



# THE VOTER

SEPTEMBER 2009

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**PLEASE NOTE:  
New League Address  
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*"We could certainly  
slow the ageing process  
down if it had to work  
its way through  
congress."*  
*Will Rogers*



## LWVLVV OFFICERS 2009-2010

President: Mary Beth Heavrin  
1st. VP: Sam King  
2nd VP: Jan Biggerstaff  
Secretary: Ann Marie Smith  
Treasurer: Sandy Metcalf  
Directors: Teresa Bell  
Laura Golod  
Freda Greenfield  
Betty Pardo



## "Women in and out of Politics, Diversity and Equity"

**Guest Speaker:  
First Lady Dawn Gibbons**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2009**

**THE LAS VEGAS SOCIAL CLUB**

**ADJACENT TO**

**MAIN STREET STATION**

**200 N. Main at Main & Stewart**

**9:30 A.M. BREAKFAST**

**Members & guests with reservations: \$18**

**(No-shows will be charged)**

**Members without reservations & Non-members: \$20**

**10:00 A.M. PROGRAM**

**Phone: 702-464-7887**

**E-mail: [lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org](mailto:lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org)**

**Reservations by Wednesday, September 16, 2009**

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** *By: Mary Beth Heavrin*

Welcome back! I am looking forward to an exciting League year filled with activity, advocacy, and activism that will lead us toward the League of Women Voters 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, which will be celebrated in August of 2010. Almost 90 years young and still going strong.

Your Board and Committee Chairs have been busy throughout the summer, doing such things as planning for this year's meetings, contacting speakers, not to mention just keeping up with their own committee's happenings. I would like to personally thank each one of them for the countless hours they spend in volunteering to keep our League a dynamic and active organization.

I would also like to thank each of you for your continued support of our League. Great organizations do not happen just by chance, it takes a committed membership to make this a reality.

I look forward to seeing each of you at September's meeting, where we will have the pleasure of hearing Nevada's First Lady, Dawn Gibbons, as our speaker. Plan to bring a friend and double the pleasure. See you soon.

**HEALTH COMMITTEE** *By: Annette Mills*

The LWVLVV Health Committee continues to work under the belief of the LWVUS that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. Health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care.

About fifteen years ago the LWVLVV established the Nevada Health Care Reform Project, a coalition of over one hundred organizations working on the aforementioned goals. We wrote and worked on passage of the Nevada Patient Protection Act, the establishment of the Office of Consumer Health Assistance, and supported other health legislation according to our goals. The League continues to be a member of this coalition which also supports national legislation.

Currently the LWVLVV Health Committee has been working on children's obesity. We have published a report on "The State of Nutrition in Nevada" to be found on the League website. Our most recent successful legislative effort was passage of required testing of height and weight of children in public school. The committee continues to monitor this legislation's statistical report from the schools. We encourage entities to apply for grants to develop programs to address children's obesity.

The committee meets the first Tuesday of the month. For location and time contact the League office.



**FIRST LADY DAWN GIBBONS**

Like many people who have moved to Nevada, Dawn arrived with not much—a suitcase and \$500—and she had brains, determination and dreams. She

helped pay her way through UNR by working as a night janitor. Grit, intelligence and an optimistic attitude helped Dawn to become a successful businessperson.

At the same time she wanted to give back to the community. Soon she was involved in numerous charities. In 1988-89 the Reno Business and Professional Women's Club named her Woman of the Year.

She met her future husband Jim Gibbons on a blind date, and while Gibbons served the State in the Assembly, Dawn served as a trustee for the Washoe County Airport Authority.

In 1991, then Assemblyman Jim Gibbons resigned his seat in the Assembly to serve in the military. The Washoe County Commission appointed Dawn to replace him during this service. Dawn worked on legislation to protect women, children and other victims; improve the justice system; enhance the ecosystem of Lake Tahoe; and deter drug and alcohol abuse. She returned her seat to Jim upon his return from the military. Following his election to Congress, Dawn successfully ran for office and served three regular and two special sessions, passing important legislation such as establishing Nevada's Organ and Tissue Task Force at the University of Nevada Medical School

Dawn continues to work for women and children's issues and is an inspiration for Nevada's women.



