



The Tyler / Smith County VOTER

January–
February 2010

League of Women Voters Mission

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that works to promote political responsibility through informed participation of all citizens in their government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. It publishes factual information to help prepare citizens to cast informed votes.

The League does take action on selected governmental issues that members have studied.

Members to Decide on Voting Procedure Options

Injuries, holiday travels, influenza, and conflicting schedules all worked together to force postponement of the November member meeting to discuss and decide on proposed options for **Voting Procedures to Increase Voter Involvement**. That meeting now is set for January 14, 12 noon, in the Genecov Room at the Chamber of Commerce.

Before the meeting, review the information sent ear-



lier by email and on pages 6-7 of the November/ December 2009 *VOTER* to learn

more about the options currently used in other states:

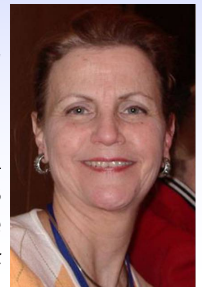
- Vote by Mail
- Election Day Registration
- Election Day Centralized Voting
- Instant Runoff Voting
- Internet Voting

It is essential that Tyler/Smith County members participate January 14 to make our input meaningful.

Pam Reeves
Program Vice President

Thursday, January 14
12 noon
Genecov Room
Tyler Chamber of Commerce
315 North Broadway

Lunch provided for \$2
RSVP to Hattie Moreland,
3309rjm@att.net



Keep the Grass Roots Green Member Input on Issues

January 25—12 noon
Tyler Public Library Auditorium
201 South College



Each year members have an opportunity to give grassroots guidance and input on the issues the League supports or opposes. It is members' chance to make their voices heard and to confirm or renounce member support at all three levels of the League.

It also can be a time to learn more about your fellow members' interests, what they want from League membership, and what role they hope to play in making the League relevant in our community.

A good way to prepare for this meeting would be to review the position statements for each level of the League—local, state, and national—so that you are up to date on where the League stands on issues. Position statements are available at the respective websites.

Make this the year that you resolve to *Keep the Grass Roots Green* by contributing your ideas and talents to the planning process. Your participation is critical for the process to succeed. **Be there!**

Lunch provided for \$2. RSVP to Hattie Moreland, 3309rjm@att.net

Great Decisions Series to Begin February 10

The 2010 Great Decisions foreign policy series kicks off February 10 with a discussion of the Persian Gulf, led by Dr. Mohamed Elibiary of the Freedom & Justice Foundation, Dallas.

Briefing books are available at the Tyler library check-out desk beginning in mid-January.

This year, even if you cannot make every discussion, you can catch the taped versions of all eight discussions on the City of Tyler's channel 3. Or you can check out the DVD of the FPA's discussions by national experts in the library's A-V department, 3rd floor.

The Great Decisions series, a project of the Foreign Policy Association, is sponsored locally by the League of Women Voters, AAUW Tyler, and Tyler Public Library.

For a full schedule and description of the season's featured topics and our local speakers, see page 4.

Mark Your Calendar
February 16



90th League Birthday Celebration

Mark your calendars for LWV-Tyler/Smith County's birthday party on **Tuesday, February 16**, and watch your email and/or U.S. mail for the time and place still under consideration by the birthday planning committee.

Read more about the birthday celebration on page 6.





President's Podium Kristi C. Roberts, President

My Wishes for the New Year

As we move out of 2009 and welcome the new year, I look forward to what the League can accomplish in the coming year.

2010 brings the celebration of our 90th year. We've been asked to work with other Leagues in Texas to celebrate this anniversary, and I would like to see our local League participate. The board has chosen February 16 for the festivities. If any of our members would like to participate in the planning of this event, please let me know. I would also like your ideas for celebrating this anniversary here in Tyler with our local League.

I would love to see more of our members! Thanks so much

to Sue Barham and Steve Lander for opening their home for our Christmas celebration. We appreciate your hospitality. These social events are great opportunities to bring in new members. I hope to see more of each of you in 2010.

Make this the year you really get involved in the League.

The Open World Leadership Institute has also asked our League to host another delegation from one of the emerging countries from the former Soviet Union. Please forward your thoughts on this and what role you would like to play in hosting. Send me your ideas at kribru@aol.com. We need to either table this idea or make a commitment to this project.

