



# League of Women Voters of Utah

## The Utah Voter

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*The League of Women Voters of Utah is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy*

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### IMPORTANT DATES

**January 20<sup>th</sup>: Inauguration of the President**

*'Rosa sat so Martin could walk, Martin walked so Obama could run, Obama ran so our children could fly.'*

**January 26<sup>th</sup>: General Session of the Utah Legislature begins**

**February 4<sup>th</sup>: League Lunch at the Legislature @ 11:30 AM**

**May 15-16: Utah State League Convention**

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear League Members,

Welcome to 2009! We will have a new president, a new Congress, and a new Legislature with a new opening day. Thanks to the citizens of Utah, for the first time since the founding of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the legislature will not begin on the national holiday, but will begin one week later, January 26<sup>th</sup> and go for 45 days (but not meet on Presidents' Day, February 16<sup>th</sup>). And in spite of the economic woes facing our country and our state, there is much to be positive about. It appears that there will be some attempt to pass meaningful ethics legislation, equal rights legislation and much more.

This is a great time for the League. Again this year we will be at the legislature



working on our legislative agenda: education, elections, energy, ethics, healthcare, and immigration. We will also be keeping our citizens informed about what is going on at the legislature through our Legislative Updates on KCPW radio each weekday morning at 8:30 and on KPCW in Park City at 8:15, as well as on our website at <http://lwwutah.org/>. You can be part of this effort. Sandy Peck is going to oversee our Lobby Corps and continue to write the legislative updates. Marie Fulmer is going to help cover the office while Sandy is taking on these duties. And League members will be following the legislature as members of the Lobby Corps. We never have too many people observing the legislature. Please call the office (801-272-8683) if you would like to participate. We want to cover as many areas of interest as possible and we like to have our presence known. You need not be an expert in any area, just have an interest. You will not be asked to speak but the fact that you are there, wearing a League button, will make a statement. Join the League at the legislature this year.

Our legislative luncheon is being held this year on February 4<sup>th</sup> in the Copper Room in the East building of the Capitol Complex. Look for upcoming information on the speakers, areas of interest, etc. and plan to attend. It is always stimulating and informative.

Looking back, we were disappointed again this year by the lack of candidate participation in our election Voters' Guide. Did you go to the League website, [lwwutah.org](http://lwwutah.org/), and look up your candidates? What did you think? We would like your feedback. Are there better ways to help the voters get information about the candidates and their positions on the issues the League cares about?

We look forward to seeing you at unit meetings, at the legislature and at League functions and socials. We appreciate your membership in the League because the League does matter; we work to make a difference at the local, state and national levels.

And remember, no matter whom you voted for, your representatives and senators represent YOU. Let them know how you feel on the issues through emails, snail mail or phone calls. Let them know you are keeping track, that you are informed and as a constituent you expect them to listen to your opinions. That is what democracy is all about.

*Nancy Melling*, co-president

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### LEAGUE 2009 ACTION AT THE LEGISLATURE – BUDGETS, BONDS AND BILLS

Money is always part of action at the Utah Legislature, especially this year, when we are experiencing a global economic downturn and reduced revenue. The League will be paying special attention to budgets as they affect League 2009 legislative priorities, which are education, elections, ethics, energy, health care and immigration.

### BUDGET CHOICES

Both the Governor and the Legislature create budgets. Governor Jon Huntsman's was revealed in December. It set revenue priorities built on Utah's reputation as a well-managed state with rainy day funds and a triple-A bond rating. Partial funding for the Governor's priorities, which are services for children, public education and health and human service needs would come from rainy day reserves and bonding for \$2.5 billion over 8 to 10 years for transportation and state buildings. Vehicle registration fees would increase by \$9-\$22, rather than raising taxes, to pay off those bonds, although raising gas and tobacco taxes is also being considered. The decision to bond for transportation as well as other capital projects is intended to save 20,000 jobs. Another hoped for source of revenue – especially for Medicaid and infrastructure-- is the federal stimulus package now being considered by Congress.



To balance the budget, the Governor has proposed cuts in all departments of 1.5 percent this fiscal year and 7 percent next year, although the “across the board” 7 percent cut is less in some areas--3.5 percent for higher education for example.