Outgoing 2008-2009 President Kathleen Bienenstein receives the League's gratitude as she hands over the gavel to newly elected President Mary Beth Heavrin.

**STATE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

*By: Sam King*

The 2009 -2010 calendar for the League of Women Voters of Nevada holds many exciting and challenging topics for our state and local leagues.

The State League will partner with the United States Census Bureau. In August I met with Oscar Reconco, Partnership Specialist for the US. Department of Commerce US Census Bureau, to investigate mutually interesting opportunities for League participation at all levels. The importance of the Census translates into \$917 of federal funds per person counted in Nevada for the next ten years. Political ramifications go beyond information and funding and enter the realm of political re-districting for Nevada in terms of re-designing state and federal districts in 2011.

The 2009 Legislative Session ended on time, June 1, 2009. Our Lobbyist, Julianna Ormsby, was effective in her job. She is working during the interim with the Nevada Woman’s Lobby. Julianna spoke to the Northern Nevada League in late June to review our advocacy. She will meet with our Las Vegas Valley League in October. It is our goal to remain active during the interim session. There will be issues which continue to come to the table concerning and impacting the economy, elections, quality - of- life, and sustainability of services within our communities.

During the 2009 session, equity issues were able to make gains with the passage of Domestic Partnership legislation, Equal Pay Recognition and equity and adequacy issues in health care and education. Equality is a difficult legislative issue.

Energy and environmental issues will continue to be headliners and we need to join stakeholders at the table to give direction and voice as to how Nevada moves forward in developing sustainable energy that complements our environment.

Our local league committees will be busy with the League 4 E’s plus 1: Economy, Education, Elections, Environment and HealthCare.

Membership and fund-raising are always a challenge and opportunity for all.

The Pahrump Valley League will soon be recognized as our newest local league. Communication is inherent so that our state and local leagues are working together. I applaud all efforts to improve web sites that will link local and state to strengthen our voice.

Hope you enjoyed the summer and are ready to work together to influence public policy through education and advocacy as we have done as an organization of volunteers for the past ninety years.



Juvenile Justice Committee Chair Regina Harrison, center, with Liz Carrasco and Dr. Barbara Timmons Strahl from the Neighborhood Justice Center (NJC), who spoke on Mediating Juvenile Cases at the April meeting.

**EQUALITY DAY—**

What is Women’s Equality Day?

At the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), in 1971 the U.S. Congress designated August 26 as “Women’s Equality Day.” The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world’s first women’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, NY. This special day not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also calls attention to women’s continuing efforts toward full equality.

**FROM MESQUITE** *By: Karen Beardsley*

Mesquite League (LWVM) is now putting a website together and will be announced soon.

We are also working on a fundraiser, information to be announced soon.

We are looking forward to starting back up in September with our new board members.

**2009-2010**

**NEVADA STATE LEAGUE OFFICERS**

- President — Sam King, Las Vegas
- Vice-President — Rosemary Gary, Mesquite
- Secretary — Alicia Wright, Sparks
- Treasurer—Carolyn Fries, Las Vegas
- Directors – Karen Beardsley, Kathleen Dickinson, Mary Liveretti, Sandy Medcalf, Betty Pardo, Lisa Stiller

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE** *By: Sam King*

Education Committee Considerations 2009-2010.

During the closing days of the 2009 Legislative session, there were several bills aimed at improving education through legislative action. Nevertheless, the 2009 session failed to pass laws which improved financial support for education. The reversal of the policy called “reversion”, which reverts taxes collected for education to the general fund was not passed, so funding was not improved. Education is a hot topic-locally and nationally- and an expensive service that is the linchpin to improving the quality of life within our community. The economic climate in Nevada does not look as if there will be robust improvement in revenue anytime soon resulting in a reality that there may be more budget cuts. There may be a special session to address revenue short-falls. The Interim Finance Committee may be challenged as to its legitimacy. How can we advocate so there is a momentum to create legislation to improve K-16 education and adult education programs during all this uncertainty and in times where state governments are not receiving money to support existing services?

