



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

THE VOTER  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
GREELEY/WELD COUNTY

January 2011

---

P.O. Box 336634, Greeley, CO 80633

[www.lwvgreeleyweldcounty.org](http://www.lwvgreeleyweldcounty.org)

[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

[www.lwvcolorado.org](http://www.lwvcolorado.org)

---

**Sat. January 8<sup>th</sup>** :Noon to 2:00 p.m, FARR Library, "Greeley/Evans School District #6: Successes, Challenges and Future Plans, Panel includes, Linda Trimberger, School Board President, Bob Stack, Board Member, along with Roger Fiedler, Dir. of School/Community Relations will provide an overview of current activities and future plans for the school district. Then the audience members will have an opportunity to address questions or discuss current issues with the panel. Any questions, please contact Barbara Whinery at 353-6731. Bring a sack lunch if you like. Drinks will be provided.

**Fri. January 14<sup>th</sup>** Book Study Discussion, "Hijacked, The Road to Single Payer in the Aftermath of Stolen Health Care Reform" by John Geyman, MD. , Centennial Library, Noon-1 pm. All are invited to join in the conversation.

**NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: Monday, Jan. 31 LWVCO Legislative Conference**, Old Supreme Court Chambers State Capitol, Denver, Seating in the Chambers is limited to 150 spaces., Registration: 8:30 a.m. Preview of the 2011 Legislative Session: 9:00 - 12:00 noon Lunch, League Lobbyist, and Breakout Sessions: 12:15-2:00 p.m. Central Presbyterian Church. **Registration Deadline: Friday, January 21, 2011**

**Sat. Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>: Redistricting in Colorado.** Centennial Library, Noon-2pm.

**Sat. March 12<sup>th</sup>: Public Meeting, Topic TBA,** Centennial Library, Noon-2pm.

**Sat. April 16<sup>th</sup>: Annual Meeting,** TBA, 9-noon.

**May Legislative Update,** TBA.

**Fri. May 20<sup>th</sup> & Sat. 21<sup>th</sup>: State Convention,** Fort Collins.

**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**

**Welcome New members and Donor Thanks!**

**Read More: Social Security and Redistricting**



**Letter from Kathleen Milligan, President**

A new year! And new opportunities to re-engage in our political world. One of my favorite writers, Henry David Thoreau, had a lot to say about voting and public engagement: He wrote in *Civil Disobedience*:

**Cast your whole vote**, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight.

And in speaking about abolition of slavery, he wrote, "All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character

of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority.

**Now that the voting is over for 2010, we must put our influence into action.**

Although the League is non-partisan on candidates and some issues, the League encourages all people to be active in the political process and to cast their influence. Thus, it is good for us to know what kinds of opportunities exist in our community for involvement. There are many opportunities, but here are two in addition to involvement in the League's meeting on education on Saturday, January 8.

\*\*\*Democrats in Action meeting, Friday, January 7, 2010 at the Golden Coral at 11:30-1:00. Program begins at 12:00. Carol Burkhart will talk about the Central Committee, reorganization meeting that will be held Saturday, February 12. This will help us to understand the structure of the party, volunteer opportunities available for that day as well as the coming year or two, and learn of the responsibilities of the officers of the Weld County Democratic Party. (Program postponed from the December meeting due to Carol's being under the weather). For more info about the past meeting and for other helpful information, click on: [www.welddemsinaction.wordpress.com](http://www.welddemsinaction.wordpress.com)

\*\*\*Weld County Republican Breakfast, January 5, 2011, 6:30-8:00 am. Doors open 6:30 am, Program at 7:00 am. Meme's at the Family Fun Plex, 1501 65th Avenue, Greeley, \$10.00 per/person includes buffet and drinks. No reservation required, Call Jim Eckersley at 970-353-8200 for more information.

We'll see you on **Saturday, January 8, 2011 for our bag lunch meeting at Farr Library** noon-2:00 pm to hear about our local school district and what it is doing for our children in Greeley/Weld County.#



**Education Position in Brief:** Colorado LWV supports a pre-K through 12 public education system in which a balanced curriculum of humanities, arts, and sciences leads to life-long learning for all students. Support of a stronger leadership role for the Colorado Department of Education to promote educational improvements and standards for early childhood education.

In 1995 LWVCO Convention adopted the consensus of the role of the State of Colorado in determining policies and standards for pre-K through 12 education. The consensus supported the establishment and enforcement of quality standards for early childhood care and education programs including nutrition, health and safety, equipment and physical safety, teacher qualifications and licensing program and curriculum. The consensus reaffirmed League's position that all children should be in a school by the age of six.

