



League of Women Voters  
Of La Plata County

# VOTER

Volume 9, Issue 1

Sixty-three Years Serving La Plata County  
97 members

August, 2009

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

[www.lwvaplata.org](http://www.lwvaplata.org)

[www.lwvcolorado.org](http://www.lwvcolorado.org)

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**Insert:  
Flyer for CO Budget  
Crisis Meeting**

*Welcome back...  
We hope you are having a  
delightful and refreshing  
summer...*

*You are receiving this  
newsletter via email whether  
or not you also requested a  
black/white paper copy,  
which will be along in a few  
days. Be sure to let us know  
when you and your computer  
are ready for a newsletter by  
email only.*



*Mark your calendars!*

### Upcoming Meetings

#### **- Colorado’s Budget Crisis -**

**Tuesday, September 1  
7 – 9 p.m.  
Durango Public Library**

**Carol Hedges, Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, Denver,  
will address Colorado’s perpetual budget crisis, how we got here and  
what might be done to fix it. The session is co-sponsored  
by the City of Durango.  
(see attached flyer)**

#### **- Welcome back to the League – Save the date**

**Wednesday, September 23, 12 – 2 p.m.  
Durango Library**

\* \* \*

#### **Good Summer Reading!!**

1. The latest LWVUS Climate Change Task Force paper: ‘**Global Climate Change: Impacts in the Midwest**’ by Eleanor Revelle, LWVUS CCTF, June 23, 2009 ([http://www.lwvaplata.org/environment.html#LWVUS\\_Refs](http://www.lwvaplata.org/environment.html#LWVUS_Refs))
2. ‘**The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis**’: Climate Change, Human Impact Report from the Global Humanitarian Forum 2009, Geneva
3. ‘**In Search of Shelter: Mapping the Effects of Climate Change on Human Migration and Displacement**’, by 2008 CARE International.

Link to either of these last two: <http://www.lwvaplata.org/environment.html#s10>

## **President's Message**

It has been a busy summer.

The new team met June 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss this year's business. National Membership Services co-chair Marcia Merrins briefed us on board responsibilities and establishing priorities. We determined that Health Care, Environment Energy and Sustainability (EES) and Membership would be our focus. Committee chairs Jill Patton, Deanna Collins and Marilyn Sandstrom will head these efforts.

We have several programs this fall. Our September 1<sup>st</sup> forum features a fiscal policy analyst from Denver who will detail Colorado's budget crisis. The September 23<sup>rd</sup> membership meeting will focus on this year's priorities, new membership procedures, and how to use technology. We are co-hosting an air quality forum on October 8<sup>th</sup> to learn what's in the air in the Four Corners, the potential effects to your health, and what you can do about it.

We have 97 members and our goal is to retain and engage each of you. We need to know what you think is important for the League and how involved you want to be. Look for a mailing in September that contains a survey and your membership renewal form.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your president for 2009-10. I'm excited about this year and hope you are as well. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

-Stephanie Huss

## **Interested in registering voters for School Board Elections this fall?**

LWVLPC needs a person, called a voter registration drive agent, to be trained to register voters and assist other League members in registering voters as well. We plan to be at the Durango Farmers' Market this fall at least two Saturdays to assist people in registering or updating their registration due to moves, party changes, etc. We need a volunteer coordinate the voter registration we do. If you are at all interested, contact Stephanie Huss, 259-7263, [stephanie@frontier.net](mailto:stephanie@frontier.net) or Marilyn Sandstrom, 764-4596, [mjschili@bresnan.net](mailto:mjschili@bresnan.net)

## **Colorado's Budget Crisis -September 1 Forum**

New information this summer indicates that sales and income tax collections are far short of projections, resulting in an estimated \$384 million deficit by July, 2010. Governor Bill Ritter requested cuts in the 2009-10 budget before it even took effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Where will these reductions come from? Transportation? Education? Social Services? Will we have to increase taxes?