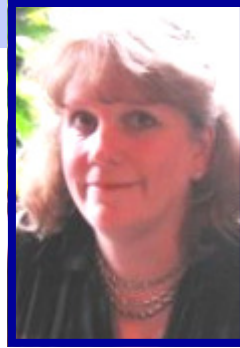
January brings two important opportunities for members to have their say in choosing the

public policy issues that the organization supports—at all three levels.

Please plan to take part in the **January 14** discussion and consensus on new options to improve **Voting Procedures**. Then on **January 25**, plan to participate in the annual grassroots session that looks at *all* LWV issues and lets members have their say about them: **Keep the Grass Roots Green**.

I want to wish each of you a safe and prosperous New Year! Make this the year you really get involved in the League.

Kristi



Serving on the LWV Board of Directors

What does a board member do? The board is responsible for policy making, financial management, member recruitment and involvement, and community relations. Board members attend regular monthly board meetings about ten times a year. Elected members serve two-year terms.

Nominating committee members serve one-year terms. Although they serve off-board, they gain valuable insight by attending board training and some board and committee meetings.

In Memory

League board member Sunny Davidson passed away in November after a brief illness. She is remembered with awe by members and the community. We offer condolences to her husband Ray and other family members.



Future Leaders Sought

Karen Wilkerson, Nominating Committee Chair

Yes, it seems early to think about a slate of officers for the coming year to be elected at our Annual Meeting in May, 2010. But it's always appropriate to consider what you, or someone whose leadership ability you respect, can contribute. Nothing happens without ideas and members willing to put them into motion.

The Nominating Committee is charged with finding a few good women (or men) to serve in the following positions for two-year terms (June 2010-May 2012):

- Program Vice-President
- Organization Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Two Directors

In addition, the one-year terms of Nominating Committee Chair and two committee members must be filled for 2010 duties.

If you are willing to step up to a leadership position or know a member who has talents to offer and is waiting to be asked to help, please contact Karen Wilkerson, Nominating Committee Chair soon, at 903-592-7255 or

dkwilkerson@hotmail.com

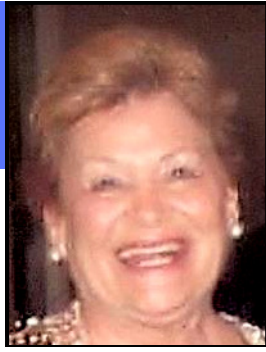
Other members of the committee are Sue Barham, Doris Stanley, Pam Reeves, and Scherel Carver.



Members Ed and Shirley Hightower attend memorial service for Sunny Davidson in the Children's Park



Sunny Davidson to Be Honored As "Woman of Courage"



Save the Date! Our very own board member Sunny Davidson is one of seven women to be honored on Women in Tyler Day, **March 25** at the Rose Garden Center. Sunny will be recognized posthumously as a "Woman of Courage" for her decades of work with early childhood education and her fight for environmental excellence.

You should make your reservation now if you want to attend as tables are filling fast. Send check for \$25 payable to **Women in Tyler** mailed to **PO Box 1432, Tyler TX 75710.**

To Join the League:

The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Join LWV, where leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels.

SEND CHECK TO:

P.O. Box 6271
TYLER, TX 75711

\$60 INDIVIDUAL

\$90 TWO IN SAME HOUSEHOLD

\$25 STUDENT

LWV-Tyler Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Tyler/Smith County, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the LWV-Tyler on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

The LWV-Tyler/Smith County recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. LWV-Tyler/Smith County subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. LWV-Tyler/Smith County affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its board and programs.

Membership News: Welcome New Members and Report on Holiday Social

Hattie Moreland, Organization VP

The LWV is pleased to welcome new members, **Martha Tapley, Samantha Dwight,** and **Linda Sharp.** See contact information at right. Watch for more about their interests in the League in a future issue.



Members **Samantha Dwight** and **Lou Anne Smoot** with **Lou Anne's daughter Laura Neal**

membership, some family members, and friends were present. Those in attendance shared delicious food, beverages, and a special opportunity to become better acquainted and meet new member prospects, as the photos here show.



Growth in membership is an ongoing goal of the League. New membership is vital to continued progress and can promote new and stimulating projects to help meet our goals. Again, we encourage current members to reach out to family and friends who have expressed an interest in the League but have not joined.



Sue Barham & Barbara Bass

Special appreciation to **Sue Barnham** and **Steve Lander** for hosting the Membership holiday party December 14.

Approximately half of the



Linda Resnik & Betty Tirey

Risa Hildeton, and Andrea Rathbone. And, of course, we thank members who brought food, beverages and themselves. Finally, we appreciate the many well-wishes from the members who could not attend.



