



**November 2010**

## **Voter Education Across Utah**

**by Marilyn O'Dell, LWVU Co-President**

After we get over our emotional reaction to the election results, we, as League members, need to think about what voter education efforts worked and what didn't. Efforts of two small Leagues in Utah seemed to be successful.

In Weber County, two League members facilitated a Voters' Guide, researched by students at Weber State University, available on line at the website of the American Democracy Project (<http://programs.weber.edu/american democracy>) with hard copies distributed through public libraries and at WSU.

The members of the League in Weber County who facilitated the Voters' Guide, Dr. Leah Murray and Dr. Kathryn MacKay, are both professors and co-chairs of the American Democracy Project at WSU. Dr. Murray assigned the project to members of two classes, Campaigns and Elections and Introduction to American National Government.

In addition to contacting candidates, the students designed the guide. The local League paid for printing of 600 hard copies that were distributed to libraries and at WSU. An article by the local paper, the *Standard Examiner*, highlighted the students' efforts and mentioned the League. The WSU student newspaper, the *Signpost*, also covered it.

The Weber County League met on November 8 with Dr. Murray to discuss election results.

The Grand County League repeated a successful model that combines a Candidates' Forum followed by a social (with food) so people can talk to candidates individually. The forum is recorded and broadcast the week before the election on two local stations. League members supply the food and the cost of a professional to videotape the forum.

Both Weber and Grand Counties' efforts concentrated on local elections (county offices, school board and in Grand County the Utah House) and both took advantage of local resources and connections.

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## Fall Fete Memorable

**By Linda Johnson**

The Salt Lake League's annual Fall Fete Fundraiser was a Fete to remember. It was a great success, very well attended by League members and other friends of Sandy Peck, who was a very happy honoree.

The Fete was at the Salt Lake Art Center downtown, a new venue for us—we've had previous Fetes in private homes. The event was catered by Angela's Catering, which has offices a couple of doors down from our office. The food was delightful, the wine and nonalcoholic drinks flowed generously..



The Fete was in honor of our Executive Director of many years, Sandy Peck. She joined the Salt Lake League in 1971, became our Executive Director in 1982, and retired just this past summer. Sandy recently received the Utah Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists "Sunshine Award," for her work for the League and the general public in monitoring and providing citizen input to the Utah Legislature, particularly regarding open government. Especially gratified by this award, she says, "Open government and informed participation by citizens in their government – this is what the League is all about." Although we will miss having Sandy at the office, responding to our phone calls day and night, we are deeply grateful that she is remaining active in League as our consultant, adviser, and editor, with the title of Executive Director Emeritus.



While the Fete was hosted by the Salt Lake League, current and past presidents of both Salt Lake and Utah leagues offered thanks and other remarks in honor of Sandy. Sandy made an inspiring speech in return, describing her feelings about League.

The Salt Lake League has in the past given each year's Fete honoree a stained glass League logo of the League logo. It has always been passed on from year to year, but the stained glass is now "retired," along with Sandy, and will be her permanent property. In addition, Sandy was presented with a looseleaf binder holding tributes and letters from League members and the public—it was necessary to find a very large binder because there are so many pages. Anyone reading this who would like to add a note to Sandy can email or snailmail it to the League office and we will make sure it is added to her collection. Board members also contributed to additional gifts, including tickets for two to a symphony function and for dinner.

## Utah League Co-presidents

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## Upcoming Session Brings League Events

### By Sherilyn Bennion

Prior to and during the 2011 legislative session, which will run from January 24 to March 10, we have (at least) three events scheduled that you'll want to add to your calendars:

1. Thursday, January 20, will be our annual orientation session for those interested in learning, or reviewing, how the Legislature works, what League does at the Legislature and how we attempt to make our voices heard. We will gather at 11:30 a.m. to purchase lunch in the Senate Building cafeteria, then begin the orientation at noon in the Copper Room adjoining the cafeteria at the south end.
2. Friday, February 11, we will gather for our annual Legislative Luncheon and hear legislators discuss their expectations and priorities for the session, with an opportunity to ask questions of them. We will purchase lunch in the Senate Building cafeteria beginning at 11:30 and convene to hear our speakers at noon in the Copper Room adjacent to the cafeteria.
3. Monday, February 14, the League will present a symposium for the University of Utah's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute titled "In the Know about the 2011 Legislature." We'll help participants learn how to be informed about and act on important issues before the Legislature. This event is scheduled for 10 a.m. to noon in the Spruce Room of the Senate Building.