The LWVLPC has invited Carol Hedges, senior fiscal analyst with the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute in Denver, to speak with city and county officials, faculty and staff at Fort Lewis College, and community leaders in a series of meetings throughout Southwest Colorado. She will address Colorado's perpetual budget crisis, how we got there and what might be done to fix it.

Our forum is open to the public. Join us for an informative talk and a lively discussion on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> from 7-9 p.m. at the Durango Public Library, 1900 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. For more information or to volunteer to help with this event, please contact Stephanie Huss at 259-7263 or [stephanie@frontier.net](mailto:stephanie@frontier.net).

## **LWVCO Sustainability Study**

The 2009 LWVCO state convention adopted "sustainability" as a study item for the next biennium. There are many definitions of sustainability, but the one adopted for the study is *Sustainability is a long term goal which seeks to balance environmental, economic, and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet that same goal.* The ultimate goal of the study will be to develop a statement that illustrates the interconnectedness of our many League positions whether they are found under the heading of government, natural resources, or social policy.

The first phase of the study to be completed this fall will be to gather information from local Leagues to determine where we in Colorado stand regarding efforts to achieve sustainability in the areas businesses, government, and non-profits. A general meeting is tentatively scheduled for spring to reach a consensus.

If you would like to participate in gathering information for LWVLPC, please contact Deanna Collins at [dcdurango@msn.com](mailto:dcdurango@msn.com) or 259-7845.

### **Fall Membership Meeting – Save the Date**

Did you know that our website averages 8000 hits each month? Are you Natalie Novice or Cyber Sara? We'll preview upcoming activities and tiptoe through cyberspace at our first 2009-10 membership meeting. It will be held at the Durango Public Library, 1900 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 12-2 p.m. in Program Room 1.

Stephanie Huss will discuss programs and priorities, Marilyn Sandstrom will describe new membership materials and surveys, and Ross Park will tutor us on how to use our website and blog. We promise that all levels of computer user will learn something new and have fun at the same time. Bring your lunch and stay as long as you like.

### **Why Aren't We Actively Supporting A Single Payer Health Insurance System?**

I know many League members are frustrated about this. Let me explain first that, as many of you know, we cannot act on a national issue (like healthcare) without agreement from LWVUS, and the National League is not currently voicing support for single payer. Let me quote from a recent piece from our president, Mary Wilson:

*“First, the LWVUS health care position as stated in Impact on Issues has not changed. The League favors universal health care to be provided through a national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums, commonly known as the “single payer” approach. But, the League’s position is much more expansive than just favoring the single payer approach. Click here for the League’s health care position:*

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=8643> (also found in *Impact on Issues*, p. 69).

I, personally, think the LWVUS is correct in not pushing for single payer right now. *However, LWVUS is in favor of the Public Plan Option as can be seen in this recent excerpt from the LWV web site:* “Health care reform legislation must guarantee quality, affordable health care to all U.S. residents. It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system, and all Americans must have health care coverage, including the choice of a quality, affordable public insurance plan.”

Locally, Julie Thompson, who was recently hired to develop a plan to provide availability of quality, affordable health care for all residents of La Plata County, is making progress and hopes to have something to present by the fall. I'll keep you posted.

-Jill Patton/Ellen Park

[Ed. Note: Since Jill initially wrote this article, LWVUS issued an action alert, conveyed to you by our Legislative Action chair Ellen Park, to contact our Congressman and Senators to support timely health care reform.]

### **Mail-in, Early and Provisional Ballot Processes in La Plata County**

If you have not had a look at it, please take a few minutes to exam the excellent and thorough work product created by our Mail-in, Early and Provisional Ballot Research Project Committee (<http://www.lwvaplata.org/> click on Current Studies).

Our president Stephanie Huss recently sent a letter to Linda Daley, County Clerk, and her assistant, Donna Elder, and to Amy Phillips, City Clerk, City of Durango, thanking them for their cooperation and candidness in working with us on this project. The

letter stated ‘The League wants to congratulate you on the excellent way in which these processes are conducted. We are truly fortunate to have such caring government employees in both our County and City clerk’s offices.’

