



The Corpus Christi Area

Voter

April 2016

League of Women Voters
PO Box 8276
Corpus Christi, TX 78468-8276
<http://www.lwv-cc.org>
361-445-4436

LWV-CC Officers, 2015-2016

President - Dr. Mary Jane Garza
537-1313, dr.maryjane.garza@gmail.com,
lwvpresident@gmail.com

Past President-Sandra Heatherley
814-9120,sheatherley@cs.com

Secretary - Vacant

Treasurer -Vacant

Vice President, Program--Vacant

Vice President, Community Relations-
Bobbie Wood-Hughes, 993-0052
bobbiecpa@aol.com, 855-7720

Vice President, Member Services
Chris Davis Garcia, 991-2784
garciachr1714@gmail.com, cell 244-2913

Directors:

Sally Farris-(210) 313-7028
s.farris@att.net

Coretta Graham-815-8346
lawyergraham@msn.com

Matilda Saenz-(214)-240-5655
dr.mdsaenz@gmail.com

OFF-BOARD CHAIRS

Nominating Committee
Maria Jimenez-888-7560
nick.maria.jimenez@sbcglobal.net

Website Editor -Debbie Noble

The VOTER Editors
Ricky Walraven-992-8031;
wilraven26@yahoo.com

Chris Davis Garcia-991-2784
garciachr1714@gmail.com

Come join LWV-CC monthly meeting

Note date change to Tuesday, April 19

Plan to join your fellow League members on Tuesday, April 19, 2016, as conversation and discussion center on “LWV-CC Planning for 2016-2017: Preparing for the Annual Meeting.”

We’ll gather from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Room 117 of the Del Mar College Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples (at Kostoryz).

Topics include budget preparation, Program topics, and available leadership positions on the LWV-CC Board. Members of the Nominating Committee will be present. Help us plan for continued success.

Order your sandwich box lunch (with chips, fruit, cookie and beverage) at \$10 each, by calling 361-445-4436 no later than Friday, April 15. You may pay at the door when you arrive.

Annual meeting planned May 26

ANNUAL MEETING: Please mark your calendar for Thursday, May 26, as LWV-CC holds its Annual Meeting at the Emerald Beach Hotel.

Schedule: 5:30-6 p.m., Networking and membership renewal, with delicious appetizers, liquid refreshments, and delectable desserts; 6:10-7:10 p.m., business meeting; and 7:15-7:30 p.m., door prizes and adjournment.

There’s no cost to LWV-CC members to attend; guest reservations will be \$10 each. Be watching for more information on the business items to be considered at the Annual Meeting.

Don’t forget that the last day to register to vote in the Primary runoff is April 25! (See story on page 7.)

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 League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

President's Message

By Dr. Mary Jane Garza



Dr. Mary Jane Garza

LWV-CC has had an exciting month. LWV-CC members have been invited to speak to several organizations, membership is growing, and most important LWV-CC outreach is increasing voter registration in Nueces County. As members

speak to organizations, the questions that come forth yield topics for our newsletter.

Questions such as, “Why do I care who is elected to the Railroad Commission?”

Here are some reasons to care: Current law requires the Railroad Commission to be the primary regulator of the oil and gas industry in Texas. Three full time commissioners and an executive director make these important decisions.

That three-person “court” often decides on disputes between oil and gas drillers. Settling disputes between drillers may be one of the most important commission functions from the industry’s perspective; and there are plenty of other reasons to pay attention to the race.

After all, it regulates huge swaths of the Texas oil, gas and mining industries. The commission also grants companies the power to take land through eminent domain in some instances. That is something that has earned it a lot of attention from landowner groups, and thrown the commission into the middle of a statewide debate over property rights.

The RR commission has an annual budget of \$79 million and focuses entirely on oil, gas, mining, propane and pipelines, setting monthly production quotas. That is why you should care who serves on the Railroad Commission.

Other questions that are asked, “Why is Texas voter participation so dismal? How do we improve voter participation?”

