



Denver **VOTER**

League of Women Voters of Denver

September 2009

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Co-President's Column

Greetings!

September marks the start of League's Program Year, and a busy and informative one it will be!

Our Kick-Off Meeting speaker on September 15 will be Mayor John Hickenlooper. Please bring guests and questions to ask. Among the topics I can think of are: the new zoning code, the personnel and other cutbacks to meet a shrinking income flow, and plans for next summer's six week Celebration of the Americas.

Programs this fall will include having Ed Scholz, Denver's budget director, speak about the city's financial situation. Also, the Legislative Action Co-Chairs are planning a pre-legislative briefing in mid-November focusing on interim legislative committees that have met over the summer. This is planned to be a lunchtime event.

Our non-event Education Fund solicitation was very successful. A great deal of thanks goes to Bobbie Heisterkamp for designing the cover and Katherine Marshall and Katy Burley for helping to keep the event in the forefront of our thinking. Look for a separate article about the results of our efforts.

The office has been busy. Katy Burley has volunteered to help Erika with office tasks, and this is a huge help. Look for your roster later in September. Just producing that booklet is a huge job. If you have any changes or additions to your roster information, get them to Erika ASAP.



**Kick-Off Meeting
for Members and Guests
with his Honor
Mayor John W.
Hickenlooper**

**Tuesday, September 15, 5:45 p.m.
Fellowship Hall
Montview Presbyterian Church
1980 Dahlia Street**

Our Education Fund board elected a new slate of officers: Co-Presidents, Buzzy Hassrick and Nancy Ulrich; Vice President, Cyndi Kahn; Secretary, Cindy Sestrich; and Treasurer, Casey Davenhill. Casey will be working on budget building with Gordon Butz who will chair the budget-building session.

Please participate with either the City Issues Committee or the City Corps. Our presence at meetings is being noticed by City Council members and opening up areas for dialogue with them. There are a number of important issues facing Denver, not the least of which is how to close the budget gap.

Volunteer when you can! Helping hands are always needed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy". The signature is written in a dark ink on a light background.

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Kick-Off Meeting with Mayor John W. Hickenlooper

Tuesday, September 15
 5:45 p.m.

Fellowship Hall
 Montview Presbyterian Church

We are so pleased that Mayor Hickenlooper has agreed to help us “kick off” our League year by being the keynote speaker on Tuesday, September 15, in the Fellowship Hall on the lower level at Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church. We have encouraged him to talk about the budget issues, the new zoning plan, and the city’s environmental efforts, among other topics. There will be plenty of time for questions from the audience.

The evening begins with light refreshments at 5:45 p.m., the program beginning at 6:30. Please invite guests as we will have plenty of room, and this first meeting is a great way to see what League is all about. See you on September 15.

Marty Sloven
1st Vice President

Visions of the City, 2009 Keep Your Fancy Clothes in the Closet and Raise Money for the Education Fund

Since 1993, the Denver League of Women Voters hosted the Visions of the City annual fundraising event to benefit the Denver League of Women Voters Education Fund. This year, in light of the economic downturn and the effect on fundraising efforts by many non-profits around the country, our Visions of the City Committee opted to host a non-event fundraiser.



Our analysis included conversations with many non-profits that actually lost money on their events this year or were cancelled entirely. The committee also reviewed fiscal scenarios such as hosting the traditional dinner, a cocktail party or a simple speaking engagement with Mayor Hickenlooper. All three proved to be financially risky for the Education Fund’s budget. With that information, we decided to host a non-event, in which we invited you to keep your fancy clothes in the closet, and simply make a cash donation instead.

Therefore, it is with great excitement to announce that the Visions of the City non-event earned just over \$23, 000 with donations from our members, family and friends, and with generous corporate contributions from Wells Fargo and CoBiz banks. We thank each of you for your donations ranging from \$10 to \$5,000. If you’d still like to make a donation, it is not too late! Please mail it to the League office. We look forward to a brighter economy next year, so we can re-instate the annual fundraising dinner.

Katy L. Burley
Visions of the City Co-Chair

City Issues Committee

Budget issues are prominent as the City and County of Denver works to close a \$120 million budget deficit over the next 18 months. The Denver League's City Issues Committee is watching discussions and decisions and will report in to us at the October 19, 9:30 a.m. briefing. The committee has lined up Denver City Budget Director Ed Scholz to discuss the budget and answer questions. The 2010 budget will be finalized by the time of the briefing and impacts to departments and services will be laid out. The briefing will aim to describe the budget solutions and identify which ones are temporary until the revenue situation improves and which ones may be long-term or permanent.