The report has been placed on our website in an effort to reassure members and the public and answer questions they may have on the voting processes more and more of us use to vote in elections.

-Marilyn Brown



**Mary Ruth Bowman, right, received a plaque from LWVCO President Margie Beal, honoring her 50 years of service to the LWV and to the community.**

### **Annual Meeting 2009**

We managed to accomplish our entire agenda despite our very interesting setting amid water features and fantastic views at President Stephanie Huss's lovely new home perched on the ridge above U.S. 550 in Falls Creek Ranch. Our keynote speaker, Durango City Mayor and LWV member Leigh Meigs spoke of, among other things, her goal for her tenure of clarifying and standardizing city processes, especially as regards public hearings. LWVCO President Margie Beal and President-elect Patty Cordova spoke briefly as part of their string of visits to local LWVs in SW CO.

### **Leadership Retreat**

It's a long way from Durango to Frisco, but it can be a worthwhile trip. Marilyn Sandstrom, Connie Jacobs and I left early, early on Friday, June 19 to be in Frisco for the League of Women Voters of Colorado's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Retreat, a full two days of learning what the League is all about. LWVCO pioneered these retreats to help train local members in how to lead their League's activities and to help new leaders to understand the way the League works.

The agenda read like a tutorial in League affairs with presenters who have lots of experience in local, state, and national League work. One of the principal presenters was Cheryl Graeve from LWVUS. Cheryl was a wealth of good information on best practices and how the national League can help local members. Much of her presentation focused on membership, including

Sally Bellerue and Marilyn Brown summarized our LWV's activities locally and legislatively. Ellen Park presented the budget on behalf of the budget committee. It passed successfully. Jill Patton presented the list of local position statements in our portfolio, which we voted to re-adopt. No new studies, nor bylaw changes were recommended.

The following officers and members of the 2009-10 nominating committee were elected:

Stephanie Huss, president  
 Trish Pegram, vice president  
 Grace Deltscheff, secretary  
 Nadine Ancel, treasurer  
 Deanna Collins, nominating committee member  
 Dorothy Newell, nominating committee member

(Our bylaws provide for three appointed directors, who will be formally anointed at the August board meeting. Other portfolio chairs will serve as off-board directors. Watch the back page of the newsletter for updates to the list of directors.)

Copies of the budget, program positions, and proposed slate of officers may be found in the April newsletter on the website <http://www.lwvlaplata.org/>, click on Newsletters 2009. Minutes of the annual meeting may be obtained from secretary Grace Deltscheff.

*-Marilyn Brown*

how to increase it, how to retain it, and how to energize it. Membership development was a recurring theme among many of the talks, so we hope there will be some new ideas for our membership that we brought back with us. For someone as new to the League as I am, it was very helpful to hear from the "old hands" about the nitty gritty of how a League operates, things like what separating advocacy from education means and the "League way" of coming to consensus and defining a position.

As with all the League meetings I've attended, there was lots of cross-pollination of ideas and suggestions. We were proud to share some of the successes and strong programs we have presented locally, and heard from other local Leagues of their work. Talking and listening to many of the talented, impressive leaders of the LWVCO at Leadership Retreat was an opportunity not to be missed, and one I recommend to any of our members.

*-Trish Pegram*

## **National Popular Vote Compact Study**

As you undoubtedly know by now, LWVUS declared that we didn't reach consensus on whether or not the LWV should support National Popular Vote Compact process as another way to reach our goal of direct popular vote of the President/Vice President.

Apparently, 390 local LWVs participated in the consensus. The National Popular Vote Consensus Report, available through our website [http://www.lwvaplata.org/current\\_studies.html#popular\\_vote](http://www.lwvaplata.org/current_studies.html#popular_vote) gives you the distribution and diversity of positive, negative and no consensus responses to the consensus questions and an idea as to why the national board declared no consensus on the entire study.