Budget cuts impacting public schools and higher education and stimulus packages are uncharted territory. Clark County School District, which had been operating on how to deal with explosive growth, this year, will face a new challenge. Student population growth is projected to be stagnant and may actually decline. With growth no longer the major driving force, CCSD is facing the elephant in the room—How to provide adequate and equitable education for all students in Clark County? How will Clark County School District retool to adjust to a non-growth climate in the midst of declining resources?

The 2008 school bond is winding down and CCSD may try to access tax-credit bonds which do not require voter approval as an interim way to continue and fund bond projects. The announcement that there may be money from these tax-credit bonds, gave voice to the West Las Vegas community asking for their share to address inequities which they claim lead to racial inequities. Racial Inequity claims led to segregation concerns. De jure segregation or segregation by law is clearly unconstitutional and was not part of the discussion. What two recent school board meetings brought to mind was de facto segregation—where inequities arise as a result of residential segregation, preferred living patterns, informal living patterns and economic realities being poor effects one’s ability to learn. One board meeting considered how to provide a new facility for West Prep to house an appropriate K-12 school model. Another board meeting presented the results of a study on the achievement gap in the Prime Six Schools. The elephant in the room is de facto segregation



**2009-2010 LEAGUE OFFICERS:** President Mary Beth Heavrin, Directors Betty Pardo and Laura Golod, VP Sam King, Treasurer Sandy Metcalf, Secretary Ann Marie Smith and 2nd VP Jan Biggerstaff. Not shown are Directors Teresa Bell and Freda Greenfield.

**ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP**

*By: Laura Golod*

The Environment Committee will be meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 pm, in the coffee area of the Borders on Las Vegas Blvd ( in Town Square). We're keeping up on all environmental issues, but our focus this year will be on food safety and other issues related to what we eat.



***A government big enough to give you everything you want is strong enough to take everything you have.***  
***Thomas Jefferson***

achievement gap. The education committee will look at the elephant in the room and the need to develop adequate equitable schools throughout Clark County regardless of location. The tax-credit bond plan will need to be carefully monitored. A question as to how the school board operates known as “policy governance” should be studied as to the effectiveness of elected officials who operate on policy. Policy driven programs beg the question as to whether the school board can provide structure necessary to meet the needs of the community. Is policy governance right for Clark County School District ?

***Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!***

***Pericles (430***



Shown attending the First Virtual National LWV Council Meeting at Ann Marie Smith’s home, are Ann Marie, President Mary Beth Heavrin, Betty Pardo and Teresa Bell. Sam King, not shown, was also at the meeting.

**VOTER SERVICES** *By: Teresa Bell*

Voter Services Committee will have a planning meeting on September 2, 2009 at 6:15 p.m. at Teresa Bell’s house. We will discuss plans for the 2009-2010- elections, census, voter registration, etc. Please contact Teresa at League email or phone number (and message will be forwarded) for address and directions.

Federal/State Elections are in even-numbered years. In 2009, the Nevada legislature changed the date of the Federal/State Primary Election to the second Tuesday in June of each even-numbered year (Senate Bill 162). The General Election date remains the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Specific dates for 2010 are below.

May 8, 2010 - Last day to register to vote or to update your registration, without having to appear in-person at the Election Department offices for the Primary Election.

June 8, 2010 – Primary Election

**MEMBERSHIP** *By: Jan Biggerstaff*

Welcome new members Devyn McNamee, a high school government teacher and Bridgette Shufford, who is in real estate and insurance. Also Lois Evora, who joined through National. This is the year to add to our membership—bring a guest and have your name in a special drawing for that meeting.

**GOVERNMENT & BUREAUCRACY**

- Lords Prayer: 66 words
- 10 Commandments: 179 words
- Gettysburg address: 286 words
- Declaration of Independence: 1300 words
- US Government regulations on the sale of cabbage: 26,911 words

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

*Prepared by Julianna Ormsby, League Lobbyist*

**Big Wins in 2009 for LWV!**

While the League supported and opposed many bills this session, the following bills are some of those in which the League was particularly active, including testifying in committees, providing subject matter expertise, writing and meeting with legislators and participating in outreach campaigns (such as co-sponsoring Stand Out for Equality).

