



WATCHDOG

Summer/Fall Issue - 2014

Message From the President

This issue usually starts with welcoming people back from vacation, but this year, the League has been busy for most of the summer. A team of members continued work on the update to the Local Government Study, which is nearing completion.

Through this process, the team began exploring the option of pushing for another look at whether Weber County should consider changing the structure of the local government representing us. We have teamed up with the Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics and Public Service at Weber State University to host a public forum on this topic. Together we have arranged for this to be held on Wednesday, September 3, 2014 at the Shepherd Union Building Ballroom A at WSU at 7:00 p.m. The event will be moderated by Max Roth and panel members include Di Allison, Leah Murray, Duncan Murray, and Adam Trupp. Each of these people will spend a few minutes talking about the current structure, what options are legally available, and how the change is initiated. The public will then ask questions and give input. This is a timely topic and should result in an excellent discussion. Please plan on joining us.

Members have also organized a small group of people who attend and moderate some of the local commissions and committees. This has been an excellent opportunity to see our government in action and increase our visibility in the community. Many thanks to Marcia Thomas, Evelyn Bertilson, Marilyn O'Dell, and Marcia Harris for the countless hours spent on this.

We have some excellent meetings and activities planned for this year. After working on projects this summer, I realized that the social aspect of our group is important as well as the educational information. One of the goals we have in the Weber League is to ask for as little time as possible from members and spread out duties so that they are manageable and meet

busy schedules. On behalf of the board, I ask all members to make every effort to attend the one or two meetings scheduled each month. I guarantee you that you will feel that you are reaping rewards from your membership.

It is so delightful to work with a group that is so willing to give of themselves to better our community and make the world a better place. We do an amazing job with a small membership base. Please know how appreciative I am of everything each of you is able to do to help us be an effective force in the community we live in. Plan on coming to the meetings in September and helping us start the year out great!



Public Forum on Local Government

The Weber League did a study on local government in 1981 and it was chaired by Di Allison. This study concluded that we did need to look at alternative forms of government so that there was a balance between the executive and the legislative actions of the commission. There were no checks and balances in place. It was also felt that Weber County had grown so much that all areas were not being represented. Unfortunately, it is now 2014 and the same issues are present. For that reason, we are in the process of updating our local study and will reach consensus in the next few months. The committee felt that public opinion is important, therefore, we worked with Carol McNamara from the Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics and Public Service to organize a panel and forum on this topic. It will be on Wednesday, September 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at Weber State University Shepherd Union Building in Ballroom A. Max Roth has agreed to moderate the discussion and the panel will consist of Di Allison, Leah Murray, Duncan Murray, and Adam Trupp. They will discuss our past study, comparison between communities of our size and diversity, the different options allowed in Utah, and the process for change. Please bring as many community members as you can to give input. The update and consensus of our study should be completed by the end of November.



Fall Membership Meeting

We are having an opening membership meeting on Saturday, September 6, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. at Jaycee Park, 2465 Fillmore Avenue. We have arranged for a member of the Ogden Police Department to speak on Community Policing – what is it, what are the changes, what does the public need to do, etc. This will be followed by a potluck dessert social. We want everyone to come out and bring at least one friend and a dessert to share.



Chains of Empowerment

The State LWV and all local leagues have been invited to participate in an art project at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art. The exhibit highlights the dreams and aspirations of women and girls in Utah and is in support of MAKERS: Women Who Make America. This is a six part series highlighting the impact women have had over the years in six fields – politics, space, war, business, comedy, and Hollywood. At the membership meeting on September 6 we will have materials for all participants to create their part of the chain. Each person will write and draw on their link the answer to the question “What is the next link in your chain of progress?” The links from all Leagues and other organizations will be threaded together and the chain will be built on Saturday, September 13 from 10:00 a.m.to 12:00 p.m. at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (20 South West Temple). The Weber League will add our members to the chain and everyone is invited to attend the building of the chain of empowerment in at the museum.