For months leading up to the consensus deadline the NPVC list-serve reflected the greatest amount of dissatisfaction with the consensus questions themselves that I have ever seen in a national study in my almost 40 years of LWV membership. Additionally, there were charges that individuals who are part of the National Popular Vote Compact project itself, who are also members of the LWV, were unduly lobbying other LWV members on the list-serve.

LWVUS President Mary Wilson's memo on the LWV's Consensus Process, also available through our website at the url mentioned above, provides us with an understanding of why the NPVC consensus questions were written as they were. Her discussion is worth your time to read. She also makes a commitment to ask the National Board to approve development of a training module on the consensus process as a part of our leadership development training project in order to assist us in training our members. There is no doubt that we need this module.

Although our local LWV painfully achieved consensus on this study albeit with numerous caveats, I noted a sense of relief among some consensus participants that the LWVUS Board declared that no consensus was reached. Our gratitude goes out to the NPVC committee that worked so hard to produce and present the materials and the 16 participants in the consensus process.

*-Marilyn Brown*

Attend if you can:

## **Global Climate Change Impacts**

Did you notice that the Animas River peaked almost 3 weeks early this spring? Higher temperatures and a dozen dust storms are the causes of the early snowmelt. In fact, recent warming in the Southwest has been among the most rapid in the nation according to the White House report **Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States** published mid-June. The report focuses on climate change impacts in 9 different regions of the U.S. and on various aspects of society and the economy. It discusses affects on human health, agriculture, coastal areas, transportation and water supplies. In the Southwest, we will see our water supplies becoming scarcer and increasing temperature, drought, wildfire and invasive species transforming our landscape.

Climate change is already reshaping the United States and "major disruptions" are taking place. The key findings in the report were:

1. Global warming is unequivocal and primarily human-induced.
2. Climate changes are underway in the United States and are projected to grow.
3. Widespread climate-related impacts are occurring now and are expected to increase.
4. Climate change will stress water resources.
5. Crop and livestock production will be increasingly challenged.
6. Coastal areas are at increasing risk from sea-level rise and storm surge.
7. Risks to human health will increase.
8. Climate change will interact with many social and environmental stresses.
9. Thresholds will be crossed, leading to large changes in climate and ecosystems.
10. Future climate change and its impacts depend on choices made today.

To read more about these findings, to look specifically at the Southwest projections, or to access the full report, logon to <http://www.lwvaplata.org/> and select Environment and Energy or logon to [www.globalchange.gov](http://www.globalchange.gov).

*-Deanna Collins*

## **Mountain Studies Institute Air Quality Forum**

**Wednesday, August 26, 2009 - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

**Durango Public Library, Durango, CO**

**Topics: AQ Planning/Management, Ozone, Mercury**

[www.mountainstudies.org](http://www.mountainstudies.org)

# Calendar



**LWV La Plata County**  
[www.lwvlaplata.org](http://www.lwvlaplata.org)  
 296 Highland Hill Drive  
 Durango, CO 81301