How does the Legislature’s budget mesh with the Governor’s? We know that the Legislature has proposed 15 percent budget cuts, twice the Governor’s proposed 7 percent. But legislators at the ASPA Legislative Preview luncheon on January 15th said cuts at the 15 percent level are drastic; anything above 4 percent eliminates not just computers but state jobs and whole programs with devastating effect. So smaller cuts, bonding, raising fees, and using the Rainy Day Funds may in the end be acceptable, although Appropriations Subcommittees are currently using the 15% level as a base until new revenue estimates arrive in mid-February.

In the past, legislators who prefer a conservative pay as you go approach have generally opposed bonding. They also want to preserve Utah’s triple-A bond rating, which allows the state to borrow at lower interest rates. At the ASPA luncheon Rep Steve Mascaro indicated that the Governor’s plan is designed to leave the AAA bond rating intact.

Arguments in favor of borrowing through bonding include: The money is spent on infrastructure such as roads and buildings, not current expenses. That means future taxpayers who will benefit from the investment can and should share in paying off the bonds over several years. Bonds bought by investors outside of Utah can contribute. Construction can begin and proceed more rapidly, avoiding inflation that may occur over a longer pay-as-you go period. During economic downturns, the investment creates jobs and stimulates the state economy. Governor Huntsman and former Senate President Lane Beattie, speaking on behalf of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, have emphasized bonding as an economic stimulus.

The League will want to be active in these decisions and follow Appropriations Subcommittees as well as Standing Committee – especially for health, education and energy.

## LEAGUE PRIORITIES - WHAT’S COMING UP?

**EDUCATION** – League’s traditional support of raising the Weighted Pupil Unit to increase teacher salaries, lower class size and expand all-day kindergarten will suffer from the lack of funds this year. But we will monitor and consider action on non-budget issues such as economic literacy, civic and character education, educator evaluation, and nomination and election of State School Board members. Changes in funding education with property taxes may also come up.

**ELECTIONS** – LWVUT Co-President Alice Steiner and member Kathy Dopp have developed an election audit bill for which we need to provide support and information. Voter I.D, voter challenges at the polls, satellite and on-line voter registration, an advisory independent redistricting committee to help the legislature redraw Congressional and legislative district lines, Election Day voter registration (which we support) and state board election procedures are also on our agenda

**ENERGY** – Energy, particularly renewable energy, is a strong League interest. *Nuclear Power Distribution and Generation* (SB 42, McCoy) requires economic viability and a licensed solution to the high level waste problem before building nuclear power plants in Utah. *Siting of High Voltage Power Line Act* (SB 41, Knudson) sets up procedures for PSC authorization of power line sites. Other bills may come up regarding tax credits and permitting. We should hear more from the experts at our Legislative Lunch on February 5th.

**ETHICS** – LWV has lobbied for years at national, state, and local levels for better laws to regulate the role of money in politics: limiting personal use of campaign funds, limiting and disclosing campaign contributions and lobbyist gifts, and limiting lobbying by former public officials. This year bipartisan support for these limits, plus ethics training and an independent state ethics commission give us hope. We would welcome your help in following ethics issues at the Capitol.

**HEALTH** – Three bills from the legislative Health Reform Task Force aim at insurance costs. The “Insurance Market” bill would allow insurers to cover fewer services and shift some health insurance decisions and costs

from employers to employees. A website "portal" to help consumers shop for health insurance is proposed along with longer eligibility for state COBRA. "Administrative Simplification" sets up a pilot demonstration to increase efficiency in billing, coordination of benefits, payment and pre-authorization processes. "Health Insurance Coverage in State Contracts" would require employers with state contracts of \$500,000 or more to provide employee health insurance.

Non-Task Force bills on health insurance for all children and use of generic medicines are expected also.

Health reform is extremely complex and needs to be comprehensive in the areas of cost, quality and access to work. It may come at the Federal level first. Members who want to know more might start with the non-profit Utah Health Policy Project website, Action Center Fact-sheets at <http://www.healthpolicyproject.org/> Judi Hillman, UHPP Executive Director briefed LWV Salt Lake members at lunch in November.

IMMIGRATION – Last year's omnibus immigration bill SB 81 does not take effect until July 1, 2009. Governor Huntsman has said he expects the issue to be a priority for Senator McCain and be dealt with at the federal level by summer. Meanwhile HB 64 (Dee) proposes a million dollar multi-agency strike force to combat violent and other major crimes associated with illegal immigration and human trafficking, a bill generally opposed by law enforcement because of lack of resources, likely profiling and fears of damaged trust between minorities and law enforcement. An employer sponsored work program and study of the economic impact of immigration in Utah also have been proposed.

