



# League Lines

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Larimer County

## Administrative Team

Rosemary Bergstrom  
206-0442  
rosemary.bergstrom@gmail.com

Judy Bushnell  
493-9674  
jabms@frii.com

Judy Filusch  
377-2464  
filusch@msn.com

Irene Fortune  
613-0966  
vladimir1992@hotmail.com

Linda Hutchinson  
667-9214  
lindahutchinson@frii.com

Charlotte Rehnberg  
224-2173  
rehnbeg@comcast.net

Carol Rush  
667-5077  
crush@frii.com

Mary Jo Shafer  
482-4399  
mjshafe@msn.com

Barbara Smith  
224-3892  
basmith@lamar.colostate.edu

## November Calendar of Events

Tues, 11/4 7 am—7 pm	Election Day
Wed, Nov. 5 1 pm	Growth Team meeting Georgia Locker's, 713 Duke Square, Ft. Collins
Thurs, 11/6 Noon—2	Admin Team meeting Rosemary Bergstrom's, 627 Atwood Ct., Ft. Collins
Thurs, 11/6 2 pm	Membership Team meeting Linda Mahan's, 708 Birky Place, Ft. Collins
Sat, 11/8	Rosters Are Ready for Pick Up!! In Fort Collins: Linda Mahan's, 708 Birky Place In Loveland: Linda Hutchinson's, 216 W. 4th St.
Mon, 11/10 11:30—1:30	Great Decisions, Iraq: End Game, Plymouth Congregational Church, 916 West Prospect Road, Ft. Collins
Mon, 11/17 7—9 pm	Growth Team presents: Community Separators Harmony Library, 4616 South Shields, Ft. Collins

### *Coming in December*

Fri, 12/5 6—8 pm	Annual Legislative Party Bonnie Baird's, 1107 Pheasant Drive, Ft. Collins
---------------------	--

### *Inside this Issue...*

Meeting on Community Separators	2	Membership Corner	4
Annual Legislative Party	2	Tidbit on Health Care	4
Great Decisions	2	LWVCO League Day	4
Green Web Shop	2	Colorado Courts	5
Financial Development Team	3	19th Old-Fashioned Political Rally	6
National Popular Vote Contract	3	Letter to Secretary of State	6
6th Annual UN Seminar	3	Western Suffrage "Firsts"	7
Program Planning/Local Issues	3	UNA	7

## Meeting on Community Separators

Are you concerned that the cities in northern Colorado will grow together like those in the Denver area? Could the borders of Windsor, Timnath, and Fort Collins be obliterated? How far south will Wellington grow? What about Loveland, Johnstown, and Berthoud? Come to a League of Women Voters meeting at the Harmony Library concerning community separators on Monday evening, November 17, from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. It is being sponsored by the Growth Team for League members and the public. We will have a panel of officials and members of the local communities and Larimer County. Following their presentations, these people will be open to your questions so please bring them, along with a friend, to the meeting.

### PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE PARTY DECEMBER 5, 2008, 6-8 PM

How would you like to meet your newly elected state legislators? Here is your chance to eat, drink, and talk politics with your elected officials. The League's Annual Legislative Party will be on Friday, December 5, 2008, 6-8 PM at the home of Bonnie Baird. League members and their spouses and friends are invited to join us for wine, hors d'oeuvres, coffee and dessert. Social hour will be from 6-6:45 PM. The legislators will discuss issues they expect to be prominent in the 2009 Legislative Session, and respond to prepared questions.

If you can bring wine or hors d'oeuvres please call Jean Blaylock at 970 282-0201 or e-mail at [lynnjean@comcast.net](mailto:lynnjean@comcast.net).

**DIRECTIONS TO BONNIE'S HOUSE - 1107 Pheasant Drive, Fort Collins, CO.**

**FROM FORT COLLINS** - take Harmony Road to Lemay, go south on Lemay to The Paragon entrance sign and turn left followed by an immediate left onto Pheasant Drive. 1107 is the first house on the right. There is a traffic light on Lemay at this intersection. The Paragon sign will be on the left side of Lemay.