In the meantime, key opportunities exist to provide input through tools like the recent survey sent out by the Mayor's office. As the City Council and especially its Finance Committee address budget options as they develop, the Denver League's City Corps group (see accompanying article on this group, which meets separately) is attending City Council meetings to keep League abreast of the issues.

The City Issues Committee is meeting on selected Thursdays at 9:30 a.m., with the Zoning Subcommittee utilizing the first portion of the meeting. If you are interested in participating in the lively interchange at these meetings, or wish to be kept informed by email, please contact me or call the League office.

Carol Pace
LWVD City Issues Committee Chair

New Zoning Code Briefing Monday, October 5 5:30 p.m.

The city's Zoning Task Force, with the input of many citizens and civic groups, has worked for four years on a completely new code. The code is written to reflect the principles of Blueprint Denver. It is the first major revision in over 50 years and will shape the development and quality of the city for the next 50 years. Many of you have attended the meetings that present the map and concepts that affect your own neighborhood. City Council plans to vote on its adoption in late fall or early winter.

On October 5 we will have a review of the new Denver Zoning Code with a panel of speakers to present the thinking behind the development of the new code. Zoning is not always the most fascinating topic, but we think you will grasp why it is so important to the life of the city. Representatives of a number of community interest groups will be included. We hope to convey something about what this city will look like in a decade or two under this plan.

Please plan on attending. We promise you will learn something!

Zoning Sub-Committee
City Issues

Want to learn more about the zoning changes before the briefing? Visit the city's project website at www.NewCodeDenver.gov.

Take Action on Health Care Reform

The League position on health care reform, adopted in 1993, favored universal health care to be provided through a national insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums, commonly known as the "single payer" approach. Because the position acknowledged that this change might have to happen in phases and that an employer-based system providing universal access would be acceptable, the League has been working hard urging Congress to pass comprehensive health care legislation.

We can do our part. Contact your senator and representative, telling them that the current health care system is endangering both our economy and our health, and that business as usual is not an option. Ask them to support basic, affordable health care for everyone.

Bev Bridges and Sharon Hartman
Health Committee Co-Chairs

City Corps – What's That?

Good question. One which a group of stalwart Leaguers* have enjoyed sleuthing the answer to this summer.

“City Corps” is the new name for the old “Observer Corps.” The Observer Corps attended City Council, school district and Ethics Committee meetings. It was a valuable part of the Denver League, but it was difficult to sustain. Hence, the new City Corps Task Force aspires to find a way to sustain the process of observing important city meetings in order to bring information about city government back to LWVD; to build a fluid team that can be responsive to opportunities for action on issues of League concern; to make direct contact with City Council members; to raise awareness of LWVD; and to bring additional citizen accountability to city government.

This summer, always in teams of two and wearing their Denver League buttons, we attended seven City Council meetings and six mayor/council meetings. Mid-July, we shared our impressions with each other -- what we learned and saw and the things we didn't understand. At one meeting, the team noted: “We were very impressed by council's commitment to neighborhood participation in a meeting in June in which it considered the development on the former site of University Hospital, and their recognition of more than 300 community meetings in the redesign of the site and decisions made regarding historic preservation.” In July, in keeping with the exploratory nature of our summer work, members decided to attend

mayor-council meetings for awhile instead of council meetings.

Some of us also explored parts of the City Charter, received the City Council calendar each week, talked to our councilpersons about our activities, and talked to the Mayor, thanking him for speaking at our Kick-Off meeting. We fed observations and information to the League co-presidents, the Program Area Committee, and the City Issues Committee. We are beginning to understand more about City Council. We've made new friends, shared rides, never stayed out past 9 o'clock and balanced the tedium of long meetings with good company and the knowledge that the Denver League was in touch with the pressing concerns of the city at a time when city issues are brimming.

Sound fun? That's as much the point as anything. We'd love to have you join us, for one council meeting or for more. We'll start by assigning you a specific meeting, a specific date and a more experienced Leaguer to go with. Give Barbara Ford a call.