The LWVUS immigration position says: All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

Would you like to be part of the action? Try it, and see if you find the ins and outs of the legislature and important issues as fascinating as we do. For more information contact Sandy Peck at [lwvut@xmission.com](mailto:lwvut@xmission.com) or 801.272.8683. You can also call Anne Zeigler at [azeigler@xmission.com](mailto:azeigler@xmission.com) or 801-944-4163.

*Sandy Peck* Legislative Action Coordinator

(On the league website, the Legislative News section will have a current copy of all league action, the KCPW Legislative Updates and the status of the League priorities at <http://www.lwvutah.org/legislative-news.html> )

### OBSERVER CORPS

This year at the Legislature we plan to have an Observer Corps in addition to our Lobby Corps. In order to be an "observer", you would wear a LWV pin and attend whatever legislative meeting you would like. We want more visibility at the Legislature this year. You can attend committee meetings, House and/or Senate sessions, and roam the halls letting legislators see that the League of Women Voters is watching them. Or meet for lunch at noon in the Capitol Cafeteria to discuss the day's issues. Many new members seem to be interested so hopefully we'll have good visibility. We encourage members and friends outside the Salt Lake area to plan to spend a day or two at the Legislature - you will have a great experience.

We're asking you to let us know on what days, whether AM or PM or both, might work for you. (You will not be held to that time. If it's difficult to commit now - that's OK - will put a ? there.) We would also like to know if there is an issue area you are particularly interested in. If so, a Lobby Corps expert in that area could contact you to possibly attend a committee meeting or follow a bill. We would be happy to discuss this with you if you want to call Anne Zeigler at 944-4163, email at [azeigler@xmission.com](mailto:azeigler@xmission.com) or call Kathy Dorn at 277-0897, email at [kmd1965@msn.com](mailto:kmd1965@msn.com). The Legislature starts Jan. 26th and ends March 12th.

### COME TO THE ANNUAL LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

February 4 (Wednesday) - 11:30AM

Copper Room, State Room Café located in the East building of the Capitol Complex

You can buy your lunch at the cafeteria (very reasonable), and take it to the Copper Room where we will have legislators and experts talk about League priority bills. This will be a great day to hear legislators speak and visit some sessions. Space is limited, so please RSVP to the office - 801-272-8683 or [lwvut@xmission.com](mailto:lwvut@xmission.com)

### GOTV Campaign and 2008 Voters' Guide

This past election season, the League of Women Voters of Utah put together a '*Get Out The Vote*' (GOTV) campaign targeted at under-voting segments of the population. The under-voting populations identified by the Census are minorities, students and poorer households. Unfortunately, Utah was ranked 51<sup>st</sup> in the nation for voter participation by the U.S. Census bureau in 2006. The LWV Utah Board felt that Utah could do better. (Clearly, we couldn't do any worse.)

Our campaign was simple: First, target under-voting segments of the population with voter registration ads during September; second, encourage the same population to vote during the latter half of October. All of the ads were designed to send the viewer or listener to LWVUtah.org, where they would find the Voters' Guide and links to several other useful websites for voters.

Shortly into the campaign, we had a major assist from Zions' Bank. In addition to agreeing to provide us with a portion of the needed advertising dollars, they agreed to put voter registration materials in all of their branches with our informative GOTV bookmark stuffed neatly inside. Sandy talked the Lieutenant Governor's office into sending us several thousand voter registration forms and several League members gathered to stuff the forms for Zions Bank the night before they were due at Zions' main office. Voting registration materials were also distributed to African-American congregations who responded to the LWV Utah offer to send forms.

Our second big break came when Shelly Storey of the Storey Agency agreed to place the ads for us and negotiate 2 for 1 deal with all of the media outlets. So, by raising \$25,000, we were able to place \$42,000 worth of ads and print 25,000 bookmarks for distribution. The under-voting populations identified by the Census are minorities, students and poorer households. After discussing potential ad placement with Shelly and the Reverend France Davis, we placed print ads in "Mundo Hispano" and "Ahora" (in Spanish), Diversity Times, Utah Chronicle (U of U), Daily Universe (BYU), The Globe (SLCC), Utah Valley Review (UVU), The Signpost (WSU), and Utah Statesman (USU). The advertisers' statistics indicate that we reached 195,000 through the print ads. We also sent ads to non-profits through United Way to be included in their monthly newsletters. We are uncertain whether the non-profits were able to fit the LWV-Utah ads in their monthly publications.

