



January 2009
President's Letter

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After surviving the election chaos and the holidays, it's time for a new Congress and Utah State Legislature! Whew! But research shows that active busy people using their brains to focus on problem-solving are likely to avoid diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia. We're getting healthier while making a difference—what could be more positive and effective?

The LWVUS has been very busy. Recent activities:

- Congratulating President-Elect Obama and urging him to explore new ways to bring all Americans into policymaking efforts.
- In cooperation with other organizations, writing a letter to incoming senators urging them to support public funding of elections. Similar letters were sent to members of the House of Representatives.

Our own LWVSL activities included the annual Holiday Social. Speaker Dr. Dan Jones took us back in history to analyze the effects of certain happenings on the American people and on the political scene. For example, he said that the death of President Kennedy changed the American political landscape forever and Americans lost their innocence.. When this was followed by the deaths of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, we saw our way of life and democracy threatened. He praised the League's work on the immigration study and urged us to remain active and vigilant, saying that we were the only constantly visible group at the legislature with a non-partisan agenda and well-thought-out positions on issues. Nice compliment, coming from someone who has been watching Utah's political machinations for a long time.

February 4 is the date for our annual legislative luncheon on Capitol Hill. We urge everyone to attend; it's a great time to hear about current issues and ask questions of the experts.

In February we will tackle the National Popular Vote. LWVUS has just completed work on a study to help us understand the issues involved. It promises to be challenging and interesting. (More healthy stuff!)

March brings the annual Sunshine Week as well as our legislative wrap-up, and in April our State of the Community Luncheon promises to be fun as well as informative.

LWVSL is in charge of the LWVUT convention in May. More information coming soon.

Ask a friend or two to come to these events and discussions. We can use new ideas and they can use our organization to help enhance their mental health.

— *Joyce Barnes*



Meet Our New Members

JESSICA HATCH, 2586 Elizabeth St, #6,
SLC, UT 84106 486-1868
jahatch1@comcast.net

Jessica grew up in Los Angeles. She moved east but when her sister became ill she decided she had better move back out west. Eight years ago she moved from New York City to Salt Lake and began working for the Episcopal Diocese. She now has a parish in Provo. In her leisure time Jessica enjoys bird watching and reading.

EVA RINALDI, 1252 Roosevelt Ave, SLC, UT 84105 550-1680
rinaldi.eva@gmail.com

Eva moved to Utah in 1992. She was a student at Kent State and then graduated from the University of Akron with a degree in Psychology and a minor in Hotel Management. She moved here to work at Deer Valley. She is now the Operations Director for the summertime labs at Sundance Institute.

MICHELLE FRANKS, 8 N. Wolcott, SLC, UT 84103 363-5553

Originally from Iowa, Michelle moved to Salt Lake 30 years ago. She obtained a Masters in Gerontology from the Nursing School at the University of Utah. She and her husband are in real estate but every year Michelle still gives a lecture at the Univ on "Hoarding". She has a 20-year-old old daughter and a son who is 17.

MARY ANN LAPSLEY, 1726 Laird, SLC, UT 84108 581-1231

Mary Ann grew up in Salt Lake, attending Highland High School and Westminster College where she got a degree in Education. She went to work for Western Airlines which then was absorbed by Delta Airlines. She worked for Delta as a Customer Service Rep until 2005 at which time she retired. She has a daughter in the Navy in the Middle East and a son who flies for Sky West. Mary Ann worked at the Democracy Store and thoroughly enjoyed it and is looking forward to helping with the Lobby Corps.

ELIZABETH F. VAN PELT, 1340 E. 4750 South, #D4, SLC, UT 84117
274-0980, bettyvp@utahisp.com

Elizabeth grew up in New Jersey. She attended Rutgers and the New Jersey Institute of Technology and holds a BS in Environmental Science and a Masters in Environment Engineering. Nine years ago she moved to Salt Lake from Pennsylvania and now works for MWH an Environmental Consulting Firm where she reviews lab data and other related entities. In her spare time she enjoys tole painting, hiking, reading and her bowling league.

LAVONE LIDDLE, 1397 Wilton Way, SLC, UT 84109 583-5411

Originally from California LaVone has lived in Salt Lake since 1969. She retired as an Administrative Law Judge in 2002. She holds a Masters in Public Administration. LaVone served as Ralph Becker's Campaign Treasurer and is involved in many volunteer positions including Chair of the Board of Premier Services Credit Union, Workforce Appeals Board, Assistance League and Salt

NEW PARK CITY UNIT

We're excited to announce
a new unit in the
Park City area.