Prospects are good for an exciting session, with many issues of interest to League members on the agenda.

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### Legislative Priorities for the 2011 Legislature

1. Follow and take appropriate action on any Legislatively initiated ethics reform
2. Follow and take appropriate action on any Legislatively initiated redistricting reform
3. Elections
  - a. Support same day registration
  - b. Support use of Medicare cards for voter identification at the polls
  - c. Take appropriate action on the recommendations of the Strengthening Democracy Commission
4. Education
  - a. Oppose budget cuts to public and higher education
  - b. Follow statewide equalization changes
  - c. Follow and take appropriate action on sex education reform
5. Oppose restoring the sales tax on food

**PRIORITIES continued on next page**

## Grand County Candidates Forum

The *Voter* regrets that part of the Grand County Candidates Forum announcement for October 11 was missing in print. Leaguers asked questions of candidates for three County Council positions, County Sheriff, County Assessor, County Attorney, Utah House of Representatives Candidates for Districts 55 & 69, and two school board districts. The forum was recorded and broadcast the week before the election on two local stations.

## News from the Local Leagues

Each local league has a page on the state website ([www.lwvutah.org](http://www.lwvutah.org)). Check to see what your league has planned and who you can contact to participate. The Salt Lake league has reported activities in other sections of the *Voter*. Check Marilyn O'Dell's message on Page One for news about the Weber County League. If you have questions about your local league, contact Janice Gygi at [Janice.gygi@uvu.edu](mailto:Janice.gygi@uvu.edu).

### Cedar City League

During the first part of October, the Cedar City League of Women Voters met to consider the program for the coming year and to collect dues. At the meeting's end, they had agreed to continue checking into some local issues upon which they may focus. They have area-wide water concerns and find last year's State League water study particularly helpful. They are awaiting the release, at the beginning of 2011, of government-funded studies into the reliability of water at Lake Powell and the cost and feasibility of the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline. At that point, the Cedar City League may be co-operating with other groups to facilitate public education about the studies and the costs involved. Program decisions will be finalized during the November meeting.

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### **PRIORITIES continued**

6. Health and Human Services
  - a. Follow and take appropriate action on changes to State Health Insurance Exchange
  - b. Oppose opting out of Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
  - c. Follow and take appropriate action on abortion bills
  - d. Follow and take appropriate action on Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing database bills
7. Follow and take appropriate action on energy bills
8. Natural resources
  - a. Oppose Snake Valley water transfers to Nevada
  - b. Follow and take action reflecting LWWUT 2009 consensus on water issues
  - c. Follow and take appropriate action on land use issues
9. Social Policy
  - a. Follow legislative action that pertains to immigration and take appropriate action in accordance with LWWUS positions
  - b. Follow legislative action that pertains to Affirmative Action and take appropriate action in accordance with LWWUS positions
10. Other League positions - Take action in accordance with adopted League positions on bills as they come up.

## Protests of GSL Minerals Expansion Continue

By Ann O'Connell

Both the LWV of Utah and the LWV of Salt Lake are members of Protectors of the Lake, a coalition that is fighting Great Salt Lake Minerals Company's plans to expand its evaporation ponds. There have been a series of articles in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and other local papers (and in an extensive piece in a recent issue of *Audubon Magazine* so I am presuming League members have a fair knowledge of what the company wishes to do and why those who hope to protect the lake, birders, hunters, boaters, artists, etc., are so concerned. Therefore, this article will be limited to the specific steps the coalition has taken.



Potash & Phosphate Institute Photo

In the very beginning, several organizations including the two Leagues joined in a letter to the Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands asking for an opportunity to present evidence as to why expanding the company's footprint is a threat to the lake. The division turned down our request for a hearing and granted the permit and now the matter is wending its way through the courts – slowly.

