



The League of Women Voters Washington County

November 2007, VOL. 53, ISSUE 10

Calendar

Nov. 8, Thurs., Immigration Forum, Panel of guests discuss issues within the LWVUS Immigration Study for public education and preparation for League consensus, Jones Center for Families Rm. 226, 7:00-9:00, Springdale.

Nov. 12, Mon., Board Meeting, Joyce Hale's home 285 W. Cleburn St., Fayetteville, 6:30

Nov. 28, Wed., Immigration Consensus Deliberation, Pot luck starting promptly at 6:00, Joyce Hale's home.

Dec. 10, Mon., Board Meeting/Holiday Festivities, An abbreviated meeting for board members at 6:00 followed by a holiday social for the entire membership at 7:00, Joyce Hale's home.

Dec. 19, Wed., Monthly Membership Meeting, "Water Conservation and Protection," another Smart Growth theme looks at an update of condominiums on Beaver Lake and independent sewage treatment systems, Fayetteville Public Library, 11:30.

From Joyce's Desk

With state and national League studies going on at the same time, the amount of material to cover presents a challenge. Fortunately there are organizations with overlapping interests to partner in sharing the workload. The Benton County LWV has met with us to coordinate the Immigration Forum and now the Fayetteville Branch of AAUW wishes to participate by supplying refreshments since they are also preparing to study this vital subject.

Sierra Club will co-sponsor a forum with LWVWC after the first of the year on the Fayetteville Shale Play. This fast moving issue will certainly receive attention in the next legislative session. Learning the complexity and ramifications of the subject will be important for citizens and our representatives. I am grateful for new member, Barbara Farley, who has stepped forward to help research the wealth of information on this gas extraction activity. If anyone would like to help with this subject or the closely related severance tax topic, please let me know.

Fresh faces will be showing up as our new members find their way into League activities. I know you will extend a warm welcome to them and encourage their participation throughout the year. Don't forget about carpooling as a friendly and responsible habit.

With all the serious issues to study, we need to break in with a little seasonal playfulness. I propose a holiday drop-in for all membership from 7:00 to 8:30 at the conclusion of the regular December board meeting. This will give me reason to Deck the Hales with boughs of holly... fa la la... and propose a toast for an expanding LWVWC in 2008.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME IS HERE!

Annual Membership Gathering - Thanks to all who attended and contributed to the Annual Membership Gathering at the Fayetteville Public Library on September 22, with extra thanks especially to the members who provided refreshments. Special mention goes to Joyce Hale, President, for organizing the meeting and preparing the materials. There were 19 current members in attendance and six guests, four of whom became new members: Diane Erickson, Barbara Farley, Courtney Henry and Louise Mann (a past member who rejoined).

Membership Renewals - the following 29 members have renewed their memberships:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Louise and Harry Alward | Carolyn B. Madison |
| Wanda A. Belzung | Nancy Glover McCartney |
| Anita Bukey | Mrs. Gordon Morgan |
| Judith Carey | Mary Bess Mulhollan |
| Eugenia Donovan | Jeannine and Stephen Neuse |
| Mary Fitzpatrick | Linda B. Nicometo |
| Joyce and James Hale | Marion Orton |
| Sally Kelley and Jean Kelley | Gertrude and Thomas Scott |
| Anne Harris Larew | Betty Solis |
| Bettie Lu Lancaster | Wanda B. Stephens |
| Sarah and Rob Leflar | Martha and Michael Ward |

The League has started its new year, and DUES FOR 2007-08 ARE DUE. Single memberships are \$40 and family \$60. Please bring dues to the next meeting or send to LWVWC, P.O. Box 4, Fayetteville, AR 72702. Attached is a Membership Form. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!

For those who have not already renewed your membership dues, we ask that you fill out the following form and submit it to our treasurer. If the spouse of a member or a student wishes to join, the dues are half of a regular full membership. There has never been a more important time to promote voter education and issue awareness. Your dues help accomplish this objective.

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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTER OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
2007-08 Membership Renewal Form**

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

Individual Membership	\$40.00	_____
Spouse	20.00	_____
Student	20.00	_____
TOTAL		_____

Please send your payment to:

LWVWC, P. O. Box 4, Fayetteville, AR 72702

Fayetteville Shale Play

Approval for a LWVAR study of the Fayetteville Shale Play was passed at the State Convention last spring. Members of the Fairfield Bay League alerted everyone to the implications of this activity that they saw taking place in their area. Since that time there has been a considerable amount of press with varied points of view as to dangers and benefits. New extraction processes now propose cost effective gas recovery. The pace of activity has many of the “boom” earmarks experienced in the rush to secure mineral, oil and gas resources throughout history. This activity poses many questions about the environment, state of regulation in Arkansas, property rights, severance tax and distribution of wealth.