Shades of Red, White, and Blue

For the second year, Weber County LWV will participate in National Voter Day Registration on September 23. We will be at numerous places to encourage the public to register to vote. Leah Murray is arranging this activity, so contact her if you are willing to help or have suggestions in regards to places to register.



Celebrate

We had so much fun last year when we went to Club Alleged; we are doing it again on Friday, September 26, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. The Club is on 25th Street and has an awesome rooftop bar. Put this on your calendar and come and socialize. Bring friends and significant others and just have fun.

National LWV News

This week, the United State League attended a special meeting on Capitol Hill conducted by Senators Mark Begich and Harry Reid concerning voting rights. We were one of a few organizations that were invited. This meeting served to remind everyone of the importance of the Voting Rights Act, not just in protecting the rights of racial and ethnic minorities, but also the rights of language minorities. During the course of the meeting, 16 senators heard from the voting rights community that fixing the Voting Rights Act was a top priority especially in advance of the upcoming federal election. On a local level, we need to continue to demand our representatives continue to make this a priority.



Disclose Act and Campaign Finance Laws

The National LWV has developed the position statement that we support the DISCLOSE Act. It has been found that in the 2012 elections, there was more than \$300 million dollars in secret contributions given. The public deserves the right to know who is supporting the candidates running for office. We will be having a meeting in January focused on campaign financing. The LWV is very supportive of disclosure, and it should be an interesting meeting.

October Meeting

On October 13 we will be having a presentation from LUPEC (Latinos United Promoting Education and Civic Engagement). This meeting has been arranged by member Azenette Garza and will help support October's Hispanic Awareness Month. It will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Pleasant Valley Library Activity Room. It also supports the recent Weber State University and Ogden College Town Initiative's concept called Diversity Connections. The LWV, along with many other groups, met with Adrienne Andrews, the director of the Weber State Unity and Diversity Center. The groups focused on specific questions related to bringing diverse groups together to work on a common goal of improving our city. The 12 groups identified in our area include: (in alphabetical order) Ability, African American, Asian, Communities of Faith, Economic diversity, Hispanic – English speaking, Hispanic – Spanish speaking, LGBT, Native American, Pacific Islanders, Seniors, and Women. Please plan on attending the meeting and learning more about this organization. It was an honor to be included in this activity.

Interesting Information on Member Eloise Runolfson

Eloise has been a member of the Weber League for a little over a year. She was raised, educated, married, and raised 3 sons in the San Francisco Bay Area. Eloise was employed as the Director of Nutritional Sciences in an Acute Care Hospital. When she retired 22 years ago, she and her husband moved to Pleasant View. Twelve years after, they moved to South Ogden to be closer to their grandchildren. They also desired a beautiful setting where they could sit back and smell the roses in their retirement years. The move to Utah was quite an adjustment from the San Francisco community, and while Eloise loves Utah, she still misses some of the more liberal things that California has to offer. She was introduced to the League by Marcia Harris, and we are delighted to have her.



State Convention

Marilyn O'Dell, Marcia Harris, and Terri McCulloch attended the state convention in Salt Lake this year. A new study was adopted on Taxation. The full scope of the study is still in the development phase, but we will have a meeting on this in March. Our own Marilyn O'Dell was one of the supporters and will be part of the committee.

Dates to Remember

September 3, 2014 - Public Forum on Local Government – 7:00 p.m. – Weber State University Shepherd Union Building – Ballroom A – Co-Sponsored by the Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics and Public Service

September 6, 2014 – Membership Meeting and Dessert Social – 11:00 a.m. at Jaycee Park – 2465 Fillmore Drive – Topic Presented is Community Policing by the Ogden City Police Department – Bring a Dessert to Share

September 23, 2014 - National Voter Registration Day

September 26, 2014 – Social at Alleged on 25th Street – 7:00 p.m.

October 13, 2014 – Presentation On LUPEC – 7:00 p.m. at Pleasant Valley Library Activity Room – Organized By Member Azenette Garza

November 10, 2014 – Consensus on Local Government Study – Details to Follow

December 12, 2014 – Holiday Social at Marcia Harris' house – 6:30 p.m. – Details to Follow

