

# The Voter

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Plano/Collin County TX February, March 2010

## Events Calendar – February

See Primary Voters Guide at [www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org)

- 9 - 7 p.m., LWV Forum on Judicial Campaigns  
Richardson Civic Center, 411 W. Arapaho  
at US #75
- 13 – 10:30-5:30, LWV Candidates Forum,  
Parr Library, Plano
- 16 – First day of early voting for TX Primaries.
- 17 – 7:30-8:45 p.m. – State Board of Education  
Candidates forum, Districts 9 & 12
- 22 – 11-1 p.m., LWV Voter Registration,  
Collin College, McKinney campus
- 23 – 11-1 p.m., LWV Voter Registration,  
Collin College, Frisco campus
- 24 – 11-1 p.m., LWV Voter Registration,  
Collin College, Spring Creek-Plano campus
- 24 – 1 p.m., AARP Candidates forum for  
Collin County Commissioner candidates,  
Room C, Plano Senior Center, 401 W. 16<sup>th</sup>.
- 24 – 7 p.m., LWVP/CC Board meeting, Christ  
United Methodist Church, room C-225
- 26 – 11 -12 noon, Presentation on Taking  
U.S. Census, at the Plano Senior Center,  
401 W. 16<sup>th</sup> St.

## **March**

- 2 – 7 a.m.-7 p.m. TX Partisan Primary Election  
Followed by precinct conventions for  
Democratic and Republican parties
- 6 – 10:30—11:30 a.m., LWV Candidates Forum  
at Schimelpfenig Library, Plano for  
Plano City Council candidates in Run-Off.
- 11 –10-2 p.m ., Voter Registration at 3 Collin  
College campuses
- 17 – 7 p.m., LWVP/CC Board Meeting, Christ  
United Methodist Church, room C-225
- 20 – 7-7 p.m. Run-off Election Voting for Plano  
City Council vacancy
- 27 – noon, at Ralph & Kacoos, Allen TX, LWV  
celebration of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
the LWVUS and the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment

## **April**

- 5-7 10-2, Voter Registration, Collin Colleges

## **Elections 2010 Have Begun !**

**By Janice Schieffer, Voter Services Chair**

Check out the new **Elections 2010** page on our League website, [www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org) for a look at our busy election year – elections, runoffs, candidate forums, voters guides, voter registration! Here's a summary of the election activity so far:

### **Plano City Council Place 3, Special Election:**

When Mabrie Jackson resigned from her Plano City Council seat to run for Texas House District 66, the city scheduled a special election for Jan. 30. We were unable to get all three candidates together for a candidate forum, but did produce a **Voters Guide**, which is on the website. Two candidates, André Davidson and Cathy Fang, are now in a **runoff election** scheduled for **March 20**. They will appear at an **LWV P/CC Candidate Forum Sat., Mar. 6, 10:30-11:30 a.m.**, Schimelpfenig Library, 5024 Custer Road, Plano.

**March 2 Primary Elections:** The Republican and Democratic parties will have primary elections on March 2 to select their candidates for the November general election. Many Libertarian and Independent candidates have also filed for office. **Early voting is Feb. 16-26.**

There are 61 candidates running for Collin County area offices, from U.S. Congressional Districts to Justice of the Peace. Of the 61 candidates, 58 plan to participate in our all-day **LWV P/CC Candidate Forum Sat., Feb. 13, 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.**, Parr Library, 6200 Windhaven Parkway, Plano.

**The Feb. 13** forum will feature five sessions as follows:

Session 1, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., U.S. Congressional Districts 3 and 4 (co-sponsored by LWV of Sherman/Grayson County);

(Feb 13 Candidates Forum, continued):  
Session 2, 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m., State Senate District 8 and State House District 66;  
Session 3, 1:00 – 2:15 p.m., Collin County Judge and Commissioners;  
Session 4, 2:30 – 3:45 p.m., Collin County District Attorney, District Clerk and District Judges, and  
Session 5, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m., Collin County Court at Law Judges and Justices of the Peace.

In addition, **AARP** of Plano will have a **Collin County Judge and Commissioners Candidate Forum on Wed., Feb. 24, 1:00 p.m.**, at the Plano Senior Center, 401 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, room Lonestar C., Plano. (moderated by LWV P/CC)

#### **State Board of Education Primary Elections:**

The public is invited to meet candidates for the State Board of Education, **Districts 9 and 12**, in a **forum Wed., Feb. 17, 7:30 – 8:45 p.m.**, at the Region 10 Education Service Center, 400 E. Spring Valley Rd., Richardson, TX 75081 (Dallas and Ellis Rooms). The forum is sponsored by LWV of Plano/Collin County, Dallas and Richardson, and the National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Dallas Section.