LWV-CC mission statement involves three key action verbs—educate, inform, and advocate. If each of us educates one person on the importance of the right to vote, informs one person on where to find information on candidates and issues, and advocates that every election is important and that person tells another, change can occur. It appears we, the people, do not seem to engage in the conversation about the importance of our right to vote.

That is the very reason LWV-CC invited Texas Secretary of State, Carlos H. Cascos, as its monthly speaker. He reinforced the importance that voter engagement requires active participation by each one of us. Ranking 50th in voter participation is unacceptable for the great state of Texas. Therefore, we, LWV-CC, will continue to educate, inform, and advocate.

Join LWV-CC in Making Democracy Work and increasing Nueces County Voter Participation for the General Election to no less than 60% of the registered voters.

Finally, today, April 4, 2016, the United State Supreme Court unanimously ruled that states may count all residents, whether or not they are eligible to vote, in drawing election districts.

The decision was a major statement on the meaning of a fundamental principle of the American political system, that of “one person, one vote.”

“We hold, based on constitutional history, this court’s decisions and longstanding practice, that a state may draw its legislative districts based on total population,” Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote for the court.

This is a significant decision—a non-partisan decision—since the Supreme Court represents both parties. It rings with the same distinctively American clarion call for equality and individual empowerment that reaches back through the ages to the nation’s founding: “...of the people, by the people, for the people.”

March has definitely been an exciting month—Democracy in Action!

Please see related stories, page 3

THE SPOTLIGHT



Chris Garcia

Chris Garcia, a multi-talented LWV-CC member, currently serves as Vice President for Member Services and is co-editor of the Voter Newsletter.

Chris also has served two 2-year terms as Director and one 2-year term as Secretary on the LWV-TX Board. She chaired the LWV-TX State Convention which was held in Houston this past month.

LWV-CC set a goal of 100 plus members and she motivated members to renew and actively engaged others to consider membership. LWV-CC has surpassed 100 members.

Chris served as President of the LWV-CC from 2007-2009.

Justices uphold Texas rules on equal voter districts

Plaintiffs sought standards set on eligible voters

In a unanimous decision released Monday, April 4, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to uphold Texas' current system for drawing legislative districts so that they are roughly equal in population.

The unanimous ruling left intact Texas' method — followed by nearly all states — of counting residents when drawing state and local voting districts.

Last year, two Texas voters, Sue Evenwel of Mount Pleasant and Edward Pfenninger of Montgomery County north of Houston, brought a case to the Supreme Court arguing that Texas should divide its districts by the number of eligible voters, not by the total population.

Challengers had argued only eligible voters should be counted, a method that would have allowed states to ignore non-citizens, children and others who do not vote.

The court pointed out that the difference in population between the biggest and smallest state Senate districts in Texas was less than 10 percent, while the difference between the eligible voters in the biggest and smallest districts was 40 percent. The justices did not say it would be unconstitutional to base district sizes on eligible voter populations, but said Texas' method of dividing legislative districts by overall population is clearly the standard. (Source USA Today, Richard Wolf)

Misnamed 'Railroad Commission' important state agency

The Railroad Commission is the most powerful elected regulatory agency not only in Texas, but in the nation.

Despite its name it no longer has anything to do with railroads. In 1984, the federal government took over transportation regulation for railroads, trucking and buses, but the Railroad Commission kept its name.

The state receives significant income for the industry and the money from leasing state lands for oil and gas production is used to fund public education. With an annual budget of \$79 million, it now focuses entirely on oil, gas, mining, propane, and pipelines,

setting allocations for production each month.

The three-member commission was initially appointed by the governor, but an amendment to the state's constitution in 1894 established the commissioners as elected officials who serve overlapping six-year terms.

Texans elect three Railroad commissioners who operate independently of each other. There is an elected chairperson who has some administrative duties, but otherwise the three commissioners have the same authority and responsibilities.



(At right:) LWV members pose for a photograph with Secretary of State Carlos H. Cascos. (At left) Mayor Nelda Martinez greets the secretary and his staff members.) (Below) League members enjoy fellowship and networking at the March 30 Meeting.

