



League of Women Voters
of La Plata County

VOTER

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Sixty-six Years Serving La Plata County
92 Members

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www.lwv.org

www.lwvlaplata.org

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September Calendar

Colorado's Health Insurance Exchange: What Does It Mean to Employers, Organizations and the Rest of Us?

Wednesday, September 7, 12-1, Sunlight Room, Durango Rec Center
or 5:30-6:30 pm, LPEA Boardroom, 45 Stewart Street

Click [here](#) for the flier and a contact for more information

Do you understand CO's new health insurance exchange? How is Colorado preparing for this new customer service? Will everyone have the opportunity for health insurance? Would you like to join a workgroup to help design this new system? Joan Henneberry, project director, Health Exchange, will explain the exchange and answer your questions. The session is co-sponsored by several community organizations.

The Water Crisis at Home and Abroad

Tuesdays, September 6, 13, 20, 27, noon-2 pm, Program Room 2, Durango Public Library

Facilitator/moderator: Dennis Lum, Fort Lewis College professor emeritus

Co-sponsored by Durango Public Library, this extended series will engage the participants in discussions focused on the issues surrounding the growing global scarcity of water and the dwindling resource depletion in our local Four Corners region. A flier, session outlines with films to be used, and a recommended reading list are available [here](#).

Welcome Back to our 66th Year

Monday, September 12, 4:30-6:30, Education Center on Durango Discovery Museum grounds

Welcome back to our 66th year of making democracy work in La Plata County! Greet new and seasoned members and enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres. Speaker: Past President Stephanie Huss who will share her unpublicized experiences in Washington in June at the Colorado Capital Conference. Click [here](#) for the Durango Herald's article about the conference. Other LWV leaders will discuss plans for this year's activities. A separate email invitation will follow shortly. Thanks to the Discovery Museum, each attendee will receive a free pass to the museum to be used at a later date!

Board meeting, Tuesday, September 13, 2:30-4:30 pm, Trish Pegram's home

Tour of Remediated Silverton Area Mines

Friday, September 16, all day, 4-wheel drive vehicle required
Box Lunch ~\$8

The Animas River Stakeholders Group has arranged a tour of two areas around Silverton (Mineral Creek drainage and Cement Creek at Gladstone) that they have recently remediated to prevent or reduce pollution in the Animas River watershed. Contact Marilyn Brown if you're interested in attending.

LWVCO League Day

Saturday, September 24, 9-3 pm, Holiday Inn Select, 455 South Colorado Blvd, Denver

Here's an opportunity to renew friendships and meet new Leaguers while painlessly bringing yourself up to date. Topics:

Hydraulic Fracturing Study: Jeannette Hillery, study co-chair (along with our Sally Bellerue!)

Federal Role in Education Study: Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, LWVUS Study Committee

State Ballot Issue (Temporary Tax Increase for Public Education): Cath Perrone, LWVCO President

CO's Health Insurance Exchange: Lorez Meinold, Governor's Office of Policy and Initiatives

CO's Fiscal Future and Recommendations for Action: Charlie Brown, Center for CO's Economic Future, University of Denver

And more....

If this all sounds intriguing, our LWV will cover your registration and some other expenses. Contact Trish Pegram for further info and possible carpooling. Click [here](#) for a more detailed agenda and the August LWVCO Voter newsletter.

Global Day for Climate Action

Saturday, September 24

Global Day for Climate Action, a.k.a. Moving Planet, is the day of a world-wide rally whose goal is to get moving beyond fossil fuels—both symbolically by hitting the streets in the thousands on foot, bicycle and other means of sustainable movement, and politically by bringing powerful demands to our leaders to move beyond fossil fuels to a 350 ppm (carbon dioxide density) world. Watch for information about related local activities. Further information can be found [here](#) at the website of the founding organization.

***Congratulations and many thanks to LWV Member Ross Park
on his 5th anniversary as our Webmaster!***

October Calendar

County School District Elections will be all mail ballot only. Ballots will be mailed in mid-October and are due back on November 1. Make sure you are registered or your address is correct and that you are an active voter [here](#).

9-R School District Candidate Forum

Thursday, October 13, 6-8 pm, Durango City Council Chambers

Four positions, Districts A, B, D, and G will be on the ballot. Candidates for contested seats only will participate in the candidate forum.

Ignacio (11-JT) School District Candidate Forum

Tuesday, October 18, 6-8 pm, Ignacio Community Library

Three seats are open. Forum will be held if there are more than 3 candidates.

Bayfield (10-JT-R) School District Candidate Forum

Wednesday, October 19, 6-8 pm, Bayfield Town Hall

Four positions are open. Forum will be held if there are more than 4 candidates.

Keep your eyes and ears open for information on the state and local ballot issues to be the November 1 ballot. Ballots will start going out to active voters in mid-October. The LPEA-City of Durango Franchise Agreement may be on a December 6 mail ballot for city residents, if it isn't postponed.

November – Federal Role in Education (national study), study/consensus, Saturday, Nov. 5, 10-1:30, Christ the King Church, click [here](#) for position papers from LWVUS Study Task Force. The Durango Public Library Reference Desk has a copy of the background papers for anyone to review on site.

