



The VOTER

March 2017

League of Women Voters-Corpus Christi

Save the Date!

Thursday, April 20, 2017

7-9 p.m., Candidate Forum for the Special Called Mayoral Election --Corpus Christi City Hall Chambers 1201 Leopard Street.

League volunteers will be needed at the Candidate Forum to greet candidates; hand out index cards for audience-generated questions; serve as timekeepers; help place signage; and assist at the Moderator's Table.

Can You Help Prepare Questions for Mayoral Election Voters Guide?

LWV-CC President Mary Jane Garza invites you to help Sandra Heatherley, VP Voter Services, develop questions this month for use in both the Voters Guide and VOTE 411, which will be published in mid-April prior to Early Voting, and at the April 20 Candidate Forum.

"The Voters Guide and VOTE 411 will only be excellent tools to help voters make an informed decision if the questions are relevant and give candidates an opportunity to articulate their views and explain how they intend to provide leadership," Dr. Garza said. "Please contact Sandra immediately at sheatherle@cs.com if you are interested in helping develop questions."

LWV-Texas President Elaine Wiant To Speak at March 23 Meeting



Elaine Wiant
LWV-Texas President

Please plan to attend our Monthly Meeting **Thursday, March 23, 2017; members will enjoy a complimentary BBQ plate lunch.**

Room 106, Del Mar College Center for Economic Development (3209 S. Staples @ Kostoryz)

Lunch: 11:30-noon; speaker Noon-12:30, with Q&A; 12:45-1:10 pm, discussion on strategies to increase May 6 election Voter Participation

Complimentary BBQ plate lunch free to all current LWV-CC members; \$15 for each guest. Menu: Brisket or chicken, potato salad, beans; bread, pickles, onions; sweetened or unsweetened tea; assorted cookies. YOU MUST RSVP by Monday, March 20, to drmarijanegarza@gmail.com or call 361-537-1313

LWV-CC Registers Five Voters, Talks to Thousands Along Beach at "Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade"



The venue was a "first" for the League (Padre Island beach and carnival site) but League members Linda Snider, Sandra Heatherley, Annie Galvan, Sue Williams, Karol Stewart, and Chris Davis Garcia, along with League friend Anmar Al Badri had a great time participating in the annual "Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade" sponsored by the Padre Island Business Association. Sandra manned the voter registration table while the others rode in the Snider family truck, which was decorated with red, white, and blue bunting, flags, and magnetic signage. (See more photos on Page 6.)

LWV MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan, 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 candidates or parties.

President's Message

By Dr. Mary Jane Garza

IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

As you've seen, the media has been filled these past few months with news of marches, protests and rallies in cities across America. It's one of our basic rights. Whether in favor of or against some government initiative, people believe their actions should count. They hope local legislators and members of Congress will listen. But we in LWV don't need to rely on hope.

We have as our mission, "Action." And if we have the facts, we can work and act intelligently. We can be alert to what's happening. Newspapers, radio, TV, Facebook and Twitter are all valuable tools to keep us up to date. We can also attend council meetings, legislative hearings and community meetings.

As members, we are part of LWV's effort, not just our own. We are also part of a larger group – organizations with whom LWV collaborates and with whom we share values. Whether on our own, or with LWV's name behind us, the idea is to voice opinions to make democracy work.

We can also aid LWV's efforts by volunteering. There's room for many to register voters, work at candidate forums and public meetings, write for publications and research issues for member discussion. These activities give us contact with thinking men and women who also want to be informed. Working with others on LWV projects heightens our enthusiasm.

Let us take our enthusiasm and mobilize to an "ACTION ORIENTED" movement. A movement that is committed to motivate Corpus Christi residents to vote in the Corpus Christi Mayor's Election. Early voting will begin on April 24 and run through May 2. Saturday, May 6, is Election Day.