Barbara Ford

City Corps

* Barbara Ford, Buzzy Hassrick, Erika Paterson, Nancy Ulrich, Carol Tone, Tracey Bedford, Jackie Long, Betsy Kester, Sue Taha, Cindy Sestrich, Mary Werner, Carol Lassen

Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation's 14th Annual Dollar Dictionary Drive

A Dictionary and Thesaurus of their own for every Third Grade Student in Denver Public Schools

Dear League Members,

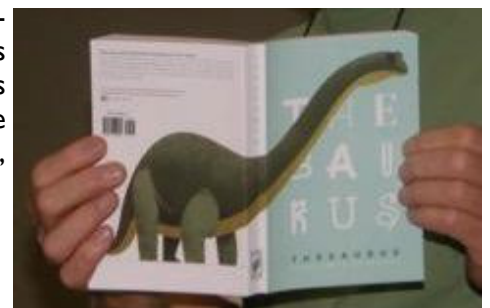
Thank you for your continuing support of INC's favorite project. This year 6,500 third graders will be receiving both the expanded dictionary and a newly published thesaurus. The dictionary includes the U.S. Constitution, presidential biographies and many other useful reference materials for students. The cover of the thesaurus pictures a dinosaur because every third grader knows thesaurus sounds like a dinosaur.

Since 1996 almost 105,000 students in Denver have received these valuable learning tools. The students, teachers and principals are always eager to receive both the dictionary and thesaurus. If you would like to help distribute books to the students at a school, please contact Nancy Ulrich for more information.

Each year the money for the books comes from many community organizations and individuals. Additional funds are still needed to pay for this year's books. The generosity of the League has been greatly appreciated in helping us reach our fundraising goals. All donations are tax deductible. Tax deductible donations can be sent to INC Dollar Dictionary Drive, P.O. Box 181009, Denver, CO 80218

Cathee Fisher

INC



An Interview with Elma Hairston, Board Member and New Membership Chair



VOTER: Where did you grow up?

Elma: I grew up in High Point, North Carolina.

V: What brought you to Denver?

E: I came to Denver some twenty years ago as the wife of an IBM executive. We relocated from Cincinnati, Ohio, for career purposes.

V: How do you spend your days?

E: I spend my days primarily working for Johnson & Johnson in Sales/Marketing -- educating physicians, hospitals and pharmacies on treating patients, as efficiently and cost effectively as possible, based on clinical outcomes.

After work, I am busy making a difference in the lives of others in my community, from mentoring girls and women, to serving my church or writing my Political Leadership Platform as part of the Colorado Political Leadership 2009 Fellowship or writing letters to the Editor about an issue pressing on my mind. A recent article is featured in the August 2009 edition of Body of Christ News.

V: How did you learn about the League?

E: Laurie Segall invited me to a kick-off breakfast meeting about two years ago and invited me to serve on the Visions of the City Committee.

V: What plans or goals do you have for membership?

E: My goal for membership is to educate all communities, including under-represented communities, about the benefits of becoming a member of the League, ensuring that the League is an inclusive organization, which is open to both men and women. The League is a great place to stay abreast of legislation which affects us all. I would also like to make sure that our youth are informed about the League. Creating partnerships with other organizations in our education outreach would also be beneficial to all.

V: In what other organizations are you active?

E: 2009 Colorado Political Leaders Fellowship; 2007 Colorado Sisterhood Crusade "Heart of Humility" Award; 2006 Salute to Black Woman Award (National Council of Negro Women – Denver Section); Executive Board, National Council of Negro Women; Past President, Women's Department, King Baptist Church, Denver; President, graduate Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Beta Rho Sigma Alumnae Chapter.

V: What would be your dream vacation?

E: I would like to spend a month in Hawaii and complete my book.

V: What do you dream of doing in retirement?

E: When I retire I would like to become more active in the political arena and manage my 501C(3), Dynamic Images®, as my life's work. Dynamic Images is a consulting company whose mission is to motivate groups and individuals to a more professional presentation in the business, social and political arena.

Wanted: Webmaster

Revamping the LWVD Website is the project of a League committee that hopes to complete its work before fall. Since the next – and equally as important – task will involve ensuring timely content, we're looking for a volunteer to fill that role, to act as our webmaster (or mistress). While our office manager Erika Paterson will help with Web work, we want to designate someone to act as gatekeeper.

Meanwhile, we're organizing the site and drafting copy with an aim toward simplicity and clarity along with professionalism. We're also making the new site more user-friendly, enabling visitors to join and/or donate online.

