



WATCHDOG

Message From The President

It is hard to believe that the year is half way over for the League. We have been busy and the turnout to activities has been excellent. Many thanks to Evelyn Bertilson for arranging for our speaker for the membership potluck. Dr. Jeff Stephens, Weber County Schools Superintendent, was a superb speaker and presented great information for us to think about. During September we took on the National Study on the Federal Government's Role in public education. Evelyn Bertilson, Heather Hill, and Lou Shurtliff guided us through the material for the study, and we reached consensus. I appreciate their time and energy in helping us show the National League we are involved. We also sponsored a mayoral debate in October. Even though we had a hard time getting any publicity, it turned out to be very informative and interesting. I want to thank Leah Murray for moderating this activity. In November, Pat Pearce arranged for us to have a presentation by Mr. Chris Dallin on the Northern Utah Chamber Coalition. It was interesting to learn that this group is working for our behalf and by joining together, has a larger impact in the legislature.

All of these activities were supported well by members and guests, and I am thankful for this support. Please set a resolution this year that you will come to at least one of the meetings we have planned in January, February, March, and April. Once you get there, you will be glad you did. I also encourage you to bring any friends that might be interested in the topic.

As the holidays approach, I want to take a moment to thank the members of this organization for the support and help you have given to me. It is amazing what everyone is willing to do to keep our group functioning, and I appreciate it more than you will ever know. As we don't have any meetings scheduled for December, I would like to take the time now to wish you all a wonderful holiday season. Please take time to enjoy and above all, be safe!

January and February Meetings

For the January and February meetings, we are participating in reaching consensus on the National Privatization Study. The articles that we will use to reach consensus are short and can be accessed on the national website. Go to lww.org, click on the For Members tab, go to Projects and Programs on the list on the left, click Privatization Study under Taskforces/Studies, click get informed under the heading Background Paper and you will find the papers we will use. When we send out the reminder notice, we will let you know which ones we will cover in each meeting. The articles should be out by the end of December.

Membership Dues

We ask for your help in making sure your membership dues are in within the next few weeks. It really helps to keep the national database up-to-date. They are \$45 and should be sent to Evelyn Bertilson at 1047 East 5675 South, Ogden UT 84405. Thanks in advance for your help with this.

Results of Consensus on the Federal Government's Role in Public Education

We determined that we feel that the role of the federal government in public education is "about right" and that a quality public education is very important. The federal government should act to make sure that this is the case in every state but not micromanage each state's policies. Common core standards should be developed on a federal level but not mandated in order to receive any federal funding. We do not believe that special programs sponsored by the federal government should be mandated to any state, but we agree that programs should be available should states wish to participate. There should be a national assessment aligned with common core standards available for any state that wishes to use it to evaluate meeting objectives. The federal government should have a national curriculum that is available for use but is not mandated. The federal government should inform school districts of how their students compare to students similar to theirs. We also believe that funding for federal programs should be non-competitive for states and schools who meet the basic requirements of qualifying for the funds. If a program is mandated, we strongly

believe it has to be funded prior to expecting any school or state to implement it. We want equitable access to high quality teaching/learning, adequate and current learning materials, and clean and well maintained physical facilities. It is our strong feeling that the federal government should provide a supportive role and not force mandates.

How To Track a Bill in the Legislature

Jenica Jacobsen has provided us with the following information on how to track a bill in the legislature. We each get daily updates from the legislature in our e-mail from the State LWV. I will e-mail you in a separate e-mail the steps she identified so you can see an example of the procedure as well. I want to thank Jenica for this information.

Sign the Utah Compact Anniversary

By Marilyn O'Dell, LWVU Co-President

A year ago a short document, the Utah Compact, was written and publicized with the aim of influencing the policy discussion on immigration reform and treatment of illegal immigrants. The League of Women Voters of Utah signed on as supporters. The Utah Compact includes statements on federal primacy, law enforcement, families, the economy and free society. Since then laws in Arizona, Alabama and Georgia show that the principles set out in the Compact are even more relevant than they were a year ago. The United States is still in dire need of reasonable, compassionate and prudent reform of our immigration laws. Authors of the Compact have asked supporters to renew their support by asking friends and family to read and sign the Compact <http://www.theutahcompact.com/> and by contacting members of Congress and asking them to support it.

DATES TO REMEMBER

NOW –Pay dues to Evelyn Bertilson

January 9, 2011 - Meeting on National Privatization Study – 7:00 p.m. – Weber County Main Library

February 13, 2011 – Meeting on National Privatization Study – 7:00 p.m. – Weber County Main Library

March 12, 2011 – Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Weber County Main Library – topic to be determined – probably an Ogden School District Board Member