The candidates for District 9 are incumbent Don McLeroy (Republican), Thomas Ratliff (Republican) and Jeff McGee (Libertarian). District 9 is a multi-county area that includes much of Collin County.

The candidates for District 12 are incumbent Geraldine Miller (Republican), George Clayton (Republican) and Amie Parsons (Libertarian). District 12 includes Rockwall County and parts of Collin and Dallas counties.

**Voters Guides** for the Collin County area races are available on our website, with responses from **55 of the 61 candidates**. In addition, the website has the **LWV Texas Voters Guide for statewide races in both English and Spanish**. Printed copies of the state guide will be distributed by LWV members to libraries, Collin College campuses, chambers of commerce and other public areas throughout the county.

**Voter Registration:** LWV-P/CC will register voters at multiple **ROCK the Vote** events at **Collin College campuses** during the spring. The first events will be 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Feb. 22 (Central Park, McKinney), Feb. 23 (Preston Ridge, Frisco)

and Feb. 24 (Spring Creek, Plano). On Mar. 11 we will be at all three campuses from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The final events will be 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Apr. 5 (Spring Creek, Plano), Apr. 6 (Preston Ridge, Frisco) and Apr. 7 (Central Park, McKinney).

LWV Dallas has also asked LWV-P/CC and LWV Richardson to help register new citizens at the almost-daily ceremonies at the **Las Colinas Citizenship & Naturalization Center**. I will work out a plan with them after we finish our primary election forums.

**Show your support for our League activities! Please plan to attend these forums and invite your friends, neighbors and other organizations. If you can work at a forum, help distribute Voters Guides, or register voters, contact Janice Schieffer, [janice@schieffer.us](mailto:janice@schieffer.us) 214-415-3476.**

#### **Message from the President:**

By Patty Jantho

How do we describe LWV P/CC's schedule at the beginning of 2010? **BUSY** is the operative word and there is something to stimulate the special interests of each one of YOU.

**The Primaries:** Through the tireless efforts of Voter Services Chair Janice Schieffer, we will have a marathon primary election Candidates Forum on **Saturday, February 13** at Parr Library, 6200 Windhaven Library. The forum, 10:30 to 5:30, is divided into four distinct sessions so you can either come for the parts that are of special interest to you or bring a bag lunch and make a day of it. All contested candidates have been invited to come. Only three have formally indicated their unavailability.

Then, we are especially pleased that Janice Schieffer, LWV P/CC, together with the LWV's of Dallas and Richardson and joined by the National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Dallas Section, have planned a **forum with State Board of Education candidates from Districts 9 and 12**. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 17, from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. at Region 10 Education Service Center, 400 E. Spring Valley Road in Richardson. The two incumbents, Don McLeroy (District 9) and Geraldine Miller (District 12) will each be joined by two contenders.

(Message from the President, continued:)

**The Census:** At the urging of the Plano City government, we will hold a public **Census Q & A** at the Plano Senior Center on Friday, Feb. 26 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon, at meal time at the Center. The Census schedule this year is as follows: March 15-17, questionnaires mailed to households; May 1, personal follow up with non-responders. There are only 10 questions. A big effort is being made to obtain as accurate a tabulation as possible—including students living away from home, assisted living individuals and undocumented workers, the most difficult group to reassure about privacy of their response. The census is so important because it affects distribution of U.S. funds to communities, governmental representation and redistricting, planning for schools, hospitals, social services, etc. and does not ask for financial information or SSN.

**Collin County Healthcare:** The LWVP/CC Healthcare Committee is awaiting the publication of the Fact Finding report by the North Texas Health Sciences Center on the county's mental health needs and system of care.

**Women's History Celebration:** On Saturday, March 27 at 12 noon, at Ralph and Kacoos Restaurant in Allen, we will celebrate both the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. We will present a readers theater production about Carrie Chapman Catt, the leading spirit behind the founding of the League of Women Voters. The cast this year is set.

We will be breaking new ground at this luncheon as we present a LWV US inspired "Making Democracy Work" award to Collin County resident(s) who have made a significant difference in the life of the county. Susan Miles is chairing the selection committee.

So mark your calendars now for the last Saturday in March, Women's History month. More details to follow about reservations.

