



League of Women Voters of Montezuma County

VOTER

Montezuma County, Colorado

www.lwvmontezuma.org Total Membership: 26

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, promotes informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, April 6

Cortez City Council Election

Monday, April 12

Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, April 15

Candidate Forum for Cortez Fire District and MCHD Elections, Cortez City Council Chamber 7:00 pm

Thur-Fri, April 22-23

LWV Booth at Teen Maze

Saturday, April 24

Great Decisions Discussion Group, Dolores Library, 10:30 a. 2010 topics to be discussed.

Monday, April 26

Great Decisions Discussion Group, Mancos Library, 10:30 a. 2009 topics to be discussed.

Join the League!

Anyone of voting age may join the League. Discounted household memberships are available. Call Betty Janes at 533-1051 for more information

President's Message

Finally, the snow is melting in the fields and crocuses and daffodils are showing their spring faces! Signs of renewal and longer days are energizing. Good thing, too, as an abundance of opportunities for Leaguers exists and calls out for our services. It's hard to keep the list short. I do what I can, attempting to prioritize well my time. Do the same for yourself, too! Enjoy spring! It's exciting to watch the birds any time of the year but especially during early spring. The hawks seem to enjoy the thermals and winds of the season. What a thrill to watch a Bald or Golden eagle soar out of sight!

Betty Janes and I have participated in the Colorado Membership Recruiting Initiative Training by national that has been facilitated by LWVCO Membership VP, Lineah Davey. The training has been web based and excellent. Betty and I are ready to share it with the rest of the members. We've learned that we have been doing much of what is recommended, but not following up well with the "ASK" action which all of us have a responsibility in growing the League. Many residents of our area would be excellent League members.

We've had community visibility this month by holding two candidate forums, one that was televised. We finalized and sent to EPA's head Lisa Jackson our proposal for a senior level position that would report and represent to EPAUS the Four Corners region. The position would not have oversight but would represent the area more holistically to the three EPA regions that do have the oversight responsibility. Eric Janes' excellent op ed piece about the proposal appeared in the Cortez Journal.

In addition, Eleanor Kuhl's op ed was published in the Cortez Journal supporting government transparency and "Sunshine Week" demonstrating how important such is to the League and our continuing advocacy of open government.

I thank Marge Fisch, LWVCO Director, for her gentle push to involve our League in the Census 2010 outreach program. I had initially

told her we didn't have the resources to commit to helping, but Marge with her subtle persuasion convinced me that our League would really miss out if we didn't sign on the dotted line! We received a grant of \$2900 to purchase the bright green shopping bags with our League logo. I think the visibility of the bags will help to market the Census 2010 slogans as well as giving our League visibility.

The Nominating Committee is actively recruiting officers and Board members. Consider stepping up and become a Board member. LWV leadership will be a rewarding volunteer experience for you. You can't trip, and it's important to spread the experience among our members. Attending the LWVCO Leadership Retreat is a great way to initiate the step. Share the drive and experience with me!

At our March 8, general meeting our League concurred with the LWVCO Sustainability Principles Statement after good discussion facilitated by new member Rebecca Samulski. Thanks, Rebecca!

Be a watchdog regarding Colorado health care legislation via the very informative legislative newsletters that the LAC (Legislative Action Committee publishes twice a month and via the state web site. contact your representative

The two Great Decisions groups we initiated are going well. Consider joining the interesting groups discussing very relevant topics. See calendar and our website for more information about meeting times for the groups.

Because we are holding a candidate forum, are participating in Teen Maze and our Annual Meeting will be held in early May, we are not having an additional general meeting in April.

— *Jodi Foran*

Montezuma County Hospital District Mill Levy Election

As you know when our League studied local health care four to five years ago we learned that there are two legal entities that together provide health care services for our local

area. The Montezuma County Hospital District (MCHD) is the taxing district and property owner of the hospital. It is a non-profit public entity. The second organization Southwest Health Systems (SHS) actually leases the hospital from MCHD and operates the hospital and other entities (Rural Health Clinic, Crossroads Orthopedic and Cortez Family Clinic). SHS is a private non-profit corporation.

The MDHD taxing district is seeking to raise the mill levy rate – first time ever since it was organized in 1974. The LWVMZC Board and members at the March 8 meetings voted to support the mill levy increase. We encourage our members and the public to vote “yes” for both the mill increase and debrucing. More information is on [our website](#) as well as [here](#).