Carol Odom with member **Barbara Bass**

Add These New Members to Your Member Handbook & Directory

Martha Tapley (11/2010)
5812 FM 2661
Tyler TX 75704
593-1661
mtapley58@suddenlink.net

Linda Sharp (12/2010)
513 Hyde Park
Tyler TX 75701
526-3848
linda15262000@yahoo.com

Samantha Dwight (12/2010)
13270 Oak Hill Lane
Flint TX 75762
894-7950 (h) 312-5118 (c)
samantha.dwight@gmail.com

Member Dues Reminder

The following members are due in January and February

January

Elaine Wells
Karen Wilkerson
Risa Hildeton

February

Diane Karlsson
Andie Rathbone
Betty Tirey

Thanks for your prompt response



LWV Observer Corps Resumes Monitoring: New Observers Sought

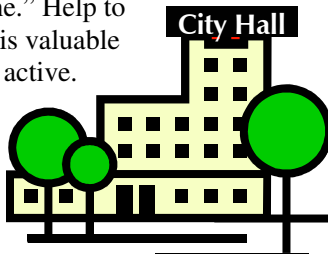


Observers are needed for several important government bodies. Please consider taking on one of these positions or share the responsibility with another Leaguer. Orientation is provided.

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- County Commissioners
- TISD Board of Trustees
- TJC Board of Trustees
- City of Tyler Planning & Zoning Commission
- City Councils and school boards in Lindale, Winona, Bullard, Arp, and Whitehouse.

Since the 1950s the League in Tyler has been active in monitoring local governments through the Observer Corps. Observers keep elected and appointed officials on notice that someone is watching what decisions are made and how they are being made. They help to ensure that the issues are being handled in an open way—"in the sunshine." Help to keep this valuable service active.



If you would like to participate as an official observer for a city or school board or commission or board, please contact
Observer Corps Coordinator
Vecky Elliot 903.596.0227
 veki99@yahoo.com or
Program VP Pam Reeves
 903.569.2777
 phreeves1@att.net

Great Decisions 2010—Scheduled Speakers

February 10 The Persian Gulf—Dr. Mohamed Elibiary, Freedom & Justice Foundation, Dallas



Now more than ever, the Persian Gulf region offers many difficult challenges to U.S. policymakers. How will Obama's direct appeal to Arabs and Muslims impact U.S. foreign policy in the region? What will the fallout of withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq be? Can the U.S. and its allies prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons?

America, crime is becoming increasingly organized and globalized. How can countries better protect citizens seeking the benefits of a globalized world from being exploited? What international actors can effectively fight global organized crime?

February 17 Russia And Its Neighbors—Dr. Marcus Stadelmenn, Political Science Chair, UT Tyler



Russia's policy of maintaining a sphere of influence in former Soviet satellites has been challenged in recent years by movements against pro-Russia regimes. Russia has pushed back by cutting Ukraine's natural gas supply and intervening in Georgia's campaign in South Ossetia. Will Russia regain its traditional leadership role in the region?

March 17 Kenya & R2P (Responsibility to Protect)—Benson Kioto, Mercy Ships USA



Post-election rioting in Kenya in December 2007 brought pressure on Nairobi, from international and regional diplomats, to end tensions and avert bloodshed on a massive scale. What lessons can be learned from the intervention in Kenya? What does it mean for the UN's emerging responsibility to protect doctrine?



March 24 U.S.-China Security Relations—John C. Cole, US Army Retd., Army War College

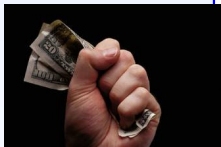
China's influence is growing, along with its military expenditures. How will this growth affect China's relations with its neighbors and with the U.S.? Will China's expanding military and economic power affect traditional U.S. roles and U.S. alliances in East Asia? How will countries like Japan, South Korea, and India respond?

February 24 Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution—Blake Bailey, Attorney Activist



U.S. campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown that military force alone cannot ensure peace in all conflicts. How can the U.S. successfully integrate the tools of peace building into its statecraft? At what point do poverty, disease and climate change threaten national security? What role can non-governmental actors play in supporting government led efforts?

March 31 Global Financial Crisis—Dr. Guillermo Covarrubius, UT/TYLER Economics Professor



The global financial crisis that began in late 2007 revealed major deficiencies in the regulation of markets and institutions, all of which came perilously close to collapse. Emergency measures to prevent a full collapse of the global financial system have led to mixed results. How will governments and the world community respond to this challenge?