**FROM LOVELAND** - take Highway 287 to Trilby Road, turn right and go to Lemay. Turn left and go north to The Paragon sign on the right. Turn right and take an immediate left onto Pheasant Drive.

## International Relations

### Great Decisions

*A recurring question found in most public opinion polls and on the 2008 presidential campaign trail: What will be the end-game for the U.S. in Iraq? How will U.S. decisions about continued engagement affect Iraq itself, and the Middle East?*

Great Decisions will focus on *Iraq: End Game* on Monday **November 10 (please note the change in date)**. All meetings are held at Plymouth Congregational Church in Fort Collins from 11:30 to 1:30, and guests are always welcome. Contact Kay Easley for further information: 282-0135; [easleykw@aol.com](mailto:easleykw@aol.com).

### What are the topics for Great Decisions 2009?

The topics listed below will be featured in the *Great Decisions 2009* briefing book. The focus of the articles and the order of the topics may change.

- ◆ The U.S. and rising powers
- ◆ Afghanistan and Pakistan
- ◆ Energy and the global economy
- ◆ The Arctic age
- ◆ Egypt in the 21st Century
- ◆ Global food supply
- ◆ Cuba after Castro
- ◆ Universal human rights?

2009 *Great Decisions* books can be preordered by contacting Kay Easley (282-0135; [easleykw@aol.com](mailto:easleykw@aol.com).) The cost is \$18.00, payable when the books arrive in January.

***You don't have to be a yak herder to  
have a positive impact on the  
environment.***

Visit the LWV-Larimer County web store at  
[www.lwv-larimercounty.org](http://www.lwv-larimercounty.org).  
Click Support LWV and then



## Financial Development Team Launches Drive

As pleas for political contributions die down, our own annual campaign asking community members for donations to support the activities of the LWVLC is revving up. We depend on individual contributions from the public to help with our operating expenses. Member dues and donations aren't enough for all we undertake, especially after an election season like this one. Do you know someone, not a League member, whom we could approach for a donation? Please send names and contact information to Carol Rush, [crush@frii.com](mailto:crush@frii.com), or call her at 667-5077. Our League performs a valuable service in the community and we are sure that there are people who would like to give us a boost financially.

## National Popular Vote Contract Gains Favor!

After puzzling over the workings of the Electoral College, maybe more of you are thinking about a change – in the way we elect the top administrative officers of our country! An opportunity to study this issue, and take action on it, is coming our way in February. However, a few good people are needed for the short-term project of compiling and presenting the material to our membership at that time. Would you like to work on such a team? Call Carol Rush to find out more – 667-5077.

Save the date - Saturday, February 21, 2009, for the 6th annual United Nations Seminar: "Rebuilding US Credibility through International Cooperation". The all-day seminar is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Colorado, the Colorado United Nations Association, and the Center for Teaching International Relations and the Josef Krobel School of International Studies, both at the University of Denver. It will be held at the DU School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management. Plan to come for stimulating speakers and provocative discussion!

## Program Planning and Local Issues

As we learned in the October issue of League Lines, our January 2009 general meeting is reserved for Program Planning. In addition to enjoying a fine meal and each other's good company we'll tackle the important work of selecting which programs should be on League's docket at the State and Local level for the next 2 years. In past years, LWVCO has forwarded a selection of State programs among which we could vote. But what about Local programs?

In fact, our Local governmental bodies are the level at which we really should have the most concern. As strong as we may feel about what our government is doing in Denver and in Washington DC, it's our locally elected officials who have the most effect on our future quality of life.

What is Local? County Commissioner and City Council meetings of course, but also Regional Authorities, and Boards and Commissions at the County and City level. Members of these entities are making decisions all day, every day. Are these people setting appropriate priorities and making sound decisions considering the changes, challenges and opportunities that lie just outside our front door or our city limits? How do we even know what's under consideration?

Glad you asked. League of Women Voters has just the answer - most local Leagues maintain an Observer Corps and our League is no exception. Larimer County's League is fortunate to have members observing the County Commissioner meetings and the Affordable Housing Boards in both Fort Collins and Loveland. Their observations have returned vital information in support of League endeavors, timely information to Issue Teams and even catalyzed formation of the Library Funding Study in 2007.