Since then, the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands has issued a second permit for an even larger pond expansion. The division's decision was not announced to the public, at least not to the part of the public to which we belong. So again we are protesting – both the permit and the lack of public notice and opportunity to comment.

This second expansion plan includes a request for a large allocation of lake water. The Army Corps of Engineers must decide if the lake can tolerate the loss of so much water. As you perhaps know, the Corps is responsible for protecting the waters of the United States, and through somewhat of a legal fluke, the Great Salt Lake is considered part of these waters.

In the meantime it was discovered that GSL Minerals has long been responsible for dumping excess water from their east side evaporation ponds directly into the lake, water carrying a high concentration of minerals, a point source in the vocabulary of the Environmental Protection Agency. Our lawyers pointed this out to the Division of Water Quality and they agreed a permit should be required and now is. The division, like everyone else, was not aware of this point source so this is real progress.

**GSL continued on next page**

**“It is  
in coalitions  
that the  
League is  
most  
effective.”  
—Ann O’Connell**

### **GSL continued**

However, there is more to be done. The permit as written does not have a testing requirement so we are not learning what is in the effluent and whether or not it may be a threat to the lake. We need to keep after the division in this matter.

### **Willard Spur Protection**

In addition to all of the above, the coalition is working to protect the water quality of Willard Spur, an important but neglected water body adjacent to the Bear River Bird Refuge. It is threatened with additional effluent from an expanded Willard/Perry Wastewater Treatment Plant. We found that the Division of Water Quality had no idea of Willard Spur’s importance to wildlife, and evidently the refuge was unaware that Willard Spur water fed into some of its properties. DWQ felt constrained to issue a permit for the effluent but is now sincerely concerned that there is a significant water quality problem in the spur. Any effort to protect the water quality of the lake is stymied by the fact that there are no standards for its water. We have standards for fresh and ocean waters and marshes, etc. but the Great Salt Lake is not any of these. Willard Spur is an exemplar of the conundrums facing the lake. It is so large we do not notice what is going on in vast portions of it, and it is so unique we do not have standards by which to measure its health.

### **Great Salt Lake Management Plan**

The League of Women Voters has joined with others to submit comments to the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands which is currently revising the Great Salt Lake Management Plan. It is important to note that the plan as it now stands designated the area of GSL Minerals and its expansion as a region of the lake open to mineral development. We would hope that at a minimum the new plan would not allow any more mineral development than is already in place.

The League of Women Voters is involved in these efforts because we have an old position on protecting places of special importance and a new one on protecting the natural waters of Utah but, perhaps most important, because our members care deeply about the Great Salt Lake. Furthermore, we always stand up for public involvement in government decision making which has been slighted all along.

If you want to learn more about the Great Salt Lake Minerals and the lake, I suggest you go to the Friends of Great Salt Lake website: <http://www.fogsl.org/>, click on Tags in the upper right, choose *great salt lake minerals*. In that list I recommend #1 for more detail on one of our legal maneuvers and #4 to link to the *Audubon Magazine* article by Ted Williams. Also go to the Great Salt Minerals website: [http://www.gslfuture.com/expansion\\_proposal.html](http://www.gslfuture.com/expansion_proposal.html). This address takes you right to the expansion proposal – with a map. You might want to visit more of that website to learn about the company and its history.

I will tell you more about the players in the GSL Minerals drama in the next issue of the *Voter*. Western Resource Advocates is a major one. Do you know who they are? Also, I will explain more about the workings of the coalition and its members. It is in coalitions that the League is most effective.

## Decisions Have Impacts

The statistics to the right result from local and state school boards in the U.S. making local decisions about educational needs for their students.

On November 5, the Utah State School Board postponed making a decision to require four years of math for high school graduation.

The decision was advocated by technology leaders and the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce to lessen the number of college remedial math classes and to make Utah students more competitively globally. The requirement was opposed by the Utah Superintendents Association which worried that it would be too much to ask districts, particularly rural ones, to implement the new core curriculum and new math requirements simultaneously.