Radio ads were placed on KDUT, KBMG, and KTUB in Spanish and on KUBL, KUUU, and KZHT (targeted to younger audiences) in English. Each series of ads reached 632,900 radio listeners, according to the rating statistics.

We had a couple of ways to measure our success.

- First, the website "hits" from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July through Election Day were approximately 13,150. This is 65% of all of the web "hits" to LWVUtah.org since the site was launched in 2004.
- Second, we asked the pastors of the churches and Zions to return unused voter registration forms after October 6 when mail-in registration for the 2008 election closed. We had distributed approximately 5,300 forms through these channels and had approximately 600 returned.
- Third, we had hoped that the ad campaign would convince the candidates to respond to the LWV Utah questionnaire so that we could provide comparative information on the web. Unfortunately, the candidate response was very poor with only 37% responding despite the concerted efforts of many volunteers to encourage them to answer. Due to the continued poor candidate response, the LWV Utah Board is contemplating other approaches to providing information about the candidates in the future.
- Fourth, we had hoped that through our efforts and the efforts of many other groups, the turnout at the polls this year in Utah would surpass the turnout in 2004 and 2006. Based on preliminary population data, registration of the voting age population increased a small amount and more of the voting age population voted than in 2004 and 2006. However, Utah did not achieve the record turn-outs reported in other states, with a turnout of registered voters in 2008 being less than the turnout of registered voters in the 2004 presidential election. Perhaps this lower than expected



turnout was a result of the reported low turnout nationally of Republican voters, the predominant voting group in Utah.

Election Year	% Voting Age Population Registered	% Voting Age Population Voting	% Registered Voters Voting
2008 <sup>1</sup>	76.4% est.	51.8% est.	67.8%
2006 <sup>2</sup>	73.0%	32.7%	44.7%
2004	76.2%	50.2%	73.7%

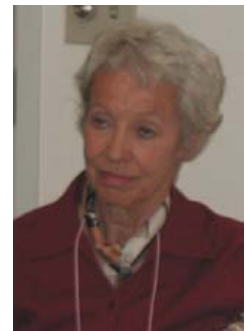
Although not every goal was achieved, the LWV Utah Board feels that the campaign was a wonderful success.

Our sponsors and advisors enabled the League of Women Voters of Utah to have an impact this election season. Please let them know that they are our heroes! Many thanks to American Express, Zions Bank, Fabian & Clendenin, Xmission.com, America First Credit Union, the Kathie and Mark Miller Foundation, Geryl Dreyfous, Mary Schubach McCarthy, Barbara Cowley Browning, Rochelle Kaplan and Alice Steiner. We were assisted in our efforts to reach a larger audience by the United Way of Salt Lake, Utah Immigrant and Refugee Integration Coalition, Comunidades Unidas, KUED 7, Salt Lake City Film Center, Reverend France Davis, Meghan Holbrook and Marsha Baldwin. Jessica Mathewson and Alice Steiner coordinated the program for the League with the assistance of many League volunteers.

*Alice Steiner*, Co-President

## STATUS OF LOCAL LEAGUES

For the past few years, local leagues outside of Salt Lake have been struggling to maintain membership and find people to take over leadership positions. The Utah County League has officially disbanded in spite of the heroic efforts of Linda Clark and Millicent Lewis. All members were placed on inactive status. Linda has become a Member-at-Large. Long term members of the Cedar City group are trying to reactivate their group after two years on inactivity. I'm working with the LWV of Cache County to find someone willing to take over leadership. The Salt Lake and Washington County Leagues continue in active status.



**The Weber League** is still up and running starting with our summer social - a dessert party the end of July. In the fall the Membership picnic was held at the Ogden Nature Center Picnic Grove. It was a lovely day and the turnout was good. Lu Shurtliff, a retiring ten year veteran of the state legislature, spoke about her experiences in the legislature as well as some of the behind the scenes activities.