Del Mar meeting

Del Mar College is hosting an open meeting Wednesday, April 13, at its Center for Economic Development, inviting members of the public to see what's planned for a proposed Southside location on Yorktown Boulevard at Rodd Field Road. The meeting is scheduled for 6:30-8:30 p.m., and the center is across from Ray High School at 3209 South Staples at Kostoryz.



LWV-CC Briefs

League speakers are available

If your organization needs a speaker to discuss the importance of the vote, VOTE411, the history of LWVUS, LWV-TX and/or LWV-CC, call LWV-CC telephone number 361-445-4436.

Several of our LWV-CC members are prepared to address your organization. Please let us know the topic, time duration, date, place and time of the organization's meeting.

During the month of March, LWV-CC members spoke to three organizations. Topics of discussion: included *The Power of the Vote*, *Democracy at Work*, *LWV-Past to the*

Present. PowerPoint presentations are available for each of the topics, depending on time allotment.

LIKE our LEAGUE on Facebook

We have surpassed 394 followers on Facebook. We encourage you to "like" or "share" our Facebook posts to help expand the reach of these announcements to all of your friends.

"Like" Our League on Facebook! It's so easy to follow our League on Facebook.

See the following procedure:

1. Go to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and login to your existing account or create a new one.
2. Enter "Corpus Christi League of Women Voters" in the search box at the top of the page.
3. Facebook will show you possible matches to your search terms as you type. Simply click on the box with our logo and title.
4. Once you get to our page, there will be a button that says "Like" and has an image of a "thumbs up."
5. Click on that button. Now you are subscribed to our page and will see our news stories on your Facebook homepage.



Large crowd welcomes Secretary of State Cascos as March 30 speaker

By Jen Vasey, Member

Texas Secretary of State Carlos Cascos, a South Texas native, knows that Texas is the best state in the country. He emphasized that point in his remarks to approximately 92 LWV-CC members and community members at the League's March 30 meeting by telling them that Texas is number one in the nation in job creation, beef production, petroleum production, and number of exports. But according to Cascos, there is one area that needs improvement-- voter turnout.

Those who gathered at the Del Mar Center for Economic Development enjoyed a barbecue plate and a welcome by President Mary Jane Garza, who had initiated the invitation to the Secretary and was



pleased that he was able to visit Corpus Christi.

Secretary Cascos says that Texas is an amazing place and one of the things that makes Texas great is the people who live in and define Texas. He cited the state's diverse population and noted that Harris County prints ballots in four languages.

Cascos targeted the youth of today as wanting to be informed and involved. They are an untapped population when it comes to voting, he said, and he is working hard to get them involved in the voting process through his speaking engagements around the state. He believes the youth of today are not voting because their parents are not voting and that there is a generational gap when it comes to voting.

League volunteers register 27 at Art Walk on April 1

There were 27 new and renewing voter registrations received at the monthly Art Walk held Friday evening, April 1, in downtown Corpus Christi.

League volunteers who assisted included Ruth Falck, Jennifer Vasey, Ann Stewart, Margie Di

Clemente, Margareta Fratila, and Nancy Devlin. The next Art Walk is Friday, May 6...and volunteers will again be needed. Please call the League phone and leave a message and your phone number if you can man the table that evening.



League members from across the state participate in the “Roll Call” at the 2016 Convention, held at the Westin Houston at Memorial City March 12-13..

State convention focuses on action items

By Chris Davis Garcia, Convention Chair

In addition to electing officers for 2016-2018, adopting a two-year budget with a strong focus on voter engagement, and hearing inspiring remarks by LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara, the 80 delegates attending the 38th biennial convention of the League of Women Voters of Texas accomplished other significant actions. Here’s a summary:

- Drafted a resolution to be mailed to Texas Speaker of the House Joe Straus asking him to appoint interim committees to (1) focus on finding ways to restore local control to Texas cities, and (2) investigate human and civil rights violations at state-controlled detention facilities for undocumented children and their family members.

- Voted to spend \$1,000 to utilize TurboVote, a new online “one stop shop” voter registration and engagement service created by Democracy Works, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. The application, being used by several universities, allows voters to register to vote, request a mail-in ballot, or update their address; track elections with text messages and email reminders; and ask for help in voting matters.