Their meeting will be:

DATE: January 30
@ Noon

Lunch will be served
LOCATION: Home of
Debra Saunders

2505 White Pine Lane
Park City, UT 84098

If you are interested or know
someone who might be,
please email Deb at
dsaunders@mwutah.com



Hinckley Forums

The University of Utah's Hinckley Institute of Politics offers ongoing forums on topics of political and social interest. Please visit their website:

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

Lake Mosquito Abatement District.

PAT DENSLOW-KILROY, 2760 Highland Drive, #7, SLC, UT 84106
484-3204, redred505@yahoo.com

Pat was born and raised in Salt Lake in the Sugarhouse area. She was teaching at Nibley Park Elementary when she decided the American Federation of Teachers (AFL-CIO) should have a presence in Utah. Due to her efforts to bring the AFT into the state, Pat became a Union Representative and travelled the country for the union. She is now retired and looking forward to becoming active in the League. She enjoys reading, indoor gardening, playing the guitar, swimming and collecting old books.

JOAN BAXTER, Atherton Way, SLC, UT 262-1227, jbax@xmission.com

Joan grew up in Detroit. She attended Central Michigan College of Education and went on to get a Masters in English from Ohio State University. She came to Utah in the '50s to teach (sight unseen, because teachers were the lowest paid in the nation). She then taught in Anchorage, Alaska, before returning to Salt Lake. When she returned she taught English in high school in the Jordan School District. Joan retired in 1989 and has been travelling to exotic places ever since.

DEBRA SAUNDERS, 2505 White Pine Lane, Park City, UT 84070
435-649-3342, 801-599-9123

Debra grew up in Utah and attended the University of Utah where she became a Medical Technician. While in school she worked at the Medical Center – this was before AIDS when technicians still sucked the blood into a tube. She married shortly after she got her degree and now works with her husband, a developer in Park City. She has 4 grown children - two living in California. She enjoys tennis and fly fishing – particularly at their place on the Snake River.

KATHY ENGLISH, 3919 Brockbank Drive, SLC, UT 84124 277-3926

Kathy was born and raised in Salt Lake City. She received her PhD in Biology from the University of Utah. She has raised two daughters and one son. Her daughters live in Salt Lake and her son lives in Spokane. Kathy is an excellent tennis player – just recently returned from a National Tournament in Palm Springs. She was lured into the League by Anne Zeigler. Kathy enjoys running, hiking, skiing, art and her family.

CARLA PITCHER, 7990 Meadow View Drive, Park City, UT 84098
435-347-8125; cell: 435-631-0610; carla.pitcher@yahoo.com

Correction: Email for new member Dan Mayhew, drmayhew@comcast.net. Dan is legislative chair for the Sierra Club.

The Economy Giveth, and the Economy Taketh Away

An Update on the Status of Education in Utah

By Education Director, Patti O'Keefe

Over this past summer and fall, the League has been closely following two promising education initiatives. The first was conducted by parallel task forces, one formed from members of the Legislature's Interim Education Committee and the other (headed by UEA) with broader stakeholder representation. Both groups, working somewhat in concert, were studying national systems for "performance pay" (or "incentive pay", for the UEA group) for teachers in hopes of developing legislation for a statewide program in Utah. The second initiative was exploring possibilities for actually implementing much-needed class size reduction in Utah's public schools. Headed by the state PTA, representatives from various education stakeholders, including Sen. Greg Bell and Rep. Kory Holdaway from the Legislature, met as a Class Size Reduction Advisory Committee. I attended meetings of both groups as a rep of the League.

Unfortunately, the downward spiral of the economy has created such a projected budget shortfall that it not only threatens these important new initiatives, it actually puts our bare bones present education funding at risk!

Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. has recommended that \$212 million be cut from the education budget. Fortunately, he is also recommending that \$153 million be injected into education for one year only. That means instead of an actual \$212 million cut, under his plan education would see only a \$59 million cut for fiscal year 2010. Most of that \$153 million would come from \$100 million lawmakers set aside for future education needs last session. The rest would likely come from the state's \$414 million Rainy Day Fund and other sources. But that \$153 million would be for one year only, meaning if the economy doesn't significantly improve down the road, the state could be digging an even deeper hole for future education budgets.