To help bring a wide array of choices to Program Planning in January, the Admin Team encourages members to attend public governmental meetings in their areas of interest, staying alert to issues which may benefit from League study and consider proposing one or more issues at our January 12 Program Planning meeting. You may feel so enlightened by your observation of the meeting of your choice, that you may wish to join Observer Corps and continue observing their activities.

## Membership Corner

### The Roster is Ready!!

Membership Rosters will be available for pick up after November 7.

Fort Collins members can pick up their rosters at Linda Mahan's (call first, 484-2259, 707 Birky Place) and Loveland members can pick their rosters up at Linda Hutchinson's (in a box by the bunny on the porch, 216 West Fourth Street).

### Calling all Members!

High interest in the election issues and candidate campaigns engaged many new people into the political process. NOW is the time to capitalize on the energy and enthusiasm in our community. In this post election season we encourage members to invite a guest to consider the League. Take a look at what's happening this month and ask a friend to join you at a meeting. Most new members join because they were asked. Contact Kathy Winder 484-1341 if you would like to add someone to our mailing list for a 3 month period.

### Roster Addition

Please add the following information to your roster:

#### Linda Turner

950 Blue Heron Ln.

FC 80524

498-9504

[lindajeanturner@msn.com](mailto:lindajeanturner@msn.com)

### If you have a roster addition/change.....

Please contact Nora Dixon at [nora1704@comcast.net](mailto:nora1704@comcast.net) or 631-8896.

### A Tidbit on Team Health Care

Energized by the new national program item and the surge in interest in reform, the Health Care Team will extend its community outreach effort this winter. We are looking for new media outlets to take articles and organizations who would like to hear about reform proposals. The team welcomes suggestions and new team members. Call Linda Mahan 484-2259 for further information.

### LWVCO LEAGUE DAY - September 27, 2008

Nine member of LWVLC attended League Day at the Holiday Inn Select in Denver on September 27, 2008. The morning began with a welcome from LWVCO President Marjory Beal. Lisa Esgar, Deputy Director of the CO Office of State Planning and Budget, discussed Colorado's Financial Situation. We then heard from Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff who talked about his experiences in the House of Representatives this past year. He also gave an in-depth talk about Amendment 59 which concerns Education Funding and TABOR Refunds. Speaker Romanoff is one of the authors of this amendment. Patricia Barela Rivera, Former Director CO District of Small Business Administration and Chairman of "No on 46", spoke about how Affirmative Action Affects Women and Hispanic Business Owners.

After lunch we had an in-depth discussion about the pros and cons of the ballot issues. Several members provided added insights about some of the obscure details of many of them. It was a very interesting and informative discussion. Finally, we discussed the LWVCO positions on the ballot issues and the reasons for them.

The Legislative Action Team wants to encourage as many members as possible to attend League Day next year as well as The Legislative Conference at the State Capitol on January 5, 2009. More information about the Legislative Conference will be coming in the Colorado Voter.

## Colorado Courts: Independent and Accountable

How can judges remain free of pressures from political and interest groups and yet be accountable to the public for their actions? That is the question that has bedeviled reformers concerned about retaining independence and accountability in the judiciary.

Most states select their judges by popular elections. Though this apparently democratic approach seems to ensure a measure of accountability, it also leads to countless problems which go against the need for judicial independence. A *New York Times* headline says it all: "Rendering Justice, With One Eye on Re-election," pointing out that judges often alter their behavior as elections approach. Influence buying, campaign finance irregularities and deal making are often associated with judicial elections, resulting in the politicizing and corrupting of the judiciary.

But here in Colorado, we are fortunate. What makes the process for selecting, evaluating and retaining judges in Colorado the envy of those in other states committed to a fair and independent judiciary?

It is impossible to give a detailed description of this process in League Lines. Instead, what follows is a picture in broad strokes of why the process has worked in Colorado to ensure judicial independence and accountability. For those interested in a more detailed picture, there are a number of web sites where information is available; for starters, we suggest [www.courts.state.co.us](http://www.courts.state.co.us) and [www.cojudicialperformance.com](http://www.cojudicialperformance.com).