— Gigi Brandt

## Education by the Numbers

The following information is from an article, "Back to School: Enhancing U.S. Education and Competitiveness" in the November/December 2010 issue of *Foreign Affairs* written by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

- Young adults in eight other nations are more likely to have college degrees.
- This year China will award more Ph.D.s in science and engineering than any other country in the world. (Last year it was the U.S.)
- In 2000 immigrants in the U.S. made up 12 percent of the U.S. work force but nearly 50 percent of the U.S.'s science and engineering Ph.D.s.
- From 1995 to 2005 immigrants started 25 percent of U.S. technology and engineering companies.
- Since 1975 the share of jobs in the U.S. economy that require post-secondary education rose from 28 percent to 59 percent.
- The U.S. is 5<sup>th</sup> in the developed world in proportion of college graduates and is tied for 9<sup>th</sup> for rates of college completion among those aged 25 to 34. (A generation ago the U.S. was 1<sup>st</sup> in the proportion of college graduates).
- Forty-two percent of young adults in the U.S. have earned an associate's degree as compared to 58 percent of South Korean young adults and 56 percent of Canadian young adults.
- Nearly 70 percent of U.S. high school graduates enroll in college within a year of earning their high school diplomas but only 60 percent of that number complete their bachelor's degrees within six years and only 20 percent of students who enroll in two-year community colleges graduate within three years.
- In the U.S., about 25 percent of ninth-grade students fail to graduate from high school in four years. (Only Mexico, Spain, Turkey and New Zealand have higher dropout rates.)
- Only one-fourth of U.S. high school graduates are ready for college work, and 40 percent of freshman at community colleges have to take at least one remedial class in their first year .
- In a 2006 study of 30 nations, 15-year-old Americans ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> on the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) test for math and 25<sup>th</sup> on the science test. (15-year-old Canadians were on average well over a one school year ahead of their U.S. peers in these subjects.)
- In South Korea (and Finland), teachers must come from the top 10 percent of graduates, and in South Korea those who teach are viewed as making an important contribution to building their nation.

## Learn Basics of Advocacy

Saturday  
December 11  
9am-4pm

### **Turning Passion into Action: Basics for Citizen Advocates**

Please join the Salt Lake City Library, Utah League Of Women Voters, Planned Parenthood Action Council, Crossroads Urban Center and Great Salt Lakekeeper for a daylong training for citizen lobbyists and community activists. This dynamic training will help concerned citizens transform their passion about issues facing our community into political action and social change. Topics to be covered in the training include: Lobbying and Advocacy Basics; Understanding Political, Legislative and Administrative Processes; Social Marketing; Engaging The Media; Technology and Internet Tools; and Public Records Law. The training is free and open to the public.

To register, call the Library at 801-524-8200. Advance registration is recommended, as space is limited.

### **Turning Passion Into Action: Basics for Citizen Advocates.**

Saturday December 11, 9am-4pm, Level Four Conference Room

### **“Changing the Dialogue with Elected Officials” –lobbying and grassroots advocacy to make change**

#### **Presented by Planned Parenthood Action Council**

Community members have the ability to amplify their voice and effect great change at the legislative level. This workshop will teach lobbying basics and the Utah legislative process utilizing the expertise of lobbyists and elected officials from both sides of the aisle.

### **Practical Tools For Local Issues**

#### **Presented by The League of Women Voters of Utah**

It is said that all politics are local. In order to effect change, it is important to understand the processes of government at the local level. We will offer tools to help you engage your local city officials. Have you wondered about how to work with a government agency to solve an issue? Ann O’Connell, a long time lobbyist for the League and five years for Utah Audubon, will share with you her experience in working constructively with government agencies. Sherilyn Bennion, retired professor of mass communication, will teach you what is available to you as a citizen using Utah’s Government Records Access Management Act (GRAMA).

### **“Amplify your Voice” – using Social Media to effect change**

#### **Presented by Equality Utah**

Organizations and Community Organizers have many new channels to brand their message, engage their communities and amplify their voices. Join experts in the field for a panel discussion on the use of the Blogosphere, FaceBook and Twitter to effect social change. Panelists include Josh Ewing of Love Communications, Eric Ethington of Pride in Your Community and Lauren Littlefield of Equality Utah.