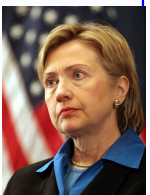
March 3 Global Crime—Special Agent Jeff Millsagle, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Tyler



From the booming sex trade in Eastern Europe, to online fraud syndicates in Africa and the drug cartels of Asia and Central

April 7 Special Envoys

Special envoys can help bring attention and diplomatic muscle to resolve conflicts and global challenges but they also bring with them their own "special" problems. Will the Obama administration's reliance on special envoys increase the ability of the U.S. to deal with major international issues or complicate our diplomatic options?



LWV-Tyler/Smith County Proposes Two Changes to LWV State Positions on Health Care, Criminal Justice



The LWV-TSC Board of Directors has voted to propose two changes to current Program positions considered in need of alteration. If supported by the state board, the proposals then would go to delegates at the LWV-Texas Convention in April for debate and approval.

The two positions needing changes follow:

1. **Health Care for the Medically Indigent** Two changes are recommended:
 - (a) Change the title to Health Care for Those of Lesser Means (the term *indigent* is no longer used by professionals in that field.) In the health care system of the United States, “Medically Indigent Adults” (MIAs)—now called “those of lesser means”—are persons who do not have health insurance and who are not eligible for governmental health care coverage, such as Medicaid or Medicare, because they earn too much to qual-

ify and yet cannot afford either private health insurance or health care.

- (b) Add to the list of services “long term care” and “care for persons with disabilities.”

2. **Criminal Justice and Capital Punishment Reform** To bring our position into alignment with the LWVUS Death Penalty position, we need to change two bullets in the current position:

- (a) Replace the 2nd bullet to read “Elimination of jury sentencing (except in capital cases) and revision of the penal code to reduce the disparity of sentences”
- (b) Change the 3rd bullet to provide the option of life imprisonment without parole to juries in capital cases. The change would omit the parenthetical phrase “in addition to execution and life imprisonment.”

See summary of current positions at: <http://www.lwvtexas.org/issuesWeSupport.php>

In November the LWV-Texas board discussed a change in a position under **Executive**. Based on the belief that the campaign for governor of Texas will be very hot, some directors favored dropping the phrase “governor limited to two terms, which may or may not be successive.” Their concern was that the current position might appear to be partisan because Governor Perry is seeking a third term.

The LWV-TSC board has not recommended this change. It is possible, however, that one or more local Leagues may propose this change. If so, this matter, along with the changes we proposed, will be on the agenda for the state convention April 23-25 in San Marcos.

Basic Needs Committee at Work

Andie Rathbone, Committee Member



The committee working on the assessment of Smith County’s ability to meet Basic Human Needs is hard at work evaluating whether or not programs that address poverty, health care, childcare, housing, and transportation are meeting the needs of the citizens of Smith County.

Members of the committee are **Karen Wilkerson, Risa Hildaton, Mary Claire Rowe, Vecky Elliott, Toni Ferrell, and Andie Rathbone.** The committee is partnering with Smith County charitable organizations (The United Way, PATH, etc.) to get an accurate picture of the re-

sources available to Smith County residents as well as to identify the gaps in state and county services.

The committee has a goal of presenting their report in the first quarter of 2010. Based on that data, members will help to decide recommendations using the consensus process.

If any members would like to join in this effort, they should contact
Karen Wilkerson at
dkwilkerson@hotmail.com

Interested in Libraries? Your Help is Needed.

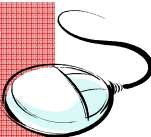
One or more members with an interest in libraries are needed to organize a campaign to call for more support for our public libraries. You will get special training in successful advocacy strategies and methods.

Make a New Year’s resolution to do something for the community in 2010. To help, contact Dee Brock at 903-565-6655 or



deebrook@faqspress.com

**Make Your Voice Heard...
Become an e-Activist!
Go to www.lwv.org**





Naturalization Ceremony Set for February 17

One of the most satisfying and inspiring activities of the League is participating in the naturalization ceremonies held in Tyler approximately four times a year. On Thursday, November 12, a total

**Wednesday
February 17
Courtroom of
Judge Judith
Guthrie
Federal
Building
211 West
Ferguson**



of ten of our members were present as eighty-two people from twenty-two different countries took their oaths to become citizens of our great country.