So, how do motivate the reluctant voter? The research from Dr. P. Green from Yale University suggests a strategy we already know. Encourage people to vote. Personal contact—face to face encouragement. LWV-CC has the resources, VOTE411, The VOTER, and the Candidate Forum which is scheduled on April 20.

Now we need to utilize the most powerful resource, our voice, to encourage voter participation. Our knowledge to be shared on the importance of voting. Our passion to reach out to as many registered voters to vote or if not registered to register them before the April 6 deadline.

We, LWV-CC, can make the difference in encouraging voting participation.

We, the League, will not make excuses for Corpus Christi residents not voting, we will not blame the Buccaneer Illuminated Night Parade, or that our residents do not care or value the power of the VOTE!

Let us join with other nonpartisan groups and GET OUT the VOTE! We are the LEAGUE and we can and will make a difference.

As League members we do not rely on hope...we are an ACTION-ORIENTED Organization.



Dr. Mary Jane Garza
LWV-CC President

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

APRIL

Wednesday-Thursday, April 5-6: Voter registration at City Hall, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; League volunteers needed.

Friday, April 7: ArtWalk, 5-9 p.m., volunteers needed to help register voters; call Sandra Heatherley, 876-4321; exact location TBA.

Thursday, April 20:

LWV-CC Mayoral Special Election Candidate Forum; 7-9 p.m., Corpus Christi City Hall

MAY

Thursday, May 18: LWV-CC 72nd Annual Meeting; 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.; Election of Officers for 2017-18 (details to be announced)

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

LWV-CC Officers, 2016-2017

President - Dr. Mary Jane Garza,
Ed.D-President, 361-537-1313
drmaryjanegarza@gmail.com

Sandra Heatherley - Vice President
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sheatherle@cs.com

Irene Longoria - Secretary
361-549-6343
irene.longoria29@gmail.com

Mary K. Fant - Treasurer

Debbie Noble - Webmaster Director
410-271-1167, debleenoble@gmail.com

(Vacant) Vice President for Member
Services

(Vacant) Vice President for Program

(Vacant) Communications Director

Sally Farris - At-Large Director
210-313-7028, s.farris@att.net

OFF-BOARD CHAIRS

Matilda Saenz - Nominating Committee
214-240-5655; dr.mdsaenz@gmail.com

Marjorie Walraven-VOTER Editor
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Special Election 2017

The filing period for anyone interested in running for Corpus Christi mayor officially began Tuesday, February 28, 2017 as City Council passed the ordinance calling for a special election. Those seeking to run have until 5 p.m. Monday, March 27, to file. Candidate information, including application forms and the requirements for filing, can be found on the City's website at www.cctexas.com.

Election Day: May 6, 2017 (7 a.m. - 7 p.m.)

Early Voting: April 24 - May 2, 2017

Nominating Committee Continues To Recruit 2017-2019 Leadership

If You Want To Serve on Board,

Please Let Committee Know

Serving on the League's Nominating Committee to ensure a strong leadership team takes time, but Dr. Matilda Saenz, this year's Nominating Committee chair, reports she and committee members Eva Brown, Dr. Tammy Donaldson, Mary Kay Fant, and Irene Longoria have confirmed candidates for about half of the nine positions to be filled.

"We have the beginning of a dynamic team," Dr. Saenz said, "with several of our members letting us know they would like to serve. However, we have more work to do between now and early April to complete the nine-member slate."

If you are interested in serving on the Board in either a one-year or two-year position, or if you would like specific information on any of the elected positions so you know that your talents and skills are best used, please let one of the committee members know immediately. (Matilda Saenz, 214-240-5655)

The slate, which will be proposed for election at the League's Annual Meeting in May, will include President, VP Program, VP Member Services, VP Voter Services, Treasurer, Secretary, and three Directors. Also to be nominated will be the chair of the 2017-2018 Nominating Committee and two League members.



**Calling Our League Members~ Please Attend!
and "Wear RED"**

Equal Pay Day Proclamation

11:15 a.m., Tuesday, March 28

City Council Chambers

Sponsors: YWCA, AAUW, EWI, LWV-CC

LWV-CC Members, Join US!