To anyone interested in being our webmaster, please contact me (buzzydh@msn.com).

Buzzy Hassrick

LWVD Web Committee Chair

The Charles Falkenberg Family Citizenship Award 2009

This award is dedicated to the Charles Falkenberg family. Charles Falkenberg, his wife Leslie Whittington, and their two small children were on American Airlines Flight 77 when it was flown into the Pentagon building on September 11, 2001. Both Charles and Leslie were graduates of Denver Public Schools, and Charles' mother, Janis Falkenberg, is a long-time member of the League of Women Voters of Denver.

The award is given each year to one senior from each of Denver's high schools who exemplifies good citizenship and school community participation. The recipients are nominated by their teachers, counselors or other school officials. We thank Bobbie Heisterkamp for all the work she does on this project each year.

This year's recipients are:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Anali Mendez Garcia | Abraham Lincoln High School |
| Marley Pierce | East High School |
| Albert Vigil | C.E.C. College of Denver |
| Yadira Solis | George Washington High School |
| Kendall Robertson | Montbello High School |
| Julia Puckett | Thomas Jefferson High School |
| Cassandra Ware | West High School |

(Denver School of the Arts, John F. Kennedy High School, North High School, and South High School did not participate this year.)

September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- 7 LWVD office closed for Labor Day
- 8 LWVD board meeting, 3:30 p.m.
- 14 City Issues Committee Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 15 Kick-Off Meeting, 5:45 p.m.

Save the Date! Legislative Preview

Monday, November 16
Noon to 1:30 p.m.
Montview Presbyterian Church

State legislators will report on interim committee studies on long-term fiscal stability, Pinnacle Insurance, the financing of public schools, and potential legislation for the 2010 Colorado legislative session. Boxed lunches will be available for purchase with pre-registration. Look for registration information in the October VOTER.

Sally Augden
Legislative Action Co-Chair

September Unit Meetings

As we go to press, it is too early for most units to be sure of their September schedules, but look in this spot in the next VOTER for this unit information.

Savvy Leaguers donate to the Education Fund and attend informative meetings.

Members, offer this application to friends and neighbors.

League of Women Voters of Denver
 1980 Dahlia Street
 Denver, CO 80220-1239

JOIN LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

NOT FOR WOMEN ONLY!

Name(s) _____ E-mail _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
 Phone (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____

- ANNUAL DUES:
- Regular member \$60.00
 - Two residing at same address..... \$90.00
 - Sustaining member \$120.00
 - Two sustaining members at same address \$185.00
 - Student \$25.00

CONTRIBUTIONS:

- To LWV Denver \$ _____
- To Dues Assistance Fund \$ _____

Make check payable to LWV Denver. (Dues are not tax-deductible. Tax-deductible contributions may be made by separate check to LWV/D Education Fund.)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Summer Board Highlights

- Board members attended a half-day retreat in June to get to know each other, receive an orientation to the League, and envision the future. They also discussed and updated the Denver League Strategic Plan.
- The first board meeting of the League year was held in August.
 - Each area of the board (organization, program, and communication) reported on continuing activities.
 - Nancy Ulrich, Bobby Holleman, and Jackie Long reported on an extremely helpful LWVCO Leadership Retreat.
 - Sally Augden and Beth Kieft volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee.
- Please feel free to attend any Board meeting – they are open to all membership. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month in the League office.

Grocery Cards

King Soopers, Safeway and Sunflower Market grocery cards are available for purchase in the League office during office hours and at all evening meetings. Let's try to start the year with a bang at the Kick-Off event—come planning to stock up on your choice of cards.



Buzzy Hassrick and Nancy Ulrich lead the Summer Board Retreat.



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League Meetings Quite Accessible

You may have noticed a new ramp on the Dahlia side of Montview Presbyterian Church; however, the ramp leads to a platform riser, more appropriate for wheelchair access. If you have trouble handling stairs these days, but are not in a wheelchair, there is a handicapped entrance into the church from the Eudora Street side of the building. The door is always open and comes right into the main entrance of the building. It is a little tricky to see from Eudora until you are there because it really doesn't look like an entrance. It is south of the first entrance from Eudora, between the two parts of the building at the wrought iron fence. Once you are in the building, go around the hallway to the right and immediately into the McCollum Room, or take the elevator to the Fellowship Hall on the first level or the third level to our office. With this easy access, meetings at the Montview Church should, we hope, attract more attendance.