Following both the morning and afternoon swearing in of these new citizens, League members assisted as a total of forty-one chose to register to vote. Several more took registration forms with them and, hopefully, have since mailed those in. In addition, we distributed printed materials explaining their voting rights.

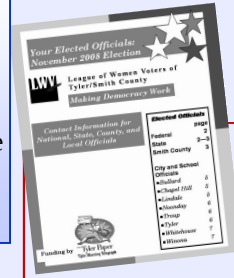
The next opportunity to be part of this vital activity is **Wednesday, February 17**, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. in Federal Judge Judith Guthrie's courtroom, 211 W. Ferguson.

If you can participate, please call as soon as possible. We are required to submit a list of attendees to the judge's clerk several days prior to the ceremony. **You will be glad you took part.**

**Please notify Shirley Hightower if you can participate.
Call 903-561-7450
or email to
eshightower@suddenlink.net**

Voter Registration Cards Improved, Redesigned

The Texas voter registration card has been redesigned and improved, and both the local Elections Clerk and the Secretary of State advise registrars to recycle or discard any old cards we may still have.



Voters Guide to Primary Election Ready Mid-February

The LWV-Texas Education Fund *Voters Guide* to the March 2 Primary Election will be available in early February, in time for early voting, which begins February 16. This guide, available in English and Spanish versions, will cover the statewide offices on the ballot:

- **US Senator (if there is a special election)**
- **Governor**
- **Lt. Governor**
- **Attorney General**
- **Comptroller of Public Accounts**
- **Commissioner of General Land Office**
- **Commissioner of Agriculture**
- **Railroad Commissioner**
- **Justice, Texas Supreme Court**
- **Justice, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals**
- **Justice, Court of Appeals (several places)**
- **State Board of Education**

Other offices on the ballot, but not included in the LWV-TEF Guide, are all US Representatives, all Texas Representatives, some State Senators, and county officials such as sheriff, district attorney, county attorney, tax assessor/collector, county commissioners, Justices of the Peace, constables, and various judges.

Consult the Smith County website after the Jan. 4 filing deadline for a complete list of offices up for election in our area.

Calendar for March 2, 2010 Primary Election

- Jan. 1**—First Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail
- Jan. 4**—Last Day to File for Place on Ballot
- Feb. 2**—Last Day to Register to Vote
- Feb. 16-26**—Early Voting
- Feb. 23**—Last Day Application for Ballot by Mail May Be Received.
- March 2**—Election
- April 13**—Primary Runoff Election

Your Elected Officials:

November 2009 Available Now

The latest up-to-date edition of *Your Elected Officials*, including officials elected in November 2009, is now available. This newest edition now includes officials for **Arp** and **Hideaway**. This brochure is a basic resource that includes information about national, state, and county officials, as well as those of all cities and school districts in Smith County. For each official, it includes office addresses, email, and phone numbers. Use this information to contact your elected officials to let them know your opinions.

The brochure also can be a valuable tool for the community. If you know of a group that could use this brochure, contact a member of the LWV-Tyler/Smith County board.

Or you can download a copy at lwvtyler.org

Go to lwvtyler.org



Watch the LWV-Tyler/Smith County web site for updates on the primary election and the 111th Congress and ways that you can be a grass-roots advocate.

Community Relations News Dee Brock Community Relations VP



Celebrate the League's 90th Birthday

February 14 is a special day for all to honor loved ones with hearts, flowers, and songs. If you haven't already done so, be sure to put the League of Women Voters on your list of honorees. On **February 14, 2010, LWV will be 90 years old!**

LWV shows its age through the remarkable history of work the organization has accomplished through the years to make democracy work on all levels here in the United States and beyond.

Still, the organization is so vital, active, and ambitious that you have to know it is still in its prime and will be for years to come.

Clearly, this important birthday requires more than one day of celebration. It requires at least a season—or perhaps a year. Here's a start:

Mark your calendars for LWV-Tyler/Smith County's birthday party on **Tuesday, February 16**, and watch your email and/or U.S. mail for the time and place still under consideration by the birthday planning committee.

The LWV-Texas convention in San Marcos in April 2010 will honor this birthday with a celebration featuring a suffragette popping out of a cake. You won't want to miss this meeting.

Altogether now, "Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday LWV, happy"



Fundraising Appeals to Begin New Year

The League of Women Voters is a calm, nonpartisan voice in the midst of this highly politicized time. Our organization is working hard to encourage informed and active participation in our democratic processes.