<b>August</b>														
Tues 11	Board Meeting, 2 p.m., Downstairs Conf. Rm., Durango Coffee Company, 730 Main Ave													
Wed 26	Women's Equality Day													
Wed 26	MSI Air Quality Symposium, 8:30-4:30 Durango Public Library													
<b>September</b>														
Tues 1	Colorado's Budget Crisis, Speaker: Carol Hedges, CO Fiscal Policy Institute 7-9 p.m., Durango Library													
Sat 19	Voter Education, Farmers Mkt, 7:30-12:30, 1 <sup>st</sup> Natl Bank parking lot													
Wed 23	Welcome back to the League, 12-2, Prog Rm. 1, Durango Public Library													
Sat 26	LWVCO League Day, Holiday Inn Select, Denver													
<b>October</b>														
Sat 3	Voter Education, Farmers Mkt, 7:30-12:30, 1 <sup>st</sup> Natl Bank parking lot													
Thur 8	Four Corner Air Quality and Our Health, 7-9 p.m. 130 Noble Hall, FLC													
		<b><u>Board of Directors*</u></b>												
		<table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>President</b> Stephanie Huss, 259-7263 <a href="mailto:stephanie@frontier.net">stephanie@frontier.net</a></td> <td><b>Vice President</b> Trish Pegram, 382-8248 <a href="mailto:trishpegram@bresnan.net">trishpegram@bresnan.net</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Secretary</b> Grace Deltscheff, 259-3040 <a href="mailto:holgnd@frontier.net">holgnd@frontier.net</a></td> <td><b>Treasurer</b> Nadine Ancel, 259-3675 <a href="mailto:ancelnm@yahoo.com">ancelnm@yahoo.com</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Health Care</b> Jill Patton, 385-4061 <a href="mailto:jgpatton@frontier.net">jgpatton@frontier.net</a></td> <td><b>Membership</b> Marilyn Sandstrom, 764-4596 <a href="mailto:mjschili@bresnan.net">mjschili@bresnan.net</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Env, Energy, Sustainability</b> Deanna Collins, 259-7845 <a href="mailto:dcdurango@msn.com">dcdurango@msn.com</a></td> <td><b>Legislative Action</b> Ellen Park, 247-8116 <a href="mailto:gellenpark@aol.com">gellenpark@aol.com</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Great Decisions</b> Pat Chatfield, 247-1692 <a href="mailto:patchwork@gobrainstorm.net">patchwork@gobrainstorm.net</a></td> <td><b>Website</b> Ross Park, 247-8116 <a href="mailto:eandrpark@aol.com">eandrpark@aol.com</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><b>Newsletter Editor</b> Marilyn Brown, 259-3593 <a href="mailto:marilbrown@aol.com">marilbrown@aol.com</a></td> </tr> </table>	<b>President</b> Stephanie Huss, 259-7263 <a href="mailto:stephanie@frontier.net">stephanie@frontier.net</a>	<b>Vice President</b> Trish Pegram, 382-8248 <a href="mailto:trishpegram@bresnan.net">trishpegram@bresnan.net</a>	<b>Secretary</b> Grace Deltscheff, 259-3040 <a href="mailto:holgnd@frontier.net">holgnd@frontier.net</a>	<b>Treasurer</b> Nadine Ancel, 259-3675 <a href="mailto:ancelnm@yahoo.com">ancelnm@yahoo.com</a>	<b>Health Care</b> Jill Patton, 385-4061 <a href="mailto:jgpatton@frontier.net">jgpatton@frontier.net</a>	<b>Membership</b> Marilyn Sandstrom, 764-4596 <a href="mailto:mjschili@bresnan.net">mjschili@bresnan.net</a>	<b>Env, Energy, Sustainability</b> Deanna Collins, 259-7845 <a href="mailto:dcdurango@msn.com">dcdurango@msn.com</a>	<b>Legislative Action</b> Ellen Park, 247-8116 <a href="mailto:gellenpark@aol.com">gellenpark@aol.com</a>	<b>Great Decisions</b> Pat Chatfield, 247-1692 <a href="mailto:patchwork@gobrainstorm.net">patchwork@gobrainstorm.net</a>	<b>Website</b> Ross Park, 247-8116 <a href="mailto:eandrpark@aol.com">eandrpark@aol.com</a>		<b>Newsletter Editor</b> Marilyn Brown, 259-3593 <a href="mailto:marilbrown@aol.com">marilbrown@aol.com</a>
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<p><b>League Mission Statement:</b> The League of Women Voters, a Nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and Active participation in government and influences public Policy through education and advocacy.</p> <p><b>Join the League!</b> Anyone of voting age may join the League of Women Voters. Others may be associate members. Discounted household memberships are available. Call Marilyn Sandstrom, 764-4596, for more information.</p>		<p>*At the August Board meeting three directors will be officially appointed to the board; the remaining portfolio chairs will serve as off-board directors</p>												