



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

THE VOTER
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
GREELEY/WELD COUNTY
March 2011

**P.O. Box 336634, Greeley, CO
80633**

www.lwvgreeleyweldcounty.org
www.lwv.org www.lwvcolorado.org
41 members

Sat. March 12th: Health Care Updates Meeting, High Plains Libraries Adm. Bldg. 2650 West 29th St (west of Red Lobster), Noon-2pm. Guests from Ft. Collins LWV will present a powerpoint and answer questions

Sat. April 16th: Annual Meeting featuring . “History Comes Alive” debate with Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters, and Alice Paul, Suffragist, UNC Greeley Campus, 9-noon. Breakfast reservations needed.

May Legislative Update, TBA.

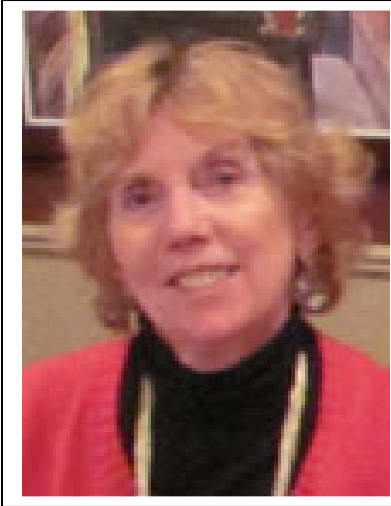
Fri. May 20th & Sat. 21th: State Convention, Fort Collins. Carpooling possible! Let us know if you want to go with us for the day.

What’s inside this issue of the Voter:
News from our President Kathleen Milligan
Local League News and the Environment
State and National League News

Meet one of our newest members of League

My name is **Holly Darby** and I have lived in Greeley for over 10 years. I met my husband while attending UNC and we have enjoyed the small town atmosphere, but still enjoy “city life” close by. I graduated with degrees in Gerontology and Community Health. Currently I work for Weld County at the Area Agency on Aging. I really enjoy my job which is working with volunteers and managing our wellness programs, Weld Aging Well, as well as some voucher programs.

I wanted to get involved with the League to learn about the facts regarding issues. I wanted to be able to make educated decisions that are not influenced by the media or extremists (left or right) that provide opinions that appear to be uninformed or prejudiced.



Letter from Kathleen Milligan, President

Do you think the Greeley/Weld League should continue to struggle to put programs on, provide Voter Service, advocate and inform with limited numbers of people; should it reduce its activities, or should it disband? What comes first for the League? How do we decide where to put our time and energy? How do we make an effective and successful organization with just 10-12 active workers? Before our Annual Meeting in April, the board will make some important decisions by prioritizing our activities and determining how or if we can do what we think is most important. That means we will not do some things. We know that we can't do it all. Or do we decide we can't do it and pack up and go home?

Just to give you an idea of what we need to sort out: these are the kinds of events and activities we need to prioritize:

- **Voter service activities**
 - **Candidate Forums and Meetings**
 - **Ballot Issue Pro and Con Information sessions**
 - **Voter registration at community events**
- **League Day (September)**
- **Legislative Conference (January)**
- **League Activities**
 - **Leadership Retreat (June)**
 - **State Convention/Council**
 - **League Summer Picnic**
- **Program Studies and Topics**
- **(This list is lengthy but there are certain issues that have been coming up lately over and over again: Health Care Reform, Immigration Reform, Education—both K-12 and higher education, campaign finance reform, and state finance, not to mention local issues like city and county finance and mining that concern us)**

The second question is how do we structure the League so that whatever we do choose to do, we can do it? Is our structure the best for a small league? Would a leadership team work better? How long can we expect the same people to stay in leadership? How do we expand the active membership?

We cannot do everything and we don't want to burn out those who want to do something—but not everything. Stay tuned. The board will keep you informed. Let board members know what you think. The League could continue to struggle along, scale down, or disband. What do you think? Let us know!