Have you made a financial contribution to your League for 2009-2010? There are three ways you can help:

- Send a check payable to **LWV-Tyler/Smith County** or a tax-deductible check to **LWV-Texas Education Fund**. Mail to P.O. Box 6271, Tyler, TX 75711.
- Log in to www.lwvtyler.org and use Paypal to make your gift.

Send the names and contact information for individuals and companies that you think would like to support a nonpartisan voice in East Texas to Dee Brock, 3529 Woods Boulevard, Tyler, TX 75707.

Thanks to all who have responded to the requests.

Go to lwvtyler.org

What's New ?

Check out the LWV-TSC website for details on upcoming events, publications to download, and links to related websites, such as the Texas Secretary of State and the state and national LWV.

You can request a speaker for your organization, subscribe to the League's newsletter, make a donation, or join the League of Women Voters of Tyler/Smith County.



Dee Brock also serves on the LWV-Texas Board of Directors and is a Trustee of the LWV-Texas Education Fund.



Thanks to Our Donors in 2009

Thanks to the following who have donated, including in-kind, to LWV-Tyler/Smith County and the LWV-Texas Education Fund

January 1-December 31, 2009

- Sue Barham & Steve Lander*
- Barbara Bass*
- Dee Brock & Linda Resnik*
- Brookshire Grocery Co.
- Scherel Carver*
- Geri Cohen*
- Sunny Davidson*
- Dick & Carole Kronenberg*
- Toni Ferrell*
- Katheryn Hetherly*
- Ed & Shirley Hightower*
- Reetha Resnik Kennedy*
- Fran King*
- LWVUS
- R.J. & Hattie Moreland*
- Maurine Muntz
- Andie Rathbone*
- Pam Reeves*
- Bruce & Kristi Roberts*
- Regina Roosth
- Smith Co. Labor Council
- Lou Anne Smoot & Brenda McWilliams*
- Roy Stanley*
- Target Distribution Center
- Tyler Morning Telegraph
- Margie Victor*
- Elaine Wells*
- Karen Wilkerson*

*LWV Member



LWV Tyler/Smith
County
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Tyler, Texas 75711

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Voters Service VP

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Observer Corps

Maggie Haas
Public Policy

Lou Anne Smoot
Observer Corps



www.lwvtyler.org

Your guide to the League, local government, links to information on candidates, & more.

Editor: Scherel Carver

In This Issue: 90th LWV Birthday Celebration Planned, page 7



2010 LWV-TSC Calendar of Upcoming Events

Please Join Us!

Tuesday January 5, 11:30 am
Board Meeting—LWV Board of Directors

Thursday January 14 12:00 noon
Voting Procedures to Increase Participation
Member Discussion & Agreement
Genecov Room, Chamber of Commerce, 315 North Broadway

Monday, January 25, 12:00 noon
Keep the Grass Roots Green:
Member Input on LWV Issues
Tyler Public Library, 201 South College

Tuesday February 2, 11:30 am
Board Meeting—LWV Board of Directors

Feb. 2 Last Day to Register to Vote in Primary

Wednesdays February 10—April 7
Great Decisions Foreign Policy Series
Tyler Public Library, 201 South College

Tuesday, February 16, 7:00 pm—Place TBA
Celebration of 90th Anniversary of LWV
Early Voting Begins

Wednesday, February 17, 11am & 2 pm
US Naturalization Ceremonies
Federal Building, 211 West Ferguson

March 2—Primary Election

Members are welcome to attend meetings of the LWV Board of Directors, first Tuesdays at 11:30 am
Roberts & Roberts, 118 West 4th Street

Inside this issue:

Members to Decide on Voting Procedures Options Jan.14	1
Keep the Grass Roots Green — January 25	1
Celebrate the League's 90th Birthday February 16	1
President's Podium	2
Serving on the LWV Board of Directors	2
In Memory: Sunny Davidson	2
Nominating Committee Seeks Future Leaders	2
Sunny Davidson Recognized as "Woman of Courage"	3
Membership News	3
Observer Corps—League Tradition—Observers Needed	4
Great Decisions 2010 Scheduled Speakers	4
Board Proposes Changes to Two LWV-TX Positions	5
Basic Needs Study Committee at Work	5
Library Support—Are You Interested?	5
US Naturalization Ceremony Set for February 17	6
<i>Voters Guide</i> to Primary Election Available Mid-February	6
<i>Your Elected Officials: November 2009 Election</i> Available	6
Calendar for March 2 Primary Election	6
90th LWV Birthday Celebration on Tap	7
Thanks to Our Donors in 2009	7