



THE VOTER

JANUARY 2009

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'Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain.'



LWV LVV OFFICERS 2008-2009

President: Kathleen Bienenstein
1st. VP: Sam King
2nd VP/Administration:
Margaret Mark
Secretary: Ann Marie Smith
Treasurer: Sandy Metcalf
Directors: Mary Beth Heavrin
Betty Pardo
Bonnie J. Swadling
Jan Biggerstaff

“Defining Sustainability for Nevada”

Panelists:

Moderator: KNPR Dave Berns
Businesswoman Jenna Morton

Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani
City of Henderson Principal Planner Ned Thomas
City of Las Vegas Transportation Manager Dan Hyde
Green Living Consultant/R-J Columnist Steve Rypka

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 2009

**THE LAS VEGAS SOCIAL CLUB
ADJACENT TO
MAIN STREET STATION
200 N. Main at Main & Stewart**

9:30 A.M. BREAKFAST

**Full Breakfast \$18 with reservation-required
(No-shows must be charged)**

10:00 A.M. PROGRAM

Phone: 702-464-7887

E-mail: lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org

Reservations by Wednesday, January 11, 2009

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE *By: Kathleen Bienenstein*

I would like to wish all of you a very Happy New Year. I am looking forward to the changes 2009 will bring.

January has been recognized as National Blood Donor’s Month since 1970. Blood supplies are traditionally low in the winter for a variety of reasons, so if you are able, please consider a donation. January is also Cervical Health Awareness Month. According to the American Cancer Society, Cervical Cancer is preventable when it is detected early.

As a reminder, we have municipal elections coming up. We will be putting the candidates’ information on our website. We also have the “Grassroots Lobby Days” in March. I hope many of you are planning to attend.

ENVIRONMENT *By: Monica Brett*

Last year, our League voted to focus on sustainable communities. So, our January meeting is set up to answer some basic questions about what it is, how you can practically implement it and what our politicians should do about it! We aim to cover as many areas as possible - from water to energy to health.

At the December meeting, one issue came up that also represents sustainable communities. And, that is helping those in need. The determination to make our place better is something that successful cultures embrace. A successful culture knows where the tipping point is, when you can no longer recover. Homelessness, especially for children, represents that edge. So, in these difficult times, I ask you again to bring something to our January meeting for those in need.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE *By: Bonnie Swadling*

The Criminal Justice Committee meets at 9:00 a.m. one half hour prior to breakfast on the third Saturday of every month at the Leagues regular monthly meeting. This month we reviewed alternative programs that could best utilize State funds and provide both the community and inmates positive results. One of the issues discussed was not building more prisons, rather keeping the camps open and providing training in solar energy that would provide jobs and provide energy resources for the small communities near the camps. It would also provide job skills for a positive outcome for re-entry back into the community.

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. Oprah Winfrey

VOTER SERVICES

By: Teresa Bell & Meredith Hartstern, Co-Chairs

The Voter Services Committee will meet on Saturday, January 24 at 9:30 a.m. to plan for the 2009 Municipal Elections. The meeting will be held at Teresa Bell’s home in Henderson. Breakfast will be provided. Please contact Teresa so that she can add your name to the list for the Guard gate. Preliminary ideas are to have 2 subcommittees plan candidate forums for the Henderson and Las Vegas elections, and publish a simple format candidate guide on our website. The Municipal Primary is April 7, 2009 and the General Election is June 2, 2009.

Nevada Center for Public Ethics will host a forum on Ethics in the Legislature on **January 10** at 10:00 a.m. in the Jewel Box room of the Clark County Library at 1401 S. Flamingo Rd. Mitch Fox will moderate. Participants who would like to speak at the forum must contact the Nevada Center for Public Ethics before the forum.

LWVLVV is partnering with the Women’s Research Institute of Nevada for a screening of the film, “A Single Woman,” that addresses issues of suffrage, reform, and political activism. It will be shown on **February 19 at 6:30 p.m.** “A Single Woman” is a film adaptation of the successful stage play about the life of Jeannette Rankin, America’s first Congresswoman and co-founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). We are also very excited to welcome the director, Kamala Lopez, to speak about the film’s historical and political content, and also how it relates to current events and issues. She will be joined by other community members in a panel discussion. Please spread the word and plan to attend.