**(Passed) SB283**—domestic partnership registry.

**AB 139** establishes a low-income housing database

**AB191** continues collection height and weight of school children to help fight childhood obesity.

**(Failed) SB181** would have eliminated Early Voting and instituted voter identification

**SB 315** Would have instituted voted identification

**Budget/Taxes** \$6.8 billion budget. New taxes to sunset in June 2011. The approved budget relies heavily on projected revenue from various sources, as forecast by the State’s Economic Forum. However, if trends continue the way they have thus far we may see the Governor call a special session.

**Recommendations for Interim**

**Affordable Housing** Nevada Division of Housing met during the summer to create the affordable housing database. Mary Beth Heavrin was League’s contact person. This will continue to be a high priority for League.

**Child Nutrition** a long time passion of Ruth Mills and the League’s Health committee and this will again be a priority of our League at the 2011 legislature.

**Interim Legislative Committees** Much of the critical policy work and agenda-setting for future sessions occurs in interim committees and studies. The committee’s agendas can be viewed online at [www.leg.state.nv.us](http://www.leg.state.nv.us). Much of the legislation proposed for 2011 will have its genesis in the interim and the opportunity for pre-session input is invaluable. One of League’s strengths is its candidate forums and issue forums. While League obviously is concerned with many issues, you are likely to be more effective when you hone in on a few key, “high priority” issues early on and then communicate those high priority issues through public outreach and participating in interim committees.

**Interim Studies** 1) Governance and Oversight of K-12 Public Education System. 2) Powers delegated to Local Governments 3) Production and Use of Energy 4) Requirements for Reapportionment and Redistricting.

A huge “thank you” goes out to all League members who volunteered to review a bill or BDR language and amendments.

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LAS VEGAS VALLEY**



**NOTE: NEW ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 12291, Las Vegas, NV 89112  
Phone: (702) 464-7887  
Email: [lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org](mailto:lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org)

*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.*

The LWVLVV meets September through April, the third Saturday of the month. Meetings are currently held at the Las Vegas Social Club adjacent to Main Street Station, Main and Stewart. A 9:30 a.m. breakfast is followed by the program at 10:00 a.m.

**Breakfast is \$18.00 with reservation, without reservation and non-members \$20**

**2009-2010 PROGRAM CALENDAR**

**September 19, 2009** Equality in Politics-Dawn Gibbons

**October 17, 2009** Affordable Housing

**November 21, 2009** Health care—(invited) Senator Reid

**January 16, 2010** Education/ Juvenile Justice - what now?

**February 20, 2010** Food chain and the environment

**March 20, 2010** Voter Services - knowledgeable voters needed

**April 27, 2010** Campaign Finances are your problem  
League Business Meeting

**NAME  
BADGES**

Magnetic \$10.00  
Pin \$9.00

All profits go to the  
501 (c)(3) Education Project Fund  
See: **Freda Greenfield**  
at meeting or  
[lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org](mailto:lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org)

**COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES**

- Affordable Housing—meets following monthly program
  - Education— meets prior to monthly meeting
  - Environment—meets 3rd Tuesday, 2 pm, Borders, Towne Sq. Shopping Center
  - Health—meets 1st. Tuesday of month (phone for location and time)
  - Juvenile Justice—meets with Education Committee prior to monthly meeting
  - Legislative—place, date and time announced at monthly meeting
- Newsletter—Jan Biggerstaff

**INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN**

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LAS VEGAS VALLEY**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Yearly dues: ( ) \$55 New/Renew Member ( ) \$75 Household ( ) \$25 Student**

**Donation to Education Fund \_\_\_\_\_ (tax deductible) Donation to Lobby Fund \_\_\_\_\_ (not tax deductible)**

**Mail to: League of Women Voters, P.O. Box 12291, Las Vegas, NV 89112**

**Please Support the League's Education Fund—it is tax deductible and assists in our scholarship program**