In October the league joined the Women's Legislative Council for a "Meet the Candidates" evening. The turnout was fair. In November the league met as a group to discuss the Electoral College/Popular Vote. We had a rather rousing discussion with no consensus. <http://www.weberleague.org/>



**The Grand County League** had their annual Candidates Forum on October 13 for 3 local county offices and three state legislative offices. We had originally planned it for October 15, but when one of the Presidential debates was scheduled for that date, we were able at the last minute to change it. We had a good attendance and then, as we usually do, we had the evening professionally taped, so it was then shown at least once a day the week before the election on one of our two local TV channels. It costs

<sup>1</sup> Voting Age Population for 2008 derived from U.S. Census Estimates of the Population by Selected Age Groups for the United States and Puerto Rico, July 1, 2007 grown by growth rate of Utah Population as published by the U.S. Census, December 22, 2008. Registered Voters and Voting reported by Utah Elections Office.

<sup>2</sup> Voting Age Population, Registration and Voting for 2004 and 2006 from U.S. Census, Statistical Abstract 2006 and 2008 editions, Table 406: Persons Reported Registered and Voted by State

quite a bit to have this done, but we feel we reach a much wider audience this way. We also had very good coverage from our local paper that ran an article one week covering what the county candidates had said and an article the next week covering the remarks of the state legislative candidates. We were quite pleased with that. We did not have our usual Silent Auction fund raiser this fall, but plan to hold it this spring when we don't have quite so many competing activities. We have about the same number of members as we have had for the last several years. Some very loyal members continue to do the jobs that need doing, but we have not recruited many new members.



**The Salt Lake League:** took a fun ride on Utah's commuter train Frontrunner to Ogden to talk about transportation (September), studied Alternative Energy (Oct), was briefed on Utah Health Reform by Judi Hillman of the Utah Health Policy Project (Nov) and enjoyed a Holiday Social visit with political guru and pollster Dan Jones in December. Details at <http://www.lwvutah.org/saltlakecounty.html>

By *Marilyn O'Dell*, Vice President for Local Leagues

(All local leagues have their own web pages on the state site [lwvutah.org](http://lwvutah.org); information can be added at any time by contacting the office at [lwvut@xmission.com](mailto:lwvut@xmission.com))

### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ON-LINE

The Board of the League of Women Voters of Utah urges all members to renew their memberships on-line. The on-line renewal system is secure and easy, although slightly more expensive than renewing by mail due to monthly minimum service charges of the credit card companies. The additional charges paid by members go to cover that contractual minimum. When members do not renew on line, we must use a portion of off-line membership dues to cover the cost of bringing you this service, which means we have fewer dollars to put to work to make our issues known in the community. Please RENEW ON-LINE!

### THE 'IN CELEBRATION OF' FUND

The traditional 'Memorial Fund' has changed its name to 'In Celebration of' Fund. This fund has always been available for contributions from members or non-members in memory of League members who have passed away. It is also appropriate to donate to this fund in acknowledgment of a celebration of such events as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, etc.

The fund is a joint savings account for both the State and the Salt Lake Leagues. Stuart Gygi, the Salt Lake League Treasurer, chairs the Memorial Fund Committee. In addition both Salt Lake and State have two representatives. The committee meets whenever the office has a need for equipment. For example, the fund recently purchased a copy/fax/scan/printer and a new DSL modem.

For a comprehensive explanation of types of donations and to donate online, go to: <http://www.lwvutah.org/donations.aspx>.

We would like to thank the following for their generous contributions to the league:

American Express

XMISSION

Mary S. McCarthey

Zions Bank

Fabian & Clendenin

Barbara G Browning

America First Credit Union

The League of Women Voters of Utah would like to thank:  
Xmission for their internet services ([lwvut@mail.xmission.com](mailto:lwvut@mail.xmission.com))  
BandCon (Ari Benowitz) for their web-hosting ([www.lwvutah.com](http://www.lwvutah.com))



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## THE UTAH VOTER

Winter 2009

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
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Permit No. 1716

**Join the League of Women Voters of Utah**, a respected, national grassroots organization that acts on important issues that affect you, your community and our nation. You can make a difference on the issues! Membership forms are available on line at <http://www.lwvutah.org/form.html>

We are –

- *Empowering millions of voters to protect their right to vote*
- *Working to ensure that ALL votes are counted and all voices are heard*
- *Preserving our constitutional rights by safeguarding civil liberties*
- *Acting as a force for positive change in our communities and in our democracy*

We believe that sensible, responsible civil discourse and action, based on substance rather than partisan battles, is essential if we are to avoid polarization and get something done. We believe that American democracy is at risk and that now is the time to act.

**Donate to the League.** Your tax-deductible contribution to our LWVU Education Fund will provide important support for advancing our critical work to safeguard the vote. Contribute today!