Everything we do is, a celebration of the work of women, joined by supportive men. We look forward to seeing YOU at the above listed events. --- Patty Jantho, President

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## **LWVUS 2010 Legislative Priorities (NEW Feb. 4)**

After a review of congressional action in 2009 and a discussion of expected activity in 2010, the LWVUS Board of Directors has adopted the following Legislative Priorities for 2010: Global Climate Change, Health Care Reform, and Money in Elections (campaign finance reform). On the Legislative Watch List are: Arms Control, DC Voting Rights, Election Reform, Ethics and Lobbying Reform, and UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This Watch List includes issues which need to be monitored for action opportunities in the 111th Congress. It is understood that the Board will have opportunities to review the priorities throughout the year to make changes if the situation requires it.

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## **What Happened to the National Popular Vote Compact Consensus?**

The requirement for 2/3 of participating Leagues to achieve consensus on the use of the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact, was not achieved. About 50% of responding Leagues were in favor; however, the remaining 50% were split almost equally between not favoring the NPV Compact or not being able to reach consensus. ....In conclusion, the committees recommend a statement of our position based on the consensus reports from local Leagues: "The LWVUS affirms its support for the direct election of the president and abolition of the Electoral College, but the LWVUS has no position on the National Popular Vote Compact as currently proposed." (from the LWVUS NPV Compact Committee and the Program Planning Committee.)

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**LWVUS and LWVTX Program Planning Report:** By Janet Imhoff, Program Vice President: Send your ideas for local Program Planning, local studies or updates, by March 17, to [janimhoff@tx.rr.com](mailto:janimhoff@tx.rr.com)

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## Observer Reports in Brief

**Collin County Commissioners Court:** Jan. 4, 11, and Feb. 1, 2010 – Items of Interest:

**Jan. 4:** Amended the budget in the amount of \$25,306.48 utilizing Drug Forfeiture fund to purchase equipment for the District Attorney Emergency Response Team...not subject to approval by the Commissioners Court....The DA wants to purchase weapons to be used by their Emergency Response Team. Various commissioners questioned the request, but no vote was taken.

(*Dallas Morning News* reporter Ed Housewright also wrote an article about the proposal.)

-A junkyard in Wylie requested approval to continue at a site in the Wylie ETJ; public hearing closed, after statements for and against, without a decision while commissioners await Wylie opinion.

-The HR manager reported on a comparison of 20 employees' use of heart testing available. Commissioners did not want to stop anyone from taking the full set of heart tests, but they wanted the employees to see a primary care doctor first to advise about taking the tests.

--Ruben Delgado, Engineering, reported on preliminary cost analysis of the Dallas North Tollway service road construction. Commissioners noted that Collin County RTR funds are now backstopping TXDOT shortfalls.

**Jan. 11:**

--Speaker questioned the DA's use of drug forfeiture funds to purchase weapons for an Emergency Response Team.

--Collin County Health Care Foundation report on contract with Journey of Hope Grief Support Center to provide assistance to low income and uninsured citizens of Collin County who need grief counseling. The request for \$5,004.08 was part of \$200,000 allocated to nonprofits for medical services to indigents. Motion to not approve the agreement passed 3-2 . Noted disagreement whether grief counseling is a medical service.

-Capital projects at the Collin County Adventure Camp (a joint venture between the county and the Dallas YMCA) requesting \$1.78 million in county bond funds; (four items were approved; and remaining items will be reviewed.) County Administrator said that bond \$ cannot be used for maintenance.

--Commissioners approved a mission statement; six sessions will be devoted to the next steps.

**Feb. 1:**

--Joe Jaynes reported that North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG—regional planning agency and pass-through agency for TX and federal funding) has been trying to get funds back from TX Dept. Of Transportation (TxDOT), but TxDOT ran out of money in October 2009. North Texas Transit Authority (NTTA ) co-signed with TxDot for gas tax money as a backstop if the tolls are not enough. In the distribution of federal stimulus money Collin County received 4.4% of NCTCOG distribution although we represent approx. 11% of the regional population.

--Census 2010: The census form is available in six languages. It is not available online. The census does not ask for financial information or Social Security numbers. Approx. 1 in 6 households gets the long form every 2-3 years. The census affects distribution of funds to communities and it affects redistricting and representation. Collin County had a 74% response rate in 2000.

--Collin County will consider using E-Verify to verify citizenship of new employees for hiring on projects. Currently, the county requires vendors to comply with the Immigration & Naturalization Act. The county contacts Social Security Administration for its own employees. E-Verify would not be required for off-the-shelf product purchases.

(condensed from Janice Schieffer's, observer report.)