The governor's state budget recommendations include no new raises for teachers and no increase in the amount of state money spent per student. Teachers have received small raises the past two years and would continue to receive that money as part of the governor's plan. However, there would be no new money available for programs designed to address our looming teacher shortage. The governor also recommended the state not offer as much money for school construction, which has implications for class-size reduction (even if we could afford it!). He did recommend fully funding more than 13,500 new students expected to enroll in Utah schools (we just may not have classrooms in which to house them!!)

For its part, the Utah Board of Education has recommended the state save money by eliminating a number of programs, including \$20 million slated to go toward the performance pay for teachers pilot program; USTAR, which is a math and science education program; and an at-home software program for preschoolers. Reps of the Utah School Boards Association and

ANNUAL LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON SET

February 4 (Wednesday)
11:30 a.m.

Copper Room, Cafe
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 visit and hear guest speakers — legislators and experts — talk about issues relating to the League's priorities. This will be a great day to hear legislators speak and to visit some sessions.

Space is limited, so please
RSVP to the office
801-272-8683 or
lwvut@xmission.com

Utah School Superintendents Association have indicated that their priority would be to have any money slated for individual programs go instead to the weighted pupil unit to meet local needs at schools.

The immediate impact of this projected belt tightening (and remember, Utah's per pupil spending is the lowest in the nation!) is that any performance pay recommendations will likely be scrapped, and the PTA appears to have totally dropped its potential recommendations on CSR. The only outcome so far from the "Performance Pay" group is a \$20 million, one-year only pilot program that is already problematic because it has run afoul of NCLB testing requirements. The recommendations developed by the CSR Advisory Committee in September have not yet been released, probably due to the PTA's rational assumption that any proposed class-size reduction legislation would die a quick death in this economic environment. Two things to remember: 1) the governor's proposals are just that: proposals; and 2) several key legislators are devoted to their pet projects.

The League of Women Voters will be closely monitoring education developments through the efforts of our Lobby Corps. If you can donate a few hours of your time to monitor Education Committee meetings, please contact Patti O'Keefe at 801-424-9215.

Website Wisdom

Check out our website — both the Utah League's (<http://lwvutah.org/>) and the Salt Lake League's (<http://lwvutah.org/salt-lakecounty.html/>)— for updated information on events, including the League Calendar. Legislative updates are particularly important and are uploaded daily to the site.

Let us know what you would like to see on the sites, or what you have found of value.

GIVE THE GIFT OF LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP!

The gift of membership to the League of Women Voters is an excellent way to introduce friends and family to issues that matter to everyone living in the Salt Lake City area. Since the beginning, the League of Women Voters has believed that active and informed citizens are vital to the health of democracy. Help support the League's mission by giving an annual membership to someone you care about.

Simply fill out the coupon below (or go online) and return it to the League office with dues payment of \$50 (\$10 for students). We will send a welcome letter to the new member(s).

Recipient Name _____

Recipient Address: _____

City: _____ State _____

Your Name: _____

Your phone: _____ email: _____

OFFICERS

1st VP Program
TBA

Education
Patti O'Keefe

Local
Government
Kathryn
Fitzgerald

Natr'l Resources
Polly Hough
Ann Wechsler

Social Policy
Millie Peterson

2nd VPs
Voter Service
Mary Fogg
Ruth Gardner

Public Relations
Sue Lind
Missy Bird

SL Voter
Katharine Biele
Pat Klentzman

3rd VP
Organization
Anne Zeigler

Membership
Phyllis Frankel
Margo Thurman

Arrangements
Mary Buchanan

Secretary
Linda Johnson

Treasurer
Stuart Gygi

Keep and Eye Out for the League

As the Legislature begins, we plan to have an Observer Corps in addition to our Lobby Corps taking stock of government activities. The idea is to increase our visibility and thus, our credibility among lawmakers.

As an observer, you would wear an identifying LWV pin while you attend whatever legislative session you choose. You may attend committee meetings, House and/or Senate sessions, and roam the halls of our state Capitol.

If you'd feel more comfortable, we will arrange for someone to go with you. Normally, we will be meeting for lunch in the Capitol Cafeteria to discuss the day's issues. Please let us know whether mornings and/or afternoons are better for you, and which days you can work. If you are interested in a particular issue or committee, please let us know that, as well. This will give us an idea of what's being covered at the Legislature, and by whom. With the many, many bills being debated, it's important that we stay on top of our priorities.

We'd be happy to discuss this with you. We hope that our many new members will be interested in helping us create a presence at the Legislature, which runs from January 26-March 11.

We are planning a Legislative Update luncheon on February 4 at the Copper Room, East Building, Capitol Complex, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Hope you can make that, too.