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A Look at Voter Service Activities

In reviewing voter service activities from fall, 2010, we were involved in several different approaches. Our traditional voter service activities included writing pro/con statements for the Greeley ballot issues, giving presentations on the local and state ballot issues and providing voter registration and League information at various local events. The more nontraditional activities included updating the LWV Greeley/Weld website and introducing candidate interviews on the web in cooperation with the Greeley Tribune.

Early in the election season we were called upon to develop pro/con statements by the City of Greeley. We have a good working relationship with the City Clerk, Betsy Holder, and they rely on our expertise and input to develop the pro/con statements which they post on the City website. Those statements are also a basis for the pro/con statements that are developed for the sample ballots all voters receive in the mail.

Our fall schedule showed that we gave 10 ballot issue presentations to local organizations and groups. This number included the League's October Ballot Issue presentation that was open to the public. Several members of the Greeley/Weld League attended League Day in Denver to prepare for the ballot issue presentations. We distributed approximately 4500 of the LWVCO ballot issue pamphlets to businesses, organizations and individuals in Greeley and the surrounding areas. A huge thank you goes to US Bank for helping to support the printing of the ballot issue pamphlet. Several local businesses bought ballot issue pamphlets to distribute to their employees.

This year we linked voter information to our website (lwgreeleyweldcounty.org). Voter information from the state and our Tribune interviews were put on our website. There is much information that we can interpret from the data on website hits but most importantly one statistic showed that during August, September and October of 2010, there were a total of 5029 page requests (hits). It appears that during the election season many people are looking to the League for election information, especially on the website.

Video taped candidate interviews, in cooperation with the Greeley Tribune, was a first for our League. Candidates for Weld County Commissioner at Large, Weld County Sheriff, House Districts #48 and #50, and Senate District #13 were interviewed. One candidate from each party, Democratic and Republican, was interviewed for up to 20 minutes by a League member. A group of League members developed questions for the candidates and also timed candidate responses. Listed below are the results of the public responses to the candidate interviews put up on the Tribune website.

| Page Views (hits) | Page |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 363 | Main Navigation Page |
| 214 | Weld County Sheriff |
| 118 | Weld County Commissioner at Large |
| 98 | State Senate #13 |
| 52 | State House District #48 |
| 51 | State House District #50 |

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The candidate interview that viewers spent the most time on was the Weld County Commissioner at Large with an average time of 16:40 minutes. Second was State Senate #13 for an average time of 9:51 minutes. Third place went to State House District #48 and the Weld County Sheriff for an average time of about 6:30 minutes. At our February Board meeting we discussed the value getting candidate information to voters through this method. The Board felt that we had reached several more voters than if we had held individual candidate forums. It was cost effective and will be used as an alternative to holding live candidate forums. Several different format changes were suggested for future video taped interviews.

All in all it was a busy voter service season. The local and state Leagues are evaluating the voter service activities to see which is the most effective and to determine how we can best educate voters in this new era of technology. We are open to your input and suggestions as to how we are doing and what we can do better.

What remains the same is that the League is still held in high esteem by the community when it comes to voter education and information. Thank you to all of the members who made it a successful election season and we look forward to your participation this year!!

Barbara Whinery, Voter Service Chair

Legislative Conference 2011

Eighty Leaguers and guests were able to meet for the Legislative Conference. Local leaguers decided not to chance the trip to Denver because of the weather. Senate President Brandon Shaffer and Speaker of the House Frank McNulty welcomed the group. Sen. Shaffer noted that a **balanced budget** was going to be the biggest challenge facing the session and that there were several controversial bills to be worked out, including Colorado's version of the Dream Act and a Civil Unions bill. Rep. McNulty's list of urgent matters included: Job creation, a Responsible budget and Economic development. On budget matters he said that regulation needs to be streamlined and more efficient for businesses to promote economic development and job creation. He said that as Colorado's budget is supported by income and sales taxes we must improve the economy to improve revenues.