Health Care Reform Updates

Can we breathe more easily now? Well, at least the passage of the health care reform is a beginning and is law. What a ride it has been! Despite the attacks that won't go away we have witnessed political courage and rational thinking. President Obama's signing of the bill is a historic event for which many have worked hard to achieve.

Some provisions of HR 4872 will happen immediately, some will be phased in over a number of years. Despite what you may have heard, Medicare *benefits* will not be cut. The “doughnut hole” of Medicare Part D will begin to be closed. Long-term care will be more easily available. Small business owners will get tax breaks. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance from an “exchange” which will give them access to a much wider range of options than is currently available to any one person. There is so much that is an improvement over what we have had to deal with for so many years.

The Kaiser Foundation has developed a very good timeline for what's in the bill and when it will be implemented, and there is a good 9-

page overview of the bill itself. For both of these, go to the Kaiser <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8061.pdf>

The **LWVUS Health Care Task Force** has concluded its work. A final background article on the Veteran's Administration system will be posted shortly on the website. If you have not recently viewed, the four Voter ready articles or six background articles prepared by the Task Force link to: http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Health_Care1

Additionally, the LWVUS Health Care Task Force has issued another ‘white paper’ called *Health Care Information Technology: A Key to Quality and Cost Issues*. Find it on LWVUS website at

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=15150>

While we continue to lobby for reform at the national level, we focus attention on our state Legislature. Several bills would contribute to improving access and affordability and controlling costs here in Colorado. Read the Legislative Letter for summaries and updates on the bills or check out the Legislative website.

<http://www.leg.state.co.us/Clics/clics2010a/csl.nsf/Search?OpenFrameSet>

We will continue to work for health care reform.

FRAC Act (Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals)

Leagues across the country have been asked to contact U.S. Senators and Representatives and urge their support of the FRAC Act. In the House Colorado Rep. Diana DeGette, (D), sponsors it. The Act would amend the Safe Drinking Water Act, to allow for federal jurisdiction of hydraulic fracturing used to force natural gas deposits from shale rock formations. It would also require full disclosure of hydraulic fracturing chemicals, which include known carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, and other toxins. The Pennsylvania League is currently conducting a study of environmental, social and economic impact of Marcellus shale natural gas extraction in their state. "Fracking", used in Pennsylvania, uses millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals to blast into wells to fracture the shale and release natural gas. Some of the water comes back up the well. It is five times saltier than seawater and filled with dissolved solids such as sulfates and chlorides, which cannot be removed by conventional sewage and drinking water treatment plants. If the recovered water gets into water sources, it can kill fish and give tap water a foul taste and odor. Garfield County Colorado has had to deal with contaminated water coming from hydro-fracking.

Industry and environmentalists have been divided on hydraulic fracturing and its potential to contaminate drinking-water supplies. Presently, companies also are not required to publicly disclose the chemicals in their fracturing fluids.

The Tompkins County New York League has submitted a position that includes fracking to LWVUS for consideration at the National Convention in June. At the March 8 meeting, the Montezuma County League of Women Voters Board voted to submit a

recommendation to the LWVUS Convention Delegates that a national study of gas exploration and drilling be initiated.

LWVUS Natural Resources Position in part: Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest. Natural Resources: Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Environmental Protection and Pollution Control: Preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment. • Water Resources - Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

The Environmental Protection Agency announced this month it plans to conduct an in-depth study of the potential effects of hydraulic fracturing on drinking-water supplies. A scientific advisory board, appointed by the EPA administrator, will meet next week to make recommendations to the agency about the design of the study. Congress has appropriated nearly \$2 million study, which is expected to be complete in 2012. A 2004 EPA study on fracturing relied exclusively on existing research, found no significant threat to drinking water, and led Congress to exempt it from federal legislation under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

So far, Democratic Sens. Mark Udall and Michael Bennet and U.S. Rep. John Salazar, D-Manassa, have not signed on as co-sponsors for the bill.

Sustainability Concurrence

There was good discussion facilitated by member Rebecca Samulski at the general meeting March 8. Rebecca kept the discussion on target and the group reached consensus on concurrence with the LWVCO

sustainability Principles Statement. If there is concurrence with other state Leagues, the statement will be added to the LWVCO Program for Study and Action book. Thanks, Rebecca for keeping the group discussion focused!