The Fairfield Bay members are hard at work developing a study guide and consensus questions for each League. This important exercise will be necessary to prepare the League to have a voice in related issues during the 2009 Legislature and update our stands. This introduction to their study does a good job of defining the situation and the areas where greater understanding is needed.

Preface

The possibility of a rich new source for obtaining the scarce commodity of natural gas here in our own state seems like an unexpected bonanza for land owners, local economies and the state treasury. The activity of drilling companies appears to have sprouted overnight leaving discussions of any possible negative repercussions uninvestigated. We believe it is urgent that we explore both positive and negative repercussions to determine how this activity will affect said landowners, local economies and the state, none of which seem to have adequate laws in effect at this time to protect their overall interests.

For instance, landowners in the drilling area are unprepared to cope with the ramifications of the sudden enticements offered by big gas and oil companies. There is much confusion over ownership of land versus mineral rights because of arbitrary state rule changes over the years. Too, ownership of land does not necessarily mean that the land owner can control the drilling for what lies beneath it.

State and local community concerns include the drilling process' impact on their environment, possible destruction of roads and bridges by movement of heavy equipment and depletion of natural resources without adequate compensation.

Make Regular Use of Our Web Page!

Sally Kelley, LWVWC Web Master, provides helpful updates on the web at www.lwvarwc.org. Questions about programs, meeting dates, times and locations are readily available there. If you have electronic pictures of an event or information you would like posted, please email Sally at skelley@uark.edu.

Immigration Forum

This event, open to the public, will be held on Thursday, November 8 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Jones Center for Families in Springdale. The Forum is co-sponsored by the Washington County and Benton County chapters of LWV, and by the Fayetteville branch of the American Association of University Women.

Panelists will include Katherine Deck, Director for the Center for Business and Economic Research, Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas, Frank Head, Director of Catholic Immigration Services, and Carmen Chong Gum, Marshallese Outreach Coordinator at the Jones Center. A short film created by the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute, summarizing information from their study on the effect of immigration in Arkansas, will also be shown. Written questions will be taken from the audience.

The Forum is being held as part of the National LWV Consensus Project in which local Leagues will attempt to take consensus on 6 questions developed by the National LWV. Members should prepare for the taking consensus by attending the Forum and by *studying the questions and study materials* that can be found at www.lwv-arkansas.org or www.lwv.org. Preparation is essential for the development of consensus on these issues.

Immigration Study Consensus Meeting

The focus of all activity generated around the National Immigration study will culminate for LWVWC in a meeting November 28 from 6:00 – 9:00 at Joyce Hale's home where consensus positions on six questions will be determined and reported to LWVUS for inclusion with the final national report.

PERSONAL PREPARATION:

Those taking part in consensus should have read as much as possible of the study reports developed by LWVUS and currently posted on the web. Links are also available to the extensive immigration study report developed by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. In addition, a **pod cast** of the entire **“Immigration Policy in the 21st Century Conference”** held by the LWVUS in Washington, DC last June, 2007 may be viewed from a link at this web site. All these speakers offer much insight and expertise in an interesting format that can be viewed in segments as your time allows.

A pot luck with a theme of international dishes will be shared along with the discussion.

LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS:

QUESTION 1: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following:

Part a: (Rate as High Priority, Low Priority, Disagree, No Consensus)

- a. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity,
- b. Economic Business and Service Employment Needs,
- c. Environmental Impact/Sustainability,
- d. Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children,
- e. History of Criminal Activity,
- f. Humanitarian Crises/Political Persecution in Home Countries,
- g. Immigrant Characteristics (health and age),
- h. Rights of Families to Remain Together,
- j. Rights of all Individuals in U. S. to Fair Treatment under the Law,
- k. Education and Training

Part b: (In Part a: you marked items as “High Priority.” Of these items, select the three most important criteria and list them in order of importance.

QUESTION 2: Unauthorized Immigrants currently in the U. S. should be treated as follows:

(Rate as High Priority, Low Priority, Disagree, No Consensus)

- a. Deport Unauthorized Immigrants,
- b. Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in U.S.
- c. Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of US Employers,
- d. All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as Paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, Etc.
- e. If Deported, Assess Fines before Possible Re-Entry,
- f. Assess Fines Before Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status

QUESTION 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U. S. for immigrants who are: (rate each)

- a. Immediate Family Members Joining Family Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S.
- b. Entering the US to Meet Labor Needs
- c. Entering the US as students
- d. Entering the US because of Persecution in Home Country.

Question 4a: In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:

Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for *All* Persons Residing in the US

QUESTION 4b: Federal Immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including: (rate each one)

- i.** Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders
- ii.** Increased Personnel at Land, Air, and Sea Entry Points
- iii.** More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the Country
- iv.** Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers
- v.** Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- vi.** Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- vii.** A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go in and Out of the US to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- viii.** Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization to Employees

QUESTION 5: Federal Immigration law should address and balance the long term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by state and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Consensus

No Consensus

QUESTION 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economics, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

Consensus

No Consensus

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Nonprofit Organization
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