The program can target young voters, Latinos, and low-income groups and engage them in both the May 2016 runoff and the November 2016 General Election. LWV-TX can get reminders and the email addresses of all who visit the site, plus all the analytics.

- Raised \$8,000 in a spirited Fund-A-Need campaign conducted during the Convention to underwrite a new initiative to Get-Out-the-Vote for the November 2016 General Election. LWV-TX will develop strategies and create materials for local Leagues to use in their own communities to help increase voter turnout at the polls.

Garcia completes State service

Chris Davis Garcia, LWV-CC past president (2007-2009) and current VP-Member Services, has completed six years of service on the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Texas. She was honored in a “farewell ceremony” at the 2016 state convention in Houston last month. She had served the past two years as Secretary, but declined an invitation to serve a new two-year term.

“Serving on the state board was a pleasure,” Garcia said. “Being part of a 12-member group of officers and directors committed to the League’s mission and directing statewide activities provided a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the organization. It was such an honor to serve.”

LWV-Texas, formed shortly after the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, has a rich history and a full program of work that includes advocacy, services to local leagues, citizen education, and marketing and development.

May Primary Runoff Election Key Registration and Voting



May 24, 2016 Primary Runoff Election

The Primary Runoff Election will take place on Tuesday, May 24, 2016. The last day one can register to vote for this election is April 25. Early Voting takes place from May 16 – May 20. Photo ID is currently required for voting in person.



Early Voting Begins



Last Day for Early Voting

State Runoff Candidates

Railroad Commissioner

Democrats

Cody Garrett

Grady Yarborough

Republicans

Gary Gates

Wayne Christian

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 2

Republicans

Mary Lou Keel

Ray Wheless

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 5

Republicans

Scott Walker

Brent Webster

Nueces County Candidates

County Commissioner, Precinct 3

Democrats

Joe A. Gonzalez

John Marez

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2, Place 1

Republicans

Jo Woolsey

Wendy Herman

New Members, Welcome

Eva Brown, Individual

Martin Johnson, Individual

Irene & Jose Longoria, Household

Tiffany Montemayor, Individual

T. Frank Smith IV, Individual

JOSE MIGUEL DURAN, M.D. Gastroenterology Screening Colonoscopy

Doctors Square
2222 Morgan Ave., Suite 111
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Ph (361) 883-6623
Fax (361) 883-0748



Carol A. Scott, APR
Fellow PRSA
cscott@kailocs.com

Doreen Harrell, APR
dharrell@kailocs.com

Carla Gardiner
cgardiner@kailocs.com

555 N. Carancahua St., Ste. 830
Corpus Christi, TX 78401
351.884.8890 | KailoCS.com

Partners for strategic
communications and public
relations solutions.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS
 PO Box 8276
 Corpus Christi, TX 78468

It's almost time to renew your membership!

The membership year for LWV-CC is June 1 through May 31, and renewal of dues is encouraged in the next several weeks. Please attach your payment to the renewal form on this page and send to the League address noted. Be sure to mark your check "2016-2017 Dues" in the notation line. If you have questions about membership, contact Chris Garcia at 991-2784 or garciachris1714@gmail.com.



Space is available for advertising in the VOTER—\$100 for 10 issues. Call the League at 445-4436 for details.



LWV Corpus Christi
 Renewal / New Membership Application
Join now and help in the effort to promote political responsibility through informed, active participation in government.

Date _____

Type of membership: New _____ Renewal _____

Individual \$60 _____ Student \$30 _____ Household \$90 _____

Friend of the League \$30 _____ Sustaining \$100 _____

Name _____

Household Member's Name _____

Address _____

Work Address (optional) _____

I prefer to receive my mail at: home or work.
(Please circle your preference above.)

Home phone _____

Work or Cell phone _____

Fax number _____

E-mail Address _____

*Please return this form to: League of Women Voters
 P. O. Box 8276, Corpus Christi, Texas 78468.
 Membership is from June 1 through May 31.*