— Anne Zeigler, 944,4163
azeigler@xmission.com

— Kathy Dorn, 277-0897
kmd1965@msn.com

LEAGUE 2009 ACTION AT THE LEGISLATURE
BUDGETS, BONDS AND BILLS

By Sandy Peck, LWVUT Legislative Action Coordinator

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 the 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

INAUGURAL WISDOM

“Those of us who manage the public’s dollars will be held to account — to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day — because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.”
—President Barack Obama

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% this fiscal year and 7% next year, although the “across the board” 7% cut is less in some areas -- 3.5% for higher education for example.

How does the Legislature’s budget mesh with the governor’s? We know that the Legislature has proposed 15% budget cuts, twice the governor’s proposed 7%. But legislators at the ASPA Legislative Preview luncheon on January 15 said cuts at the 15% level are drastic; anything above 4% eliminates not just computers but state jobs and whole programs. 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. Gov. 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 Committees – especially for health, education and energy funding.

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 expanded 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 will want 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* (SB42, 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* (SB41, 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 4.

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, and may come at the Federal level first. Members who want to know more might start with the non-profit Utah Health Policy Project Action Center Factsheets at <http://www.healthpolicyproject.org/> Judi Hillman, UHPP Executive Director, briefed LWVSL at lunch last November.

IMMIGRATION – Last year’s omnibus immigration bill SB81 does not take effect until July 1, 2009. Governor Huntsman has said he expects the issue to be a priority of Senator McCain’s 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 on Utah have been proposed also.

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

— Sandy Peck

LWVUT Legislative Action Coordinator

GET ACTIVE, POLITICALLY FIT

Would you like to be part of the action? 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 or 801.272.8683.

Or call

Anne Zeigler at azeigler@xmission.com

or 801-944-4163

MORE BAD AIR DAYS AHEAD?

As this *Voter* goes to press, we are experiencing our seventh day of smog and haze in much of northern Utah, including the Uintas, necessitating “red alerts” from the Division of Air Quality. Inversions like this are expected after the snow begins to fall, but with climate change, we are less able to predict how weather changes may impact us in the future.

We can be sure, however, that if the proposed coal-fired power plants for the Great Basin are built in the future, we can look forward to increased pollution in the entire region. Take a “tour de coal” via the chart below, and note, especially, the size of the plants, their location (mostly near the national parks, though our population centers are downwind of the two biggest in Nevada), and the amount of carbon dioxide (the dreaded greenhouse gas) they emit.

— *Ann Wechsler*

COAL FIRED POWER PLANTS OF THE GREAT BASIN					
Plant	Corporate Entity	MW Output	Location	C02 in tons/yr	Permit Status
White Pine	WP Energy Assoc.	1590	White Pine Co. NV	12,600,000	awaiting final air permit /NV Div of Env Protect
Ely Energy	NV Power & Sierra Pacific	1500	White Pine Co., NV	16,000,000	same as White Pine
Intermountain Power	Intermtn Power Service Auth	950	Millard Co., UT	9,922,200	approved, under appeal
Toquop	Toquop Energy	750	Lincoln Co., NV	4,875,000	?
Hunter	Pacificorp	400	near Castle Dale		deferred by Resource Management PPlan
Sigurd	NEVCO	270	Sevier Co., UT	1,755,000	deferred to Sevier County Commission
Bonanza	Deseret Generating	110	Uinta Basin, south/Vernal		approved, under appeal

League of Women Voters of Salt Lake
3804 Highland Dr. Suite 8-D
Salt Lake City, UT 84106
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*The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization
that encourages informed and active participation in government.*

JANUARY UNITS – SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

JAN 26
(Mon.)

GIRL SCOUT HEADQUARTERS
445 East 4500 South
Monday -11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Lunch after meeting @ Anna's
Anne Zeigler – 944-4163 Unit Chair

JAN. 26
(Mon.)

NIGHT OWLS
Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Home of Judi Short - 862 E. Harrison
Judi Short, Unit Chair - 487-7387

JAN. 28
(Wed.)

BENCH BUNCH
League Office, 3804 Highland Dr.
Wed. - 9:30.-11 am.
Carolyn Dunn, Unit Chair – 278-9409

JAN. 29
(Thurs.)

MAIN LIBRARY – 210 East 400 South, SLC
Thursday, noon-1 p.m.
Conf. (Room D) Level-1
Kathy Dorn – Joyce Barnes, Co-Chair – 277-0897

NOTE: Please feel free to attend any of the units listed above.