a Leader's Guide, including consensus questions, in August 2007, and consensus forms will be due back in the national office by February 1, 2008. Using these responses, the Immigration Study Committee will prepare a position statement for Board approval at their spring 2008 meeting. Immigration Study Committee background materials are already available on the website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). Plan to include this in local League calendar planning for 2007-2008.

## Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Update By Janice Schieffer

On January 11, 2007, I attended a National Town Hall Meeting on Children's Health Coverage at the Children's Medical Center in Dallas. The Dallas Town Hall portion of the meeting featured a number of local representatives in person, as well as taped presentations from U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison and Texas Senator Royce West. The National Town Hall Meeting portion, which was broadcast from Washington, D.C., to 35 hospitals throughout the country, featured a discussion, moderated by Susan Dentzer of *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, by four U.S. Senators: Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR).

The State Children's Health Insurance program (SCHIP), enacted by Congress in 1997, provides authorization and funding for the CHIP programs offered by the states. The authorization for SCHIP will expire this year, and the four senators named above are working to re-authorize the program. Supporters of CHIP are being asked to sign a petition to the Congress and the President to enact legislation that will provide comprehensive, affordable, high-quality health coverage for all children.

The petition can be signed online at [www.childrenshealthcampaign.org](http://www.childrenshealthcampaign.org).

We are also asking our governor and state legislators to support improvements in CHIP and the Children's Medicaid program during the 80<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas Legislature. Texas has the nation's highest rate of uninsured children, with one in five kids lacking coverage. You can send a message to your legislators online at <http://capwiz.com/childtx/state/main/?state=TX>. (Click on the TAKE ACTION button to send an e-mail to the representatives for the address you enter.) Full funding of Medicaid and CHIP was one of the top three priorities for LWV-TX Lobby Day in Austin on January 30 (see separate article).

In addition, the Dallas Area CHIP Coalition is sponsoring an outreach event at Carnival/Minyard stores on Saturday, February 17, and Martha Dorris (CHIP advocate from LWV-Richardson) is arranging CHIP sign-up events at various Richardson schools during February. For more information about CHIP and/or these outreach events, contact Janice Schieffer ([janice@schieffer.us](mailto:janice@schieffer.us), 214-415-3476).

**Join the League of Women Voters of  
Plano/Collin County and Make a Difference**

Joining locally automatically adds your membership in the LWV of the US and LWV Texas. Annual dues are not tax deductible. Single Membership Dues: \$55

Would you like to become involved in supporting your League by participating in committees?

- Education
- Action
- Transportation
- Healthcare
- Publicity
- Open Space/Land Use/Water Use
- Voter Services
- Fundraising
- Membership

To become a member of the LWV Plano/Collin County:  
Send a check for your annual dues (not tax deductible)  
 Dues \$55

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone & e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: LWV P/CC  
P.O. Box 866592  
Plano, TX 75086-6592

The League of Women Voters is a 501(c) 4 organization in the eyes of the IRS and contributions are not deductible unless the check is made payable to the LWV Texas Education Fund, "Plano/Collin County account" noted in the memo line, and mailed to the same address.

WEB SITES: Lwvus.org  
Lwvtexas.org  
Lwvcollin.org

**The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.**

**LWV-TX Lobby Day, January 30, 2007**

By Janice Schieffer

Having just joined the League of Women Voters less than a year ago, I was attending Lobby Day in Austin for the first time. As I walked from the parking garage to the capitol, I struck up a conversation with another attendee, a member of the LWV in Pasadena, near Houston, and together we managed to find the conference room.

First on the agenda was breakfast with state legislators and other League members. The LWV-TX had invited all the senators and representatives to join us, but only a handful were able to attend, although others were represented by their aides. Senator Jeff Wentworth, the featured speaker, discussed some of the bills coming up in the session. He said he wasn't sure why he, out of all the legislators, was asked to speak at the meeting, but he thought it had something to do with the fact that his mother used to be a member of the LWV. Later he invited us to go to the visitors' gallery of the Senate and gave us a nice introduction from the Senate floor.

Various LWV members presented advocacy papers on three priorities for lobbying, as follows:

**1. Provide full funding for Medicaid and CHIP.**

Implement 12-month eligibility and fix problems with the Integrated Eligibility System to prevent eligible children from losing coverage. Eliminate the asset test and 90-day waiting period for CHIP, and allow the deduction of child care expenses from income.

**2. Require recorded votes.**

Support a Constitutional amendment to require that votes in the Texas legislature be recorded and made readily available to the public.

**3. Adopt enforceable standards for air quality.**

Monitor legislation regarding air toxins and adopt enforceable standards, including regulation and reduction of ambient toxic-air pollutants, measures to reduce vehicular emissions, and regulation and reduction of pollution from stationary sources. Regarding the applications for permits to build coal-fired power plants, we support postponing the permits until we know the overall cumulative impact, rather than only considering each application individually.

After the morning session and lunch, I teamed up with Janet Imhoff to visit the Plano/Collin County legislators. We left LWV Advocacy materials (and cookies decorated with the LWV logo) for Senator Florence Shapiro, Representative Brian McCall and Representative Jerry Madden, although we didn't get a chance to talk to any of them. The offices of the other Plano/Collin County legislators (Paxton, Laubenberg) were locked. However, the LWV-TX plans to provide materials to all legislators who did not receive them on Lobby Day.