**Come Share in the Spirit of Giving of the Holiday Season!**

The League of Women Voters of Salt Lake invites you for holiday drinks, hors d'oeuvres and great conversation.

Thursday, December 2, 2010  
5:00 - 7:00pm  
Village III Clubhouse  
1525 East Vine Street, Murray

Crossroads Urban Center Executive Director, Glenn Bailey will speak on the needs in our community served by his organization.

Crossroads operates Utah's busiest emergency food pantry, a free/low cost thrift store, a regional food co-op, and a variety of community organizing and advocacy efforts focused on the issues facing low-income Utahns. Crossroads has been serving low income residents of the greater Salt Lake area for 45 years. Donations will go to support their work to meet the emergency and long term needs of the impoverished in our community.

Please join the League for this event and give generously at the door or online at <http://www.crossroads-u-c.org/>

## What Can the LWV do?

The immediate actions of the League should be directed at education of the public regarding the Northwest Quadrant issue. And most immediate should be the organization of a public forum, either by the League itself or in conjunction with Envision Utah.

Ultimately, the position of the League regarding the NWQ will depend on if or how the problems and questions described here and in other documents prepared by the League (specifically, a letter sent to the city Planning Department in October, 2010), are solved or answered, and the results of considering alternatives to the present proposal.

## NW Quadrant Report from Unit Meetings

By Sherman Bloom

Four units discussed the Northwest Quadrant issue, and submitted reports (Girls Scout, Night Owl, Bench Bunch and Library). Town Club was committed to another subject, but may take up the NWQ at a later date.

All four unit meetings were lively. Participants were clearly and deeply engaged with the subject. Each unit considered why the project is on the city agenda, and what the reasons are for wanting, or not wanting, the project to go forward. All recognized the value of the NWQ as a natural resource and feared for the ecology of the GSL in view of a variety of developments causing degradation. Fear that the NWQ could give us a low-income isolated community was raised by several participants and generally considered an important issue.

As brought out in the meetings, the points in favor of proceeding with the NWQ project include the need to accommodate a growing population that is expected to increase by at least two-fold, but possibly as high as five-fold by 2050. Secondly, the NWQ is an area of high employment but with meager housing, and consequently excessive commuting occurs, contributing to air pollution, among other things. Thirdly, the future of the NWQ will be one of haphazard development if the city doesn't impose an overall plan. The city plan will give us a green community with features we can be proud of while housing 70,000 to 100,000 citizens (an approximate 28 percent to 36 percent increase in the SLC population).

The points raised in opposition to the present plan begin with the belief that the area is unsuited for human habitation, which may be why essentially no one lives there now. This is because of insect problems, subsurface alkaline water that precludes plant life associated with a comfortable family life, unstable soil in an area where a magnitude 7 earthquake is possible, and vulnerability to flooding. Additional issues relate to the consequences for the present population of SLC in terms of taxes, air pollution, and the general quality of life. Another line of concern was the damage it would or might do the Great Salt Lake, which is one of the most critical areas of bird habitat in the world.

In addition to the above objections to the NWQ, the question of alternatives to the project were discussed, and the absence of such alternatives in the city plan was pointed out. If our objective is to accommodate a growing population, then why not use infill, as opposed to sprawl. Could inappropriate development of the NWQ be prevented by TDRs (land swaps, with the city giving development rights to landowners in exchange for the NWQ)? And why do we need to accommodate more people in the valley? Will growth continue until there is standing room only?

## Historic Vote in California

Read about one of the history-making elections in the United States. Not only is Jean Quan the first woman mayor of Oakland, CA, but also the first winner of a ranked-choice vote.

[http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/wwong/detail?entry\\_id=76866](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/wwong/detail?entry_id=76866)

### Christina Smithers

The LWVSL is fortunate to have Christina. She is a graduate student at the University of Utah in city planning and environmental law. She was recruited by Anne Zeigler and Linda Johnson, no doubt because of her keen interest in civil rights. One of Christina's goals is to register college students to vote.