KAMALA LOPEZ (Director) and JEANMARIE SIMPSON (Jeannette Rankin) on the set of the film **A SINGLE WOMAN**
HERESICA FILMS
Photo by Sarah Goodrich

WCF FOUNDATION

The Women’s Campaign Forum/Foundation project launched “Appoint Her” an online resource center for women interested in appointed office, particularly at the state and local level; to educate them about opportunities for appointed office and how to start thinking about applying for it. Their website at [http:// www.wcfonline.org/Foundation/foundation](http://www.wcfonline.org/Foundation/foundation) is available so that women who are looking for new challenges can get a better sense of the possibilities and take their first steps towards appointed office.

LWV LOBBYIST *From: Julianna Ormsby*
 I am excited to be working for the League of Women Voters of Nevada. I have been a member and I have long admired the League's work. It is an honor to be able to work with you on legislative issues in the 2009 session. My other clients include the Nevada Women's Lobby, Child Welfare Network, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Nevada chapters. Before working in the public policy analysis and lobbying arena, I was the Program Manager for the Women's Research Institute of Nevada at UNLV, where I directed NEW Leadership Nevada, an award-winning leadership and civic engagement designed for college women. I also taught as a part-time instructor in the women's studies department at UNLV. I serve on the Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on Participatory Democracy and I'm excited to be working with the inaugural class of the Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum. I am also a member of the Attorney General's Victims of Crime Subcommittee. I received my BA in American studies, with an emphasis in women's studies from University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and a Master's in Social Work from UNLV.

In the interim period between legislative sessions, the League has been following numerous committees and studies, in addition to monitoring the budget cuts, particularly as they relate to health and human services. Additionally, we have been tracking bill draft requests (BDRs) and pre-filed bills that fall within our priority areas, the economy, education, elections, the environment and health care, with a particular emphasis on the economy, as decisions that are made about our state budget effect every issue we care about, from providing a sound education to our children, to ensuring people with disabilities have access to needed services, to exploring new energy sources in geothermal, wind and solar. We will be working with other organizations to examine the tax structure in Nevada to see where there are opportunities to close loopholes and increase revenue in the state. We recently participated in a rally with partner organizations to bring much-needed attention to the budget cuts and the effect on an array of services and we anticipate participating in more events to raise awareness and look for solutions.

One way League members can get involved is by taking part in Grassroots Lobby Days (GLD), scheduled for March 8-10, 2009, in Carson City. The Nevada Women's Lobby has sponsored this successful event for a number of years and they always look forward to the participation of League members. For

more information, please email GLD Chair Byllie D'Amato Andrews at byllie@charter.net or 775-327-4856. For more information on BDRs and bills, please contact me at juliannaormsby@yahoo.com, or 702-493-5030. If you have expertise in a particular League issue area, we'd love to hear from you.

LEGISLATURE INFORMATION

To reach the Nevada Legislature website type in the url: www.leg.state.nv.us Spend some time on the home page to familiarize yourself with the options. On the right side there is a place to go to the live meetings. Also a list of bill drafts that you can track as the session gets started. All bills that we can support (or not) must fall under the guidelines of the state positions.

The State League hires and pays for a lobbyist during the session. As this is a major function and expense for the League, an ongoing fundraising for the next few months will help pay for this much needed position. We have retained lobbyist Julianna Ormsby. She welcomes and needs our input on issues that we will track and support. We will probably emphasize 4 or 5 issues to support for each of the education and juvenile justice committees.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY

Would you like to hold a leadership position as a Chair or Board member, especially Membership Chair? Interested members can contact Nominating Chair -Marjorie Branch or committee members Sandy Metcalf and Teresa Bell.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING *By: Mary Beth Heavrin*

The Affordable Housing Committee continues to monitor the problems associated with housing in our Las Vegas Valley. The March League meeting is devoted to our topic, and preliminary steps have been taken for our upcoming panel discussion. I would like to encourage anyone interested in our topic to stay for a short meeting after our January League Breakfast meeting. We need, as a committee, to begin discussing the questions to be posed to the panel and other logistical concerns. We always encourage new members to join our committee and we wish everyone the best for the new year ahead.



Reduce, re-use and recycle have always been central in the lives of Margi Mark's niece and nephew. Their home was included in Colorado's Boulder County Tour of Solar and Green Homes, and copies of a magazine article describing the home's energy, green, water conservation and re-use features will be available at the January meeting.