December – Holiday Social, Friday, Dec. 9, 11:30-1:30 pm

Articles of Interest

September is Membership Renewal Month!

Be an early bird and click [here](#) for our membership renewal form. Our membership chair, Suzanne Becker (see above for her contact info), will appreciate your early attention to renewing and we all will be very pleased to have you and your support with us again for the coming year. Many of us will tell you that our best friends anywhere are LWV members because Leaguers can discuss intelligently and agree to disagree on a wide range of governmental, social, environmental and other issues.

Federal Role in Education Study

Our study committee, consisting of Mary Barter, Carol Blatnick, Barbara Cristol, Ann Flatten, Connie Jacobs, Bev Wells, Marilyn Brown (facilitator) Trish Pegram (ex officio), has been hard at work digesting the position papers received from the national study committee (click [here](#) to see them online or ask to read them at the Reference Desk of Durango Public Library (white notebook)). On Wednesday, August 17, we were silent participants in a discussion, supremely well-organized and moderated by Mary, of various La Plata County educators representing our three public school districts, one charter school, the San Juan Board of Cooperative Educational Services and several other relevant educators. The distinguished guests discussed our consensus

questions giving us good input for our study. Subsequently, the study committee has reviewed the meeting notes (taken by Connie Jacobs and Bev Wells) and determine how to convey the information to our members at our consensus meeting in November. Surprising fact: Gretchen Wilson, teacher at Needham Elementary School, said that her students are subjected to 19 assessment tests during the year. Due to Ann Flatten's pleasant persistence, we will likely gain at least one new member from the group!

To get yourself started, check out the [Glossary and Acronyms](#) used in the materials for the study.

LWVCO Takes Neutral Position on State Ballot Issue

The state board has decided to take a 'neutral' position on the state ballot issue, Proposition 103, on the temporary five-year tax increase for public education. Per Cath Perrone, LWVCO president, "As much as all of us want quality education in this state, the credibility of the League may well be at stake if we were NOT to look at the broader picture. The League believes that major changes need to be made in Colorado's fiscal situation. Our infrastructure as well as our children are in serious danger, and that is as important as adequate and equitable education funding are, our positions on good government require more." Click [here](#) for the August LWVCO Voter, *From the President* on page 2 and Legislative Action Committee member Sally Augden's summary of the arguments on page 3. This means that as a League we can neither support nor oppose the ballot issue; however, as individuals we can vote our conscience, of course.

National Study: Privatization of Government Services

Does this topic intrigue you? Become a member of our local study committee, which will begin work after the study materials arrive from national in November. The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good. The timeline requires us to study and come to consensus by May, 2012. We welcome all members to join us. Contact Marilyn Brown for more information. A brief description of the study and recommended reading are available on our website [here](#).

Clean Air Promise Campaign

The League of Women Voters has launched a campaign, including a national advertising effort, seeking to renew America's promise to protect clean air and public health embodied in the Clean Air Act, now under threat in the Congress and across the country. The **Clean Air Promise** campaign calls on citizens, elected officials and community leaders around the country to join in making this simple promise to protect the health of our children and families:

"I promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution. Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths, I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality."

Our local LWV will be working with San Juan Citizens Alliance and perhaps other community organizations to publicize the campaign. Click [here](#) for a copy of the LWVUS press release announcing the launch of the campaign and other materials. More information about the campaign can be found [here](#) on the People Not Polluters website.

Reapportionment Commission Hearing, Durango, August 12

Three LWV members, Trish Pegram, Nadine Ancel and Marilyn Brown, observed the CO Reapportionment Commission Durango hearing at Fort Lewis College and were duly impressed by the process, the receptivity of the Commission to points presented. We look forward to revision of the preliminary plan, in particular to accommodate the suggestions from the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Tribes, as well as from the Montezuma County Clerk. Click [here](#) to read Trish's comments on the hearing process and content. Click [here](#) for Reporter Ann Butler's summary in the Durango Herald. Audio of each hearing, including the Durango hearing, is available [here](#) or through our own website, as are the preliminary district plans. Have you ever heard the Ute language spoken? Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council member Manuel Heart greeted Pearl Casias, his colleague and S. Ute Tribal Chair, in the Ute language, hear it on the audio version!

LWV Facebook Page and Twitter Account

Don't panic! Although we have determined that at least 19 of us have Facebook Pages, our goal for the LWV FB page and the Twitter account is outreach to the community and to folks we couldn't reach any other way. Check out our FB page 'League of Women Voters of La Plata County, CO' at www.facebook.com or [here](#) where we will be posting items and events of interest to the community and follow us on Twitter, where we will be posting short reminders (140 characters max) like public service announcements.

New Format for Calendar and Newsletter

We hope the new format of our LWV calendar is useful to you. We plan to provide you electronically each month with either a concise calendar or a full website based newsletter, such as this. Articles to which the newsletter links will go out on the website as soon as they are ready so that you will not need to wait for the newsletter if you are looking for a report of something particular. However, each newsletter will alert you to the articles about our projects that have been posted since the last newsletter providing you with a teaser and a link to each complete article.

Unsubscribe: Please let me know at marilbrown@aol.com if you no longer wish to receive our newsletter.