



League of Women Voters of La Plata County Calendar

March, 2011

Date	Event	Venue
Tues, March 1	<i>Living the Legacy: How the He-man West Won the Vote for Women</i> , Judith Reynolds' original play for voices, a free Spoken Word program	Program Room, Durango Library, 7 pm
Tues, March 1 Thurs, March 3	Great Decisions: Responding to Financial Crisis	Program Room 2, Durango Library, 11:45-1:45
Thurs, March 3	LWV Ski Day – Come join and get some AIR at Purgatory (Durango Mountain Resort) p, all levels of skill welcome	Meet at PJ's parking lot at Trimble 9:15, or six-man lift 10 am*
Thurs, March 3	Globalization or Fragmentation? Yes! Ron Garst, Life Long Learning Program	130 Noble Hall, FLC, 7 pm
Sat, Mar 5	AAUW Book/Author Luncheon: LWV member Paula Huntley, author of <i>The Hemingway Book Club of Kosovo</i> (Make \$25.00 checks payable to Durango AAUW and mail to Durango AAUW, P.O. Box 9200, Durango CO 81302)	Durango Public Library, 12-2:30 pm
Tues, March 8	<u>LWV board meeting</u>	Trish Pegram's home, 1-3 pm
Wed, March 9	LWV Environment, Energy and Sustainability Committee meeting	Doughworks, 9:30 am
Tues, March 15 Thurs, March 17	Great Decisions: Germany Ascendant	Program Room 3 upstairs, Durango Library, 11:45-1:45
Wed, March 16	<u>Durango City Council Candidate Forum</u>	Durango City Council Chambers, 6-8 pm
Thurs, March 24	Climate Change, Jim White, Life Long Learning Program	130 Noble Hall, FLC, 7 pm
Wed, Mar 30	<u>LWV General Meeting: Amanda Saunders, 4CORE, La Plata County and City of Durango Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) and Where We Go From Here</u>	Program Room 2, Durango Library, 10-12
Thurs, March 31	Impact of Islamic Achievements, Dennis Aronson, Life Long Learning Program	130 Noble Hall, FLC, 7 pm

*Information: Marilyn Brown, 970-946-6523 or marilbrown@aol.com

Members: See summaries of interviews with our state and local representatives that follow.

LWV of La Plata County Interviews Our New State and Local Elected Representatives

Biennially, local LWVs are asked to interview their state legislators and Congressmen with special emphasis on any newly elected officials. The goal is to get to know them, find out their priorities and how they feel about issues of interest to the LWV. This year our LWV interviewed State Senator Ellen Roberts, State Representative J. Paul Brown, and County Commissioner Bobby Lieb.

Highlights of 12/16/10 Interview with State Senator Ellen Roberts, Republican 6th District by Stephanie Huss and Ellen Park

Ellen Roberts served four years as state representative from our district prior to her recent election as state senator. She has been a LWV member in the past and continues to be a friend and appreciator of the LWV. She is a self-described 'middle of the road' Republican and is often the 'token' Republican on committees. She is a diligent researcher and knows the issues well. Her priorities are the CO Youth Advisory Council, the Citizens for CO TV group working to get Denver television into this area, health care and hospice reform. She believes in states' rights in health care, immigration and other hot button issues. She prefers to use CO's energy but believes climate change is real. She is a friend of the CO Farm Bureau, has an 'A' rating from the NRA and received the CO National Federation of Independent Business Guardian of Small Business award in July, 2010 and scored a pro-business vote of 81% from the Denver Metro Chamber for her work as state representative in 2010.

Priorities: CO's budget deficit, hospice eligibility, keeping oil and gas severance monies in local fund. She will not support any legislation that has a fiscal note (i.e., would cost the state money).

Health care: She is on the health and human service committee. She believes the Roadmap for CO is the way to go. She feels that the national policy is causing a large increase in the state budget.

Redistricting: She would consider putting Congressional (House and Senate) redistricting in the hands of a non-partisan commission.

Budgetary shortfall: She feels that the governor's big challenge will be dealing with state employees; the department heads need to make cuts to programs added during good times, including employee cuts. Where is there duplication, or overlap with non-profit sector? She decries driving down of costs from federal to state and state to local level.

CO's stricter oil and gas rules: she voted for them but parts need tweaking. Unintended consequences have cropped up and Division of Wildlife section is not being applied consistently across the state.

Taxes: she supports a fiscal reform discussion but not a tax increase.

Highlights of 2/5/11 Interview with State Representative J. Paul Brown, Republican, 59th District by Stephanie Huss and Trish Pegram

J. Paul Brown is the newly elected state representative from the 59th district. He has not held state office before. He is very conservative but is trying hard to get to know both his Republican and Democrat colleagues. He believes that economic recovery will take time; we must encourage new business and review regulations that are driving oil and gas producers to other states. He also feels we are pricing CO residents out of CO colleges.

Priorities: PERA Board; tax benefits for propane users; repeal of agriculture tax; use of road tax money only for roads/maintenance, not for mass transit and bikes; supports term change for State Conservation Board; supports modifications to amendment 23 and a bill to make changes to Constitution more difficult, requiring signatures from all over the state, and supports transparency/disclosure of initiative organizers.

Health care: repeal Obamacare and develop a plan for CO; a health insurance exchange for CO; tort reform; encouraging more grads from state medical schools; review of regulations stifling competition; encouraging other insurance companies to come to CO.

Redistricting: not enough information now, supports emphasizing communities of interest.

Budgetary shortfall: don't take dedicated funds to cover shortfall in general fund; keep severance taxes in local communities; reduce number of state employees.

Highlights of 2/25/11 Interview with La Plata County Commissioner, District 1, Bobby Lieb, Republican, by Trish Pegram, Deanna Collins and Stephanie Huss

Commissioner Lieb is settling into his new job and enjoying it very much. The County Commissioners discussed the strategic plan last week [mid-February] and are identifying core services and prioritizing them. County revenues are down significantly; oil and gas activity is expected to be erratic and property assessments will be about 25% lower this year. There are some difficult decisions to make.

Bobby believes that La Plata County needs a capital improvement plan. We need to look at our facility requirements and road issues and set a funding schedule. Our county is growing and local tax reform may be necessary to meet our needs. He also says we must complete our comprehensive plan. The county needs to be zoned and many residents will not be happy about this.

We discussed the EPA and how the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) should respond to them and to citizens who ask for non-binding resolutions. Bobby feels that these are often partisan, politically motivated, and can be divisive. In the case of a recent EPA request, the BOCC felt sending a letter would have more impact. He worked with Wally White until both were comfortable with the language. They requested a public EPA hearing be held in La Plata County on the proposed rulemaking for the San Juan Generating Station.

We explained our organization and asked how we could help him. Given the fact that there are Leagues all over the country, he asked if we could look at land use regulations in other similar communities to see what they had done with a comprehensive plan.