MINUTES, December 20, 2008

Submitted: Ann Marie Smith, Secretary

Kathleen Bienenstein, President, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She announced that the Board had decided that the 50/50 raffle would benefit the Lobby Fund. Jan Biggerstaff has been appointed to the Board to replace Rose Johnson, who resigned. Kathy asked that anyone who was interested in running for a Board position next year should contact Marjorie Branch, Teresa Bell or Sandy Metcalf.

Regarding fundraising, there are several new items for sale, including tote bags, pens and other logo items. Everyone was asked to check out the fundraising/raffle table.

Kathy then introduced Annette Mills, chair of the Health Committee. Annette read an overview of the League's Health position on the right to access to basic health care. She mentioned AB 354, the bill the League supported last year that required schools to test for height and weight. It passed for a three-year period and we will continue to work on extending it. The statistics that are received will help get grant money for related projects and get attention to the issue of children's health and obesity. As a result of this bill, we are No. 2 in the Nation in States that have done something about children's health.

Annette introduced Diana Taylor, RN, the Director of Health Services for the Clark County School District. The school nurses supported AB 354. Ms. Taylor spoke on the primary functions of school nurses, which include identification of student health concerns, health referrals and follow-ups, health education and supervision of emergency care. The recommended national guideline for the ratio of school nurses to students is 1:750. Clark County has 1 nurse for every 1850 students. This makes it difficult to do as much health education as they would like to. She spoke about the accountability and delegation of responsibilities, and outlined the health concerns of students. While the nurses monitor health information, provide health plans, develop special and regular education accommodation plans and provide referrals to community and District resources, they also administer medications to students who must receive it during the day and provide various health procedures, including feeding tubes and catherizations. Many of these procedures need a physician's order. They also train students to do their own treatments in many cases. Their screening efforts include vision/hearing and scoliosis. During the three-year study period mandated by AB 354, they are also doing height/weight screenings. They would like to be authorized to do these screenings whenever the nurse feels it is necessary and would like that authorization written into the State law. Ms. Taylor also spoke on the Emergency Response Plan in place in the District. A question and answer period followed.

The committee chairs reported on activities. Monica Brett, Environment chair, said that the committee would be arranging a panel on Sustainability for the January meeting. They will tour the solar facilities in Boulder City in February. Sam King, Education chair and State League President, spoke of the new League brochure that outlines our legislative position. Bonnie Swadling, Criminal Justice chair, announced the February meeting when Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto will be our speaker. She asked that questions be submitted early.

Teresa Bell, Voter Services chair, said that the committee will be working on the municipal elections in April. The plan is to hold Town Hall meetings in Las Vegas and Henderson and prepare a Voter Guide that will be available in PDF format on the website. The group will also be following the Popular Vote issue with the Legislature. She further announced that on February 19th, at 6:30 in the UNLV Barrick Auditorium, the Women's Research Institute of Nevada will be presenting "A Single Woman," a film that addresses issues of suffrage, reform, and political activism. The League will be a co-sponsor of the event. Teresa also commented on Grass Roots Lobby Days, which will be held from March 8-11 in Carson City. The State Convention will be held at the same time.

Regina Harrison, Juvenile Justice Chair, reported on her committee's activities and meetings she had attended.

Every December, League members bring donations of food and other items for Straight From The Streets, a local organization that reaches out to the homeless. Executive Director Linda Lera Randle El spoke about the problems with the homeless and the extreme cold weather we've been experiencing. She thanked League members for their generous donations. Jan Biggerstaff suggested that each League member who was able to could donate \$20 each for the organization's contingency fund at the next meeting.



HELP NEEDED! After hearing Linda Lera Randle El mentioning she often makes quick decisions including paying rent to help get families off the street, a suggestion was made to take a collection at this meeting to help Linda. We know the money will go directly to those that need it. If you can contribute great—if you can't we understand—these are hard times for everyone.

STATE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE *By: Sam King*

The last few months of 2008 were chaotic to say the least. There is universal hope for change, new beginnings, and a brighter forecast in 2009. I hope everyone had a happy relaxing holiday season. I hope that League members are energized and ready to face 2009. The League of Women Voters has a history championing causes which improve the quality of life in our communities. The League of Women Voters has always supported transparent democratic government within a framework of representative government, and fair elections. As members of the League, we volunteer our time to help ensure grassroots movements have voice. We have our work cut out for 2009.

