



## **WATCHDOG**

2014 Winter Issue

### **Message From the President**

The year 2014 has begun and the Weber League keeps moving forward. I really would like to thank those members that attended the Agriculture study meeting. I found it fascinating to listen to such knowledgeable people about a subject I am not very well versed on. February's meeting will be on



the state Prison Relocation Study (PRADA). The information for this is now on the state website, which is [www.lwvutah.org](http://www.lwvutah.org). I hope we can get everyone out to help us reach consensus on this timely subject.

I am amazed over and over again by how much a small group of people can accomplish within our league: volunteer at Count My Voter tables, register voters, schedule and register high school seniors, attend meetings, keep our social media pages active, call members about meetings, write letters to the editor, serve on study committees, conduct and plan meetings; design projects that benefit voters, represent the League, and on and on. I enjoy being a part of a group of people who aren't afraid to do what needs to be done to better our community – and do it with a smile. Many thanks to all of you for all that you do.

Once again, we lost a valued member – Pat Garner. Pat served on the board for at least 8 years and was always active in the League. She was a wonderful person and such an active member of our community. I have had the pleasure of working with her for many years, and I often still think –“I'll call Pat – she will help.” Unfortunately, I then remember I can't. The League made a donation to the Weber County Library to purchase books in her name. She will be missed greatly!

I wish all members and their families a wonderful year filled with great things, family, and friends. Make it a point to share yourselves with us at meetings!



### **Legislative Briefing and Lobbying Workshop**

The Utah State League of Women Voters is partnering with the ACLU of Utah, Alliance for a Better Utah and Planned Parenthood Association of Utah to present advocacy training geared around the function of the legislature and citizen lobbying. It is on Tuesday, January 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the main Weber County Library, 2464 Jefferson, in the auditorium downstairs. Anyone interested in attending should call Anna Brower at 801-521-9862 ext. 100 or e-mail [abrower@acluutah.org](mailto:abrower@acluutah.org). Since the legislature convenes on January 27, this is a very relevant workshop to attend.



### **Important Dates to Remember**

February 10, 2014 – Consensus Meeting on the State Prison Relocation Study – 7:00 p.m. – Weber County Library Main

March 10, 2014 – Speaker on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Led by Di Allison – 7:00 p.m. – Weber County Library Main

April 14, 2014 – Annual Meeting – 6:00 p.m. – Place To Be Determined

May 14, 2014 – Member Orientation – 7:00 p.m. – Place To Be Determined



### **Summary of Consensus Questions for the Agriculture Study**

Our last meeting we worked on reaching consensus on the National Agriculture Study. The summary of our results are listed below:

- We believe that government financial support for agriculture should be directed to disaster assistance and subsidized implementation of best management practices.
- We believe that government financial support for agriculture should not be for crop insurance, local farms that supply local markets, commodity crops livestock, and dairy programs and other production methods.
- We could not reach consensus on whether government financial support for agriculture should be used for subsidized credit or specialty crops.
- We could not reach consensus on what changes the government should make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators – eliminate, update, broaden, or enforce them.
- We believe that there should be no governmental support for crop insurance.
- We believe the government should act on revising the anti-trust legislation to reduce vertical integration and also enforce the anti-trust laws relating to agriculture.
- We do not believe that the government should promote alternative marketing systems.
- We do believe that the government should transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding organizations and the health of animals, as well as apply and enforce clean air and water regulations in reference to animals or seafood facilities.
- We believe the government should require or implement programs to treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies and prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges rather than construct new facilities.
- We believe the government should fund the following: basic research, independent third party risk assessments of products, research on the impacts of new technologies, research that advances diversified and sustainable agriculture systems, seed banking, genetic diversity, new product research, research long term effects of new crops, products, and processes, and develop new programs to promote conservation.

- We believe the government should perform or fund the following: enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and additives, require developers to monitor all food products once released to the market, withdraw government marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe, require post-market research of approved pharmaceutical applications, require developers to provide data to third parties for pre- and post-market safety research, limit the use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease, fund independent third party group research, promote crop management procedures that decrease the use of chemicals, and fund, train, and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions.
- We believe that nutrition facts on food labels for information and consumer education, allergy information, and health and ingredient claims that are understandable are sufficient as they are.
- We believe the government should define health and safety marketing terms and require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the material.
- We do not believe that the government should regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising.
- We believe the government should require labels to identify food with ingredients developed using new technology and indicate whether the item does not contain ingredients developed using new technology.
- We could not reach consensus on whether the federal government should require labels on meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products that are from animals that have consumed feed developed using new technology indicating what new technology was used.

### **National Convention and Policy Setting**

The National Convention is in Dallas, Texas on June 6 – 10. The National League sets policies and program plans at that time. The main goals for setting priorities to guide the LWV advocacy programs are to:

- Enhance the League's effectiveness by concentrating resources on priority issues
- Build the League's credibility and visibility by projecting a focused and consistent image
- Ensure that the League has sufficient issue and political expertise to act knowledgeably
- Enable the League to manage resources effectively in setting legislative priorities
- Identify opportunities for the League to make an impact
- Represent the interest of members
- Follow the suggestions made at convention or council for program

If anyone would like to suggest some possible policies or programs for the National League to consider at National Convention, please let Terri McCulloch know and she will get them to the appropriate person. The National League wouldn't be as effective if it weren't for the state leagues, so our opinion is important.

**SEE YOU AT THE MEETING IN FEBRUARY**