**LWV Richardson Sponsors:  
at Richardson Civic Center,  
411 West Arapaho Rd  
(972-744-4094)**

**“Voting Responsibly for Judicial  
Candidates”**

**Speakers:**

**Dr. Anthony Champagne, Professor,  
In the School of Economic, Political  
and Policy Sciences at UT at Dallas**

**Keven Ann Willey, Vice President and  
EditorialPage Editor, Dallas Morning  
News**

**Moderator will be Jeff Whittington,  
Senior Producer and Host,  
KERA/KXT**

**Written questions from the audience  
will be considered.**

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**Wed., Feb. 17  
7:30-8:45 p.m.  
Meet and Question  
Candidates for TX Board of  
Education, Dist. 9 & 12.  
at  
Region 10 Education Service  
Center, 400 E. Spring Valley  
Rd., Richardson**

**Sponsored by LWV Plano/Collin County,  
LWV's of Dallas, Richardson,  
National Council of Jewish Women**

**Mark your 2010 Calendars**

**LWV Texas Convention, April 23-25,  
San Marcos TX – Embassy Suites Hotel  
(we are entitled to three delegates)**

**LWVUS Convention,  
June 11-15,  
Atlanta GA  
(we are entitled to one delegate)**

**LWV Plano/Collin County Annual Meeting  
Sat., May 22 – for all local members**

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**LWV of Plano/Collin County  
Offers Free Public Forum**

**Meet the Candidates  
For Collin County Primary  
Elections:**

**Saturday, Feb. 13, 2010  
Parr Library, Plano  
6200 Windhaven Parkway**

**10:30-11:30 a.m. – US House  
11:30-12:45 – TX Senate &  
House  
1:00—2:15 – Collin County  
Commissioners Court  
2:30—3:45 – Collin County  
District Attorney, Clerk  
and Judges  
4:00--5:30 – Collin County  
Court at Law judges and  
Justices of the Peace**

**Written questions from the audience will be  
considered.**

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## LWVTX Primary Voters Guide

The state-wide Voters Guide for the primary election on March 2 was available to local Leagues via e-mail by the end of January if they integrate their local races with that content for local publication. The Primary Voters Guide from LWVTX Education Fund will be available on line at [www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org) or in print as distributed by local leagues.

## LWVUS and LWVTX Action Alert

H.R. 1826, The Fair Elections Act, needs a push from League members. Contact your representative in Congress and ask them to join 117 House members to co-sponsor legislation that would provide public financing for elective Congressional office.

On January 21, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed a century of reasonable restrictions on how corporations and unions may make political campaign contributions. This decision is an open invitation for undue influence over the legislative process. Public financing of campaigns is one way of restricting the amount of influence that comes from corporate and union money. The Court decision also puts in jeopardy Texas' 100-year-old ban on corporate and union contributions to political campaigns.

Public confidence in the electoral process has eroded because voters think they have no voice in the process. Public financing would level the playing field, reduce the costs of running for political office, and lower the influence on legislation from special corporate interests. Public financing would also make it possible for challengers to compete more effectively with incumbents.

Seven states and two cities have some form of public financing. To qualify, candidates must collect a certain amount of small donations. These would be matched by funds from designated sources, thus reducing or eliminating the need for private donations. Among the issues addressed, H.R. 1826 would establish a Fair Elections Fund, with eligibility, contribution, and expenditure requirements. It would also create a Fair Elections Oversight Board; it would reform advertising by amending the Communications Act of 1934.

## LWV Plano/Collin County Needs Your Help.

Please submit names and addresses for mailing our February letter asking for community support for our valuable services. Please e-mail your list of potentially generous individuals or businesses in Collin County to Meg Titus, our Fundraising Chair, ASAP. [meg@teamtitus.net](mailto:meg@teamtitus.net)

Who are likely recipients of this letter? Doctors, Dentists, Attorneys, CPA's, Engineers, Friends, Family – anyone you believe to be supportive of LWV. THANKS.

When YOU receive a letter from the League soliciting donations from both members and non-members, we appreciate your generosity.

### Join and Renew: League of Women Voters

Inquire at LWV Voice Mail: 972-964-3335 or our website: [www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org)

To become a member of the LWV Plano/Collin County, send a check for your annual dues

to: LWV P/CC  
P.O. Box 866592  
Plano, TX 75086-6592  
\_\_\_\_ Single \$55,  
\_\_\_\_ Household \$80,= 2 or more at same address

Joining locally automatically adds your membership in the LWV of the U.S. and LWV Texas.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about us?

Would you like to become more involved? Please tell us your League interests:

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

**THANK YOU.**