Carol Hildebrand, an **immigration** attorney in Denver and LWV member, gave a brief history of the current immigration problem by showing that the immigration act of 1986 was not properly funded for enforcement and was not properly administered with regard to the number of visas for both professionals and seasonal workers. The numbers have not changed for over 20 years but employment needs have greatly increased. Current immigration action, including a proposed Colorado bill, work the problem backwards by attacking the enforcement without addressing the visa needs which would lessen the numbers of undocumented.

Scott Gessler, the newly elected Secretary of State, spoke on **mail-in voting** which is touted by county clerks for relief from escalating costs and staffing problems. He supports photo ID and proof of citizenship and noted his staff is working on a possible 16,000 driver's license holders who provided evidence on non-citizenship yet still are on the voter rolls.

He is also concerned that **campaign finance laws** are unconstitutional and cause great problems through unintentional errors in reporting by candidates and issue committee resulting in huge fines. And court cases the state is losing are costly in resulting attorney fees. He noted that he is eager to work with groups with opposing views to find compromises.

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Cont.

Rep. David Balmer (R Arapahoe) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D Boulder) are co-chairing the Joint Select Committee on **Redistricting** and are intent on “making history”. They are proposing to have a bill to redistrict the US Congressional districts by April 14 of this year. They will hold 10 hearings around the state in February and March and the early Census reports will help with the April deadline they have set for themselves. They feel that if they can get a 10-0 vote in committee that the momentum will carry through into the House and Senate and they will be successful in making history.

Chris Watson, LWVCO Lobbyist, provided a look at **bills that are in the works** and in the case of at least one already disposed of. She mentioned Redistricting; Voting issues, especially ID and mail-in ballots; Healthcare, specifically the Hospital Provider repeal bill and one that requires counties to include healthcare issues when doing a master plan; Fiscal issues, noting that there are several attempts to rollback tax exemption repeals from last session. “Some bills we support will pass, some won’t ...but we need to just keep on keeping on ‘til we get what we want.”(portion of summary by Alice Ramsey, LWVCO)

Elections: LWVUS Supports State Leagues in Battles against Voter Photo ID

The LWVUS continues to work with national partners and state Leagues across the country to fight back voter photo identification legislation. In addition to the LWVMO testifying before its legislature, the LWVUS and coalition partners sent key legislators in Missouri a [letter](#), urging them to oppose ID legislation. If you are looking for a quick and easy way to track legislation in your state, the National Conference of State Legislators has a great [online tool](#) you can use.



IT’S NOT TOO LATE!—Join us, donate, or get a friend to join!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ **Zip** _____

E-mail address _____

Annual Dues: \$50 for an individual or \$75 for family membership (two people who receive mail at the same address) Name of second household member _____.

Student Membership: \$20. If you want to make your **contribution tax deductible**, let us know and we will put the contribution into the LWV Education Fund.

\$_____ Annual Dues

\$_____ Donation for LWV Greeley/Weld County

Mail your check to: League of Women Voters, P.O. Box 336634, Greeley, CO 80633



Happy 91st Birthday

Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed a League of Women Voters to work to end all discrimination against women. The League was found on Valentine's Day, 1920, six months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

The heart of our mission—strengthening our democratic system and increasing the public's participation—has not diminished. Today, we are a grassroots organization of 140,000 supporters and more than 800 Leagues throughout all 50 states.

We are also celebrating the tremendous strides we've made for voting rights and other critical issues in America — thanks, in large part, to the work of supporters like you. As we recognize this important anniversary, I wanted to share some thoughts on a few of last year's accomplishments. [Click here to watch my special video message.](#) The League works daily to make sure we have an active citizenry that participates in our democracy ... and your support is at the core of our work.



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OF GREELEY/WELD COUNTY**
343 50th AVENUE
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The LWV, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.