How Sustainability Fits Into Our Positions

By LWVCO Sustainability Committee

The following statement is from the LWVCO Sustainability Committee and is important for League members to identify with. It is presented here for those unable to attend the March 8 discussion and for those who did participate. In such a short time, it was impossible for a full discussion that encompasses much of what is mentioned below.

— **Jodi**

It is important to understand exactly what **Sustainability** means with regards to the three areas of League of Women Voters positions. What is *Sustainable Government*? What is *Sustainable Social Policy*? What is *Sustainable Natural Resources*? How does it all fit together?

Sustainable Government:

League's Government positions include stands on Apportionment, Campaign Finance, the General Assembly, the Justice System, School Finance, and Voting Rights. Our democratic government rests on these foundations and others that we have studied and decidedly belong in our Program for Study and Action. They are the backbone of our organization when we take action and declare our support or opposition on legislative or ballot issues. If our government is not representative of its people, responsive to its citizens, equitable and flexible, protective of the right to vote, transparent and open to its citizens, or does not provide equal access to public education and equal

opportunity for all then we do not have a sustainable government.

If our government is accessible only to a few powerful and wealthy entities, does not look to the needs of its people and does not represent the people of our country then we do not have a democracy. We must guard these rights for all the people of our country to maintain a sustainable government that is based on our Constitution of equality. So LWV positions fit into a definition of sustainability because we are maintaining these rights for ourselves as well as preserving them for future generations.

Sustainable Social Policy:

Similarly, League Social Policy positions include stands on Children's Support Systems, Education, Equality of Opportunity, Health Care, Housing and Income Assistance. If the citizens of our country and state do not have access to quality education, quality health care, adequate housing, equal opportunity and protection from discrimination then we will not have a sustainable society. We will not be able to maintain a society of educated, healthy, and productive people for now and the future if we do not protect these rights through our positions.

Sustainable Natural Resources:

Natural Resources is the one area most of us can relate to sustainability and it is probably the most tangible piece of the sustainability pie, the one we have heard about the most and perhaps are doing the most about to *be* sustainable. Our positions on Air Quality, Energy, Water, Environmental Planning and Management, Land Use and more may already include the word *sustainable* or at least *planning*, *preserving*, etc. We understand that if we do not sustain our natural environment we will not succeed in preserving ourselves much less our future generations.

How Does It All Fit Together?

Sustainability is an overarching philosophy we should consider when contemplating action on our positions. It is important to look at legislation, ballot issues and other actions League takes a stand on to see if the result of the legislation, ballot issue or other action is sustainable today or furthers sustainability for tomorrow.

Does the sustainability of a governmental issue conflict with the ability of a Social or Natural Resource policy to be sustainable? For example, Social Policy frequently requires that many sides of the legislation come together to form a bill that can succeed to passage: Is the financing available— who may have to pay more or receive less? Who is backing this bill? Who benefits? Or a Natural Resource bill: Who wants the legislation—a special interest group that will benefit to the detriment of other groups? What happens to an energy plant upstream that may need to release warm water into a cool mountain stream if an environment policy is enacted that forbids this? Who pays for the company to “fix” things? Can the company sustain itself if the cost is too high? Or does the stream suffer if the company can persuade the legislature to kill the bill? Is the stream now unsustainable for the future? Government, Social Policy and Natural Resources can all come into play when legislation is considered in the State House and perhaps, all in one bill. Is the final result sustainable for all those who are affected—the business, the stream, the jobs created or lost, the water people drink or the fish swim in? The current debate on Health Care is a good example of how sustainability is or is not being considered. Who are the active participants in the debate and why? Are the people being represented? Is the process transparent? Is the financing sustainable? Who is going to get covered—everyone equally, some, those with money? Is our health care sustainable—now or in the future? By adding a definition to the Principles of the League of Women Voters of

Colorado, the principle of Sustainability will become something to be considered when action is contemplated on legislation, ballot issues, or other action items by the League. Discussion

Leadership Retreat June 25-26

Jodi Foran is driving to Leadership Retreat June 25-26 in Frisco, Colorado. Last year's Leadership was a most valuable League meeting. Very few state Leagues offer this worthwhile experience. Please let's have at least two additional people from our League carpool with Jodi for a day of fun and networking.

There will be an emphasis on learning proven League recruiting tactics and on gaining more visibility in the community. In addition, we will focus on the “how-to” guidelines of Voters Service activities. 2010 will be a big election year, and Leagues usually gain members as the public hears from us about election issues and as we hold candidate forums.