**How Judges are Chosen:** when a vacancy occurs in a county or district court, interested attorneys apply to the District Judicial Nominating Commission in their district (there are 22 judicial districts in the state, Larimer County is the 8th). The Commission selects its nominees based on written application, recommendations and personal interviews. Two to three names from among the applicants are then submitted to the governor, who must choose from this list. Commission members are made up of lawyers and non-lawyers (majority), and no more than half plus one may belong to any one political party.

The Supreme Court Nominating Commission nominates candidates for the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, following, more or less, the same procedure as above.

Thus, judges in Colorado do not run in elections. A non-partisan group of lawyers and non-lawyer citizens carefully research the merits and qualifications of those who have applied, sending two or three names to the governor for final selection.

**How Judges Are Held Accountable:** First, all judges come up for retention elections after an initial two-year term. Then, each judge must be retained by voters after the expiration of his or her term (County, 4 years; District, 6 years; Appeals, 8 years; Supreme Court, 10 years); a judge may stand for multiple terms but must retire by age 72.

Second, there are the following safeguards:

(1) a statewide judicial performance commission, again made up of lawyers and non-lawyer citizens, evaluates Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges; (2) a District Judicial Performance Commission (made up of lawyers and non-lawyers) in each of the judicial district (22), reviews the performance of district and county judges in their respective district; and (3) a Judicial Discipline Commission investigates allegations of judicial misconduct and may recommend removal from office by the Supreme Court.

But the important point to note is the thoroughness with which the performance of each judge is assessed in reaching recommendations for retention (or not) by the Commissions. The state Judicial Performance Commission has developed evaluation methods which include such criteria (among others) as knowledge and understanding of the law; communication skills; preparation; management and administrative skills; courtroom demeanor and behavior and sentencing practices. Each Commission sends out survey questionnaires, based on these criteria, to attorneys, including prosecutors, public defenders and private attorneys; litigants; jurors; probation officers; social workers; victims; etc. (for a complete list and procedure, see page 113 -J1 of your Blue Book). All the materials are then collected and gone over carefully before decisions are reached.

The system is probably as fail-proof as possible. As the Fordham Urban Law Journal notes, "judicial performance review in Colorado is the most sophisticated method in the nation for providing information to voters in judicial retention elections." But see for yourselves. The Blue Book (which was mailed to all registered voters) has a short narrative for all judges up for retention election this year, including percentages for retention by lawyers and non-lawyers in the Commission. Though all judges were recommended to be retained in this year's Blue Book, it is interesting to read comments for each judge, showing enthusiasm for some and less enthusiasm for others.

Study your Blue Book for information about the judges up for retention election As LWVCO says, "there is no excuse for a single voter with the interest in becoming informed to 'vote blind.'"

## 19th Old-Fashioned Political Rally

The 19th Old-Fashioned Political Rally was held on October 6 at the Ranch and was another success with over 1,500 people in attendance.

The rally is sponsored by the Loveland Daily Reporter-Herald, the Loveland Chamber of Commerce, and the Larimer County League of Women Voters. We would like to thank the following members for helping with this year's rally:

Deb Bobowski

Susan Bonsall

Carolyn Boyum

Irene Fortune

Marilyn Heller

Linda Hutchinson

Carol Kirkstadt

Carol and John LaBorde

Linda Mahan

Wanda Mayberry

Vicky McLane

Carol Rush

Dixie and Dan Schmatz

Beverly Schmitt-Bacon

Judy Siple

Joan T. Shaffer



The LWVCO has sent the following letter to Secretary of State Coffman:

*Dear Secretary Coffman:*

*The League of Women Voters of Colorado has serious concerns about the potential disqualification of voters who did not check the appropriate box on their voter registration form asking for the following pieces of information:*

- ◆ *Colorado Driver's License Number*
- ◆ *Colorado ID number*
- ◆ *Check a box which indicated that they had neither of the above*
- ◆ *Complete the line requesting the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number*