Feb. 23 Planning Meeting Helps Get Head Start on 2017-2018 Year



I Wish the League Would...

By Nan Pillinger (member for over 50 years)

Participants: Sylvia Whitworth, Eva Brown, Alex Garcia, Nan Pillinger

Fifteen written suggestions were made for consideration to assist the LWV-CC in incorporating member wishes/concerns in 2017-18. Several comments were positive and encouraging. Our group addressed all issues and condensed them into "Four Top Ideas" as follows:

1/ Continue the "lecture series" at our monthly meetings as they have been very informative and have drawn new members and publicity.

2/ Member recognition is deemed very important, and we need to have a brief member introduction at each meeting, perhaps splitting by alphabetical order for brevity. And we need NAMETAGS. Better seating arrangement (in a circle or?) at meetings so that we can better see and hear those in attendance. Room size might be a problem.

3. Prepare and distribute an annual Handbook for Members that includes members' names, addresses, emails, phones. This should be online for members with privacy concerns addressed with a password.

4. Promote coffee "interim meetings" or at least a quarterly meeting just for members. This should be a voluntary casual setting where LWV members can freely address local subjects. No press, no extra publicity

The fund raising idea is to sell LWV t-shirts. It is simple and easy to implement. Buy them from an existing source if available or have local design.

We had considerable chatter around Homeless housing (could be meeting topic); solicit sponsors for meeting beverages; importance of good signage at our meeting venue; promote transparency on what committees are working on, i.e. Nominating Committee; Promote high school/college level membership in the League during voter registration.



Issues

By Peggy Duran

Participants: Ruth Falck, Nan Pillinger, Pat Parr, Sylvia Whitworth, Linda Snider, Peggy Duran

Past Issues: Water, Beaches, Ambulances, Jails, Status of Current Program under Study: Water headed by Sally Farris. Sally has sent formal requests for information to the City of Corpus Christi but has not received any reply neither by email nor regular mail. She is currently stymied and asks for advice on how to get records.

Possible program issues for Study:

1. Exxon/SABIC. Combines well with water study as projections show that the steam cracker will consume 7.3 billion gallons of water a year, an amount equal to current usage by the entire city of Corpus Christi.

2. Homeless and Low Income Housing

3. Human Trafficking and Child Protective Services.

Have Todd Hunter speak to this as he has expressed interest in these topics.

4. For-Profit Prisons and Immigration

5. Voter ID, Photo card. How to help/improve access to vote.

We want to stress that any study undertaken needs a champion, a person willing to head it.

Fund-Raising Idea: T-Shirts to sell at our voter registration booths: "Put your vote where your mouth is"

Read fifth report on Finance/Budget on Page 6.



Voter Services

By Sandra Heatherley

Participants: Sandra Heatherley, Brenda Hamby, Cam Alemdar, Kathryn Oler, Sue Williams

There was an agreement to continue to stay focused on the 2016 goals discussed last April. Since the special Mayoral election is occurring in the current planning year, the focus was on the November 2017 election which is expected to be on the Constitutional Amendments, joint resolutions, which will come out of the 85th Texas Congress which is meeting right now.

Based on past history the voter turn-out for that election is expected to be between 20-40% based on the issues put forth.

Voter Registration goal will again be 2,000 and it was suggested that the LWV develop an initiative to assist high school principals in meeting their legal obligation to offer voter registration twice/year to eligible students.

Concerns were expressed that we need more information regarding casting overseas and absentee ballots. Kathryn, Cam, and Brenda volunteered to learn how to develop the Voters Guide through the VOTE411 software.