This is a great opportunity for new League members to learn about League processes. The Holiday Inn in Frisco, off I-70, will be the location of the Retreat from Friday noon through Saturday until about 2:00 p.m. You will meet Leaguers from across the state, ask questions of LWVCO Board members, and learn from local Leaguers who have “been there, done that”. The only cost is \$75 as The LWVCO Education Fund sponsors most of the cost and our league covers the rest. This price includes your shared room, three meals, all materials, and expert advice! What a bargain for a change of scenery and a very fast paced and well-organized meeting! Additionally the drive is beautiful.

Teen Maze

Thursday and Friday, April 22 – 23 our League will be helping again with Teen Maze, a unique educational experience for middle school students who travel from as far as Silverton to attend the event held at the Montezuma County Fairgrounds. The League sets up and staffs a room in the maze where the teen participants use ballots to take pre- and post tests that will indicate changes in attitudes resulting from their participation in the Teen Maze experience. Teen Maze provides experiential learning regarding life decisions that will have major impact on a person. The Teen Maze journeys that participants can experience include smoking, pregnancy, law enforcement, nutrition counseling, etc. Participating in the League Teen Maze booth is a unique experience for adults, too, as anyone who has helped will tell you. **Please consider volunteering a couple of hours of your time to help with the LWV booth. You can do so by phoning Judy Schuenemeyer at 565-0179.**

2010 Colorado Renewable Energy Conference

“Clean Energy: Let’s Get to Work”

The Delta Montrose Electric Association is sponsoring the conference with the above theme. The Colorado Renewable Energy Society (CRES) will hold their state conference at the Montrose Pavilion June 18-20.

CRES is a nonprofit organization that works to increase awareness of the economic and environmental benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. Exact presentations and exhibitors will be announced closer to the event. For more information [click here](#) or go to [our website](#).

Annual Meeting May 8

Circle Saturday, May 8, 9:30 AM on your calendar as the date we will hold our League’s annual business meeting at the Ponderosa Restaurant in Dolores. Ashton Harrison, Montezuma County Administrator will be our featured speaker. During the business portion, the membership will elect officers, vote to approve the annual budget and proposed program, (strategic programs/which issues to study, advocate). If members read the specific materials that will be emailed prior to the meeting, the business portion will be over quickly. Let’s not make it all business, but a time to gather in friendship and celebration.

Call for Voter Services Volunteers

The LWVMZC Voter Services team invites members to help with Voter Services projects. Even if you are not able to make a longer-term commitment as a member of the team, you can make a valuable contribution just by helping out with a one-time task. We’ve held two candidate forums this year and will be holding at least three more - for the Cortez Fire Protection District and primary and general elections. Additionally, we’ll be speaking to various groups about 2010 Ballot Issues in October. If you are interested in helping, please contact Jodi Foran at 882-2401.

Cortez City Council Candidate Forum

Our League held a Cortez City Council Candidate Forum for Cortez voters on Thursday March 25 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Council Chambers. The moderator, LWV member Judy Schuenemeyer, opened the forum by welcoming the participants and the audience of about thirty-five and set the ground rules for the discussions, whereupon

the participants gave a short background of their experiences, what they believed were their qualifications for the office and what they hoped to accomplish. These opening statements were followed by a questions provided by the audience with each participant giving in turn their answers. Most of the discussion centered about the loss of revenue, supporting present businesses and attracting new. Judy ended the forum by asking the candidates why the voters should vote for them. The Forum was broadcast live over the Cortez City channel.

Dolores Board of Trustee Candidate Forum

Our League also held a Dolores Board of Trustee Candidate Forum for Dolores voters on Monday March 29 from 6:30 – 8 pm in the Town Hall. The moderator, LWV President Jodi Foran, opened the forum by welcoming the participants and the audience and set the ground rules for the discussions. Each candidate began by telling briefly about their background, what they believed were their qualifications for the office and what they hoped to accomplish. The same League procedure of the opening statements followed by additional often provided by the audience with each candidate giving in turn their answers to the same question. Most of the discussion centered about support for current projects of infrastructure and beautification in spite of declining revenue. Questions of how to entice and keep businesses were also emphasized. When asked what they see as the future of Dolores, the unanimous answer was that the town would remain a nice, small community, with good schools and a good place to raise children. Eleanor Kuhl was an excellent timekeeper for both events. Candidates usually had only a minute to answer a question, which initially created a small panic until they relaxed a bit and realized that a minute can be a long time!