*We have done an informal survey of our League members around the State who received the Voter Registration Drive (VRD) training conducted by the Secretary of State's office. Our survey revealed that information on the above described issue was provided on an inconsistent basis. Some League members stated that information about the policy was stressed at their training; others said it was mentioned in passing and many said it was simply not covered.*

*We believe if this was a policy adopted to follow state and federal law, it should have been covered in the training materials, and at all voter registration training sessions.*

*The League of Women Voters is trusted for its non-partisan and accurate voter service activities. We also pride ourselves on following the law to the best of our ability. We cannot do our best unless we have complete and accurate information. We fear the inconsistent training methods provided by your office may result in disenfranchised voters. Therefore, we ask that you grant those new voters the benefit of the doubt when determining their eligibility to vote.*

*Sincerely;*

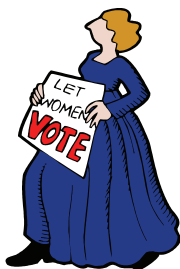
*Marjory Beal, President*

*Gerry Cummins, Voter Service Chair*

## WESTERN SUFFRAGE "FIRSTS"

### DID YOU KNOW.....

- Women in the American West were the first in the world to win full voting rights?
- No state east of the Mississippi River granted women full voting rights before Illinois in 1913?
- Women in all western states except three could vote before the 19th Amendment made suffrage the law of the land in 1920?
- Wyoming was the first US territory to grant suffrage (1869), the first to allow women in juries (1870), and the first state to elect a women governor?
- Utah women were the second to win the right to vote in 1870, but Congress took their right to vote away because of their religion in 1881?
- Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Tennessee were the only southern states to ratify the 19th Amendment?
- The first state where suffrage was put on the ballot was Kansas in 1867?
- The first three women elected to a state legislature were in Colorado in 1894, and Helen Ring Robinson was one of them?
- The first women elected to the US House of Representatives was Jeannette Rankin of Montana?
- New Zealand was the first nation in the world to grant the right to vote to all of its women citizens in 1893?
- Native American women were not granted the right to vote when the 19th Amendment was ratified?



### United National Association

League members and friends are invited to a program on "Balancing Development and the Environment in Ecuador." Jeff Borg, who teaches political science at Front Range Community College and traveled to Ecuador last summer, will be the presenter. The meeting is at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 8 at Plymouth Congregational Church. It is sponsored by the Northern Colorado Chapter of the United Nations Association/USA.

Want to find out more about the United Nations Association? An orientation for new and prospective members will be held on Saturday, November 15 at 2:30 p.m. at the home of the chapter's president, Eleanor Dwight. (907 Sailors Reef, Fort Collins.) League members and friends are welcome. Please call either Eleanor (377-0863) or Margaret Smith (493-3857) to let us know if you're coming.

#### Advertise Your Business

Cost: \$15/ issue; \$75/10 issues (1 year)  
Submit your business card with payment made out to the LWV-Larimer County to  
Linda Hutchinson, 216 West Fourth Street,  
Loveland, CO 80537.

Dr. Paul A. Smith

#### Integrative Writer

Retired College Professor  
Creator of a System of about 8,600 essays  
Available at: [www.essayz.com](http://www.essayz.com) <=====  
Visited 7 times daily, mostly from USA.  
Visitors have come from about 60 nations.  
Essays encourage discussions of vital issues.  
E-mail: [psmith1coe@aol.com](mailto:psmith1coe@aol.com)



**The League of Women Voters  
of Larimer County**

*League Lines* editor:  
216 West Fourth Street  
Loveland, CO 80537

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

**Return Service Requested**

[www.lwv-larimercounty.org](http://www.lwv-larimercounty.org)



The League of Women Voters of Larimer County  
[www.lwv-larimercounty.org](http://www.lwv-larimercounty.org)

The League of Women Voters is *the* organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

*Our Mission*

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

*Our History*

Established in 1920, the League is one of the nation's most respected grassroots organizations. We explore issues from many points of view and take action on issues affecting our families and communities.

The League of Women Voters is nonpartisan. We do not support or oppose candidates.