Ask permission to attend events of millennials such as:

- o Group meetings of Young Business Professional (YBP)
- o Rising Tide Society (RTS)
- o Young Professionals of the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC/YP)
- o Set up table at the conclusion of fishing events, at weigh-in and conclusion of golf tournaments
- o Set up table at college campuses and health fairs
- o Deputize members during July, 2016 and January 2017 LWV-CC meeting so we have more volunteers
- o Explore new venues in addition to Art Walk such as:
 1. Gypsy Park on the island every other Thursday
 2. Fiesta De Le flor
 3. Wednesday and Saturday Farmers Markets
 4. Jazz Fest
 5. 4th of July Parade

(Report continues on page 7)

Key Topics Addressed: Issues, Voter Services, Membership and Recruitment, Budget & Finance, “I Wish the League Would...”



Membership and Recruitment

By Irene Longoria

LWV-CC Membership currently stands at 136. Establish membership goal for 2017-2018 and most important the marketing strategies to attract new members and retain existing members.

Committee Members: Margaret Fratila, Michael Cortez, Debbie Noble, and Irene Longoria

2016 Goal - 120; 2017 Goal - 175

Five strategies to maintain and exceed 2016 Membership goal:

1. Social Event - “Meet the Mayor” membership drive. Each member bring 1 possible member.
2. Social Media - Target younger group via social media. Minimal funds needed (around \$100)
3. Incentives for Top 3 membership recruiters - Start at Social Event, end and announce winners at Holiday Party in December. Recognition (The Voter, At Holiday Meeting, Caller-Times etc...) and Prizes
4. Target Men - Recruit at Fitness Centers and via social media.
5. Happy Hour Membership Drive - For example, at Katz 21 - they provide appetizers and low cost drinks.
6. Continue great speakers at meetings. Also, continue educating, advocating and informing.
7. One fund raising idea - simple and easy to implement: Silent Auction at Social Event.

Budget & Finance

Participants: Mary Kay Fant, Treasurer; Anne Stewart, Maria Jimenez, and Chris Garcia

This study group reviewed the League's current financials, compared year-to-date figures, and discussed possible adjustments to the budget for 2017-18. They noted that there was no major fundraising project this year but anticipate that the new Board will need to consider one or more activities to generate income. This year's balanced budget for 2016-17 is \$13,380, with about \$9,400 in the checking account as of mid-February 2017.

Specific income streams include monthly luncheon meetings, special events/fundraising, community support, and a small amount of membership dues that remain with the League after it pays state and national dues for its members. The group briefly touched on reinstating business-card advertising (placed by members only) in The VOTER to generate income.

Annual expenses include PO box rental, administrative costs, Voter Services publications (Voter Guides, VOTE 411), general printing, luncheon costs, leadership training, website maintenance, and program activities.



It was noted that the new budget will need to reflect attendance at the 2018 LWV-TX convention in Kerrville. The League has \$1,501 in a regular business savings account and \$956.73 in the Education Fund (maintained by LWV-TX).

Continued work is needed on the 2017-18 proposed budget prior to adoption at the Annual Meeting in mid-May.

Participating in Mardi Gras Parade Was Lots of Fun!

(Continued from page 1)

Special thanks to Linda Snider's husband who helped decorate and drive the family truck so that the League members could throw red, white, and blue beads and encourage the crowd to vote. The registration to participate in the parade was \$35. And a huge THANK YOU to Anmar Al Badri, a recent immigrant from Baghdad, who carried the American flag ahead of our "float." Kudos to Debbie Noble, Karol Stewart, and Chris Garcia for capturing the event on their phone cameras!



VOTER SERVICES

Report, continued from Page 5

Voter Turn-out: Goal for 2017 election:
40% turn-out of registered voters

- o Promote ‘Take your parents to the polls’
- o Promote mail-in ballots to senior centers
- o Send reminder postcard with key election dates to people we have registered to vote
- o Display flags around town “Vote Today” with our logo
- o Develop an FYI for social media with key election dates for filing, registering early voting, etc.