### New Members

### Mirna Berg

Mirna is a very busy new member to the League. She brings to us a Hispanic background and is interested in educating naturalized citizens about the importance of voting. She has a demanding schedule that requires a great amount of travel.

### Trudy Bach-Whitehead

Trudy is no stranger to community involvement. She volunteered at the Literacy Action Center for 15 years, and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker of 35 years. She likes the League because she can stay current and informed about what is going on in our community. She is interested in the high school programs and voter registration of naturalized citizens.

## League Participates in Debate

During the last election cycle, the League of Women Voter played a part in an October 19 debate at the University of Utah between Gov. Gary Herbert and challenger Peter Corroon. Here is a note of appreciation.



*to our friends at the League of Women Voters -*

*We are honored to have such an historically important organization pose such thoughtful questions in tonight's events. Thanks for your support - & keep up the good work!*

*Nick Russell, Mike Middleton,  
& Utah Forensics*

## Learn More on the League Website

By Anne Zeigler

What is the LWV doing? I have been asked that many times – so here's my answer – go to our website, [www.lwvutah.org](http://www.lwvutah.org). Under GET INFORMED on the left side of the screen, click on "UTAH LEAGUE CALENDAR" When you see a date with a meeting or event happening, click on that and it will give you more details.

We also list Forums of the Hinckley Institute of Politics and other events of interest on our calendar.

We would like to invite all the local leagues in the state to put their events, board meetings, etc. on this calendar so that people can see what other leagues besides Salt Lake are doing. Please send your information to Jenn Gonnely at [jenn@gonnely.com](mailto:jenn@gonnely.com).

I urge you to take some time to explore the website. For people who want to learn about our legislature go to UTAH LEGISLATIVE NEWS on the left side of the home page. You will find information on the state legislature including League legislative priorities and action alerts. You will also find links to League Legislative Updates, including one to KCPW broadcasts of the Updates. There are also links to the Utah State Legislature's award-winning website where you can find your legislators, committee agendas and proposed bills. Check out the CITIZENS GUIDE there.

HELPFUL LINKS will be a big surprise. You can get information about elections in Utah and other states. Also find links to other advocacy groups the League works with such as Voices for Utah Children.

There is so much information on our website, you will be amazed – I urge you to do some exploring.



Hinckley Forums are held in Orson Spencer Hall, Room 255, at the University of Utah. All forums are free and open to the public and are sponsored by the Hinckley Institute of Politics and The Sam Rich Program in International Politics.

Hinckley Forums  
<http://www.hinckley.utah.edu/events/forums/index.html>

You can also find the Hinckley Forums on our website on the League Calendar! Sync the League's Google calendar with your own and always stay on top of League activities.

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*The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization  
that encourages informed and active participation in government.*

### **Unit meetings**

#### ***Election Laws and Utah's Dismal Voter Participation***

Nite Owls ~ Monday, November 22, @ 7:30 p.m.  
@ 862 E Harrison Ave 1375 South - 801-487-7387

Bench Bunch ~ Wednesday, December 1 @ 9:30 a.m.  
@ LWV Office  
Carolyn Dunn, Unit Leader — 801-278-9409

Girl Scout Unit ~ Monday, November 22, @ 11 a.m.  
@ Girl Scout Headquarters 445 E. 4500 S  
Anne Zeigler, Unit Leader — 801 944-4163 [azeigler@xmission.com](mailto:azeigler@xmission.com)

Library Unit ~ Thursday, December 2, @noon-1:30 p.m.  
@Main Library, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 200 E 400 S  
Joyce Barnes, Unit Leader 801-278-2296 [jbarnz@xmission.com](mailto:jbarnz@xmission.com)

Town Club ~ next meeting January 5, 2011, @10:45 a.m.  
Town Club, 1081 East South Temple  
Alice Steiner, Unit Leader — [akarsteiner@aol.com](mailto:akarsteiner@aol.com)  
Call Alice to reserve lunch — 801.363.9193