Cortez Fire District Candidate Forum

April 15 at 7pm in Cortez City Council Chambers, the League will hold a candidate forum for the Cortez Fire District.

Census 2010

Thanks to all who helped to distribute literature and the bright green Census bags that continually remind those who used the bags that the census is ***“It’s safe”, “It’s easy” and “It’s important”***. I hope by now all reading this have completed and mailed the Census 2010 questionnaire.

If you would like to follow Montezuma County census form return rates and compare us to other counties, check out this website <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/>.

Good Health to Denis and Tonia

Denis Boon has recovered well from the leg break in December that resulted from a slip on the ice. He is about to leave his one crutch in the closet.

Tonia Gurnea is recoving from back surgery and has had great support from family and friends. Hopefully it won't be long before she is entertaining a full schedule of community activities again.

We wish them both well!

Calendar

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| April | |
| Thursday, 1 | Census 2010 |
| Tuesday, 6 | Cortez City Council Election |
| Monday, 12 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Thursday, 15 | Candidate Forum for Cortez Fire District and MCHD Elections, Cortez City Council Chamber 7:00 pm |
| Thur-Fri, 22-23 | LWV Booth at Teen Maze |
| Saturday, 24 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Dolores Library, 10:30 a. 2010 topics to be discussed. |
| Monday, 26 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Mancos Library, 10:30 a. 2009 topics to be discussed. |
| May | |
| Tuesday, 4 | Montezuma County Hospital and Cortez Fire District Election |
| Wednesday, 5 | LWVCO Board Meeting |
| Saturday, 8 | Annual LWVMZC Business Meeting, Ponderosa Restaurant, Dolores, 9:30 a Election of Officers |
| Monday, 10 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Saturday, 22 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Dolores Library, 10:30 am. 2010 topics to be discussed. . |
| Monday, 24 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Mancos Library, 10:30 a. 2009 topics to be discussed. |
| Friday – Saturday, 21-22 | LWVCO Council, LWV Estes Park |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| June | |
| Monday, 14 | Board Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 10:00 a.m. |
| Monday, 14 | General Public Meeting, Colorado Visitor's Center 11:00 a.m. |
| Friday – Tuesday, 11-15 | LWVUS Convention in Atlanta |
| Friday 25 – Saturday 26 | LWVCO Leadership Retreat Frisco, CO 12:00 – 12:00 |
| Saturday, 26 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Dolores Library, 10:30 a. 2010 topics to be discussed.. |
| Monday, 28 | Great Decisions Discussion Group, Mancos Library, 10:30 a. 2009 topics to be discussed. |

Board

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Membership..... | Betty Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net |
| 50 Year Member | Llois Stein 565-9565 llois@msn.com |
| Health Care..... | Eleanor Kuhl 564-0708 ekuhl@frontier.net |
| Voter Services..... | |
| Environment..... | Eric Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net |
| President..... | Jodi Foran 882-2401 jodi@foran.net |
| President Elect..... | Eleanor Kuhl 564-0708 ekuhl@frontier.net |
| Secretary..... | Eric Janes 533-1051 ejanes@frontier.net |
| Treasurer..... | Denis Boon 560-0404 denisboon@msn.com |
| Newsletter Ed..... | Chris Foran 882-2401 chris@foran.net |
| Hospitality | Marcia Boon 565-7668 marciaboone@msn.com |

Have you sent in your membership renewal?

We need every one of you...

**Call Betty Janes, 533-1051
ejanes@frontier.net.**

Send the membership form to Denis Boon.

Our goal is 29 members for 2010



League of Women Voters of Montezuma County

2010 Membership Form

Name _____
 Date _____
 e-mail _____
 Phone [h] _____ [w] _____ [cell] _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

The \$50 membership fee supports the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Colorado for their studies, voter education and advocacy on your behalf.

Dues are payable in September and renewed each year.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Dues Amounts: | |
| Regular dues..... | \$50 _____ |
| Additional household member(s)*... | \$30 _____ |
| TOTAL..... | \$ _____ |

Please give names and email addresses of the other members of your household who are joining:

Please make checks payable to “**LWVMZC**” and mail with this form to:

Denis Boon, Treasurer
LWV of Cortez-Montezuma
14030 Road 21
Cortez, CO 81321