Candidate Forums: Goal for next year=standing room only

- o Hold forums earlier to allow more time for voters to view the resulting video on public access TV and on social media
- o Keep format identical to past forum

Voters Guide and VOTE411.org:

Goal for next year=promote VOTE411

- o Is VOTE411 trackable? How could we use that information?
- o Need members who are computer savvy to assist with VOTE411 which also provides the text blocks for the printed Voters Guide.



Follow the League
on FACEBOOK!
Be sure to LIKE us.

THANKS to these Renewing Members!

Jeanne Adams, Individual

Carol & Mark Scott, Household

Legislative News from LWV-TX Advocacy Team

LWV Texas Women’s Health Actions!

1. Contact your state Senator!

Oppose:

- **SB 25**, which allows doctors to lie to pregnant mothers
- SB 8, which bans the donation of fetal tissue for research
- SB 258, which requires embryonic and fetal tissue be buried or cremated
- SB 415, which bans a specific procedure and forces doctors to practice substandard care.

2. Call the Senators on the **Business and Commerce Committee**

and tell them you **OPPOSE** SB 20 that would effectively ban insurance coverage for abortions for most women.

LWV Texas Land Use Actions!

Save your Community’s trees! If you are a constituent of any of the Senators on the **Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs Committee**, please let them know you **OPPOSE**: SB 782, SB 898, and SB 1082, which prohibit local governments from regulating removal of trees, in effect prohibiting city tree ordinances.

LWV Texas Drug Policy Actions!

Support HB 81 to reduce penalties for possession of marijuana

Continuing LWV Texas Actions!

1. **Support** the USE THE RAINY

DAY FUND to fully fund Education & Healthcare in Texas!

2. **Oppose** constitutional convention bills!

3. **Oppose** Anti Sanctuary City bills

LEAGUE PRIORITY ISSUES:

Learn more about issues you are interested in. Voter Rights and Election Laws in Texas:

The only major voting/elections bill activity in the two chambers this week was the introduction of Lt. Governor Patrick’s Voter ID bill – **SB 5**, which incorporates the court-ordered compromise process used in the November 2016 election. That means that those unable to obtain one of the seven photo IDs could sign an impediment form claiming they were unable to obtain an ID. **Women’s Health and Reproductive Choice:**

The League opposes SB 8, which bans the donation of fetal tissue for research; SB 258 which requires embryonic and fetal tissue be buried or cremated; and SB 415 which bans a specific procedure and forces doctors to practice substandard care. **Public Education:** LWV-TX **opposes SB 3**, relating to the establishment of an **education savings account [ESA]** program and a **tax credit scholarship** and an **educational expense assistance program**. The primary purpose of the bill is to provide parents with tax monies that can be used for private and/or religious school tuition and expenses. These are variations on **vouchers**, which LWV opposes.



**The League of Women Voters
Corpus Christi, Texas
PO Box 8276
Corpus Christi, TX 78468**

ART WALK UPDATE

At the March 3 Art Walk, LWV-CC registered 12 new voters. Thanks to Kathryn Oler, Ruth Falck, and Sandra Heatherley for participating. If you can help at the April 7 Art Walk, give Sandra a call.

FINAL VOTER REGISTRATION BEFORE APRIL 6 DEADLINE...

Our Voter Services team plans to set up voter registration at City Hall on Wednesday and Thursday, April 5-6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Volunteers are needed! Please call Sandra Heatherley, **361-876-4321**

LWV-Corpus Christi LWV-Corpus Christi Area New Member/Renewal 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
- Household, \$90 (2 individuals at same address)
- Sustaining Member, \$100
- Student, \$30
- Friend of the League, \$30 (non-voting)

Name _____

Household Member's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City and Zip Code _____

Work Address (Optional) _____

I prefer to receive 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 with your payment
(check or money order) to:**

**League of Women Voters-CC
PO Box 8276
Corpus Christi, TX 78468**

**OR you can pay your dues online at the League's website:
www.lwv-cc.org**

**Membership is from June 1 - May 31.
If questions, please call the League at: 361-445-4436**