Municipal elections are coming up. Our state legislature convenes in February. Our national government transfers power to a new administration and newly elected members of Congress this January. The balance of power has changed. The system is working. However with the economic wheels of the United States and the world off track, our leaders and our government will be challenged in ways that challenged our founding fathers. There is a concern that our Constitution based upon separation of powers must be reinstated which will take time and careful leadership. Transparent government is inherent in government of, by, and for the people. The citizens of the United States and the world want to know that our democratic values are strong and alive.

Our League Legislative Committee is working with our Lobbyist, Julianna Ormsby. We are prepared to make a difference this legislative session.

Our League State Convention will be held in Carson City, March 6 and 7, 2009. More information will be provided for the Convention after our state board meeting, February 7, 2009. After our state convention, many of us will participate in Grassroots Lobby Days scheduled March 8-10, 2009. Since 1991, Grassroots Lobby Days has been organized by the Nevada Women’s Lobby convening in Carson City and working with our members of the legislature. For information about Grassroots Lobby Days contact Byllie Andrews 775-327-4856 or Byllie@charter.net.

The Nevada League of Women Voters 4 E’s plus 1 provides opportunities and challenges for our Nevada League and our local Leagues. Looking forward to working with all of you and Happy New Year!!

FUNDRAISING *By: Kathleen Bienenstein*

Happy New Year from your fundraising committee. The committee is working on a major fundraising project. We will be presenting it to the League Board and if we get their approval to move forward with it, we will present it at an upcoming meeting.

As a reminder, we have reusable bags with the League’s logo available for \$1.00. We also have logo pens for sale. They are 2 for \$1.00. I will have all of these items and more at the monthly meetings.

If any of you are interested in chairing the fundraising committee, please let me know.

JUVENILE JUSTICE *By: Regina Harrison*

Juvenile Justice will continue to connect with other organizations around town to see what can be done from our standpoint. There are several things that are being suggested, but the funding is still a question at this point, with the cuts going on.

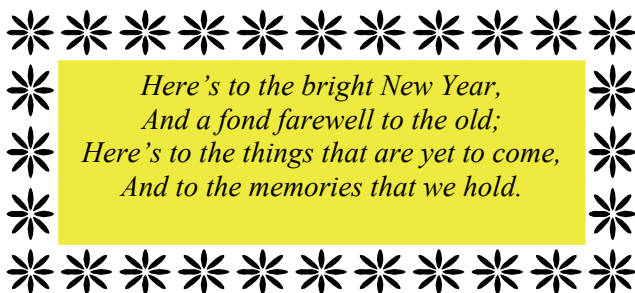


HEALTH COMMITTEE *By: Annette Mills*

Last legislative session we sponsored AB 354, a bill requiring public schools in Nevada to test height and weight of children. We were only allowed three years to gather statistics. As of now we do not have any statistics. They are expected this month. In the meantime we are working with a small coalition of American Heart

Association, American Diabetes Association, Cancer Society and Clark County Health District to write legislation that would extend the testing beyond three years. In order to do research it is necessary to have ongoing statistics to determine whether programs work or not.

Our new endeavor is to explore the possibility of a junk food tax encouraging all ages to eat more nutritious foods. The Clark County School District already has a list of foods they will not allow in the schools.



*Here's to the bright New Year,
And a fond farewell to the old;
Here's to the things that are yet to come,
And to the memories that we hold.*

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LAS VEGAS VALLEY



P.O. Box 371332, Las Vegas, NV 89137-1337
Phone: 702/464-7887
Email: 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. Full breakfast is \$18.00 with reservation (required).

2008-2009 PROGRAM CALENDAR

- February 21, 2009** “The Role of the Board of Prison Commissioners”
- March 8-10, 2009** Grassroots Lobby Days, Carson City
- March 21, 2009** “Affordable Housing: Visions from the Hill to the Valley”
- April 18, 2009** “Tax Dollars for Education K-20”
“Violence in our Schools”
Annual Business Meeting & Elections

An optimist stays up til midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

Bill Vaughn

NAME BADGES

Magnetic \$10.00
Pin \$9.00

All profits go to the
501 (c)(3) Education Project
Fund

Dot Gayton - 464-7887
lwv@lwvlasvegasvalley.org

COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES

- Affordable Housing—meets following monthly program
- Criminal Justice—meets prior to monthly meeting
- 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

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 371332, Las Vegas, NV 89137-1332**