**League Member Serves on Local Board**

Long-time League member, Deb DeBoutez, serves on Board of Directors for non-profit Greeley Transitional House. Thanks for serving our community in so many ways. Volunteers like Deb help us make democracy work at home.

**Fall Voter Service Activities**

The 2010 fall voter service activities were numerous as usual. So busy that we are still computing the data and statistics about several of the new projects we undertook this fall.

In addition to our traditional activities of voter registration and ballot issues we stepped in to the world of technology. In a collaborative project with the Greeley Tribune we interviewed candidates and put those interview links on our website. We are in the process of assessing our project and the value of using our website and the Tribune website to promote voter education. Stay tuned for further results in the February newsletter.

Thank you to everyone to assisted in voter registration, ballot issue presentations and distribution, writing pro/con ballot issues and assisting with the Greeley Tribune interviews. Your time and efforts really make a difference for the voters and to our community. Barb Whinery, Voter Service

**Uranium Mining Company Files Suit Against Colorado**

Powertech Uranium Corp., the uranium prospecting company which has leased thousands of acres in Weld County north of Greeley, recently filed a lawsuit against the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board (MLRB) and the Exec Dir of the Colorado Dept of Natural Resources. The suit claims that the recently adopted rules and regulations implementing laws passed in the state legislature in 2008 are "arbitrary, capricious, and exceed Colorado statutory authority."

The rules were designed to ensure ground water protection and to require public and local government involvement in the mining permit process. The rules were compiled through a process of public input and testimony throughout the state over the past two years. Local League members attended and spoke at the public hearing in Loveland.

Another corporation has sued the MLRB in an attempt to fight clean-up orders at its mine near Golden. Jeff Parsons, Senior Attorney with the Western Mining Action Project, who has represented local communities in the rulemaking process, has stated: "The uranium mining industry in Colorado is wrong to keep fighting water quality protections and better public involvement. The people of Colorado have a right to be heard and will not accept mining projects that cannot protect the water."

Many environmental and conservation groups state-wide, along with multiple local governments, civic groups, and both the Weld and Larimer League of Women Voters supported the rules on the basis of protecting ground water and the environment. The Weld County Commissioners are currently gathering information on the process being proposed, and they need input from citizens in the area who no doubt will be affected by the Commissioners' future decisions on this subject.

To meet the growing energy demands of our society, oil and gas activity has increased locally in the past year. While acknowledging that the income from such activity is welcome, citizens need to remain alert to see that drilling is conducted according to the best standards for that industry. Leagues across the country continue to support alternative energy in the form of solar and wind and to encourage conservation of energy in our daily lives. Jean Hoffman, with excerpts from C.A.R.D. newsletter.

**January 8- 9 Health Care for All Colorado** is sponsoring a workshop for individuals from many organizations ( civic, faith communities, labor, business, educational, health and social justice). The intent is to revitalize the coalition created to educate and advocate for single payer health care in Colorado. The LWVCO joined in 2008 and I encourage you to attend the Saturday January meeting! Registration can be done on-line at <http://www.healthcareforallcolorado.org>. If you plan to attend please let me know so we can meet up and carpool. Hazel Gibson (352-4903)

## Greeley/Weld County League of Women Voters January 2011

### **Local Group Helps Make League Possible**

A small group of women, formerly a part of the Home Extension Clubs, now an independent community-spirited group who have been together since 1953, continued their annual support of our Greeley-Weld LWV.

The "Cheerful Learners" club, with an annual budget of roughly \$700 - \$800, support with both time, money and food, various community activities, such as 4-H clubs and county fair, schools, library, and historical society in the Johnstown-Milliken, CO community.

This group of twenty women friends again donated \$100 to support our local League of Women Voters' work. Each fall they listen to a presentation of local and state ballot issues, ask pertinent questions, and share often differing opinions.

I'm proud to be a long-time member of this group. Democracy at work! Jean Hoffman

### **LWVUS Calls On Media To Stop Secret Political Advertising**

Recently the national League of Women Voters called on television and radio stations to refuse political advertising paid for with secret money. The League also called for political candidates to repudiate campaign advertising in their races that comes from front groups and organizations that fail to disclose their big donors.

"We are seeing huge sums of money from secret sources going into campaign advertising, much of it the negative advertising that poisons the airways," said Elisabeth MacNamara, national president of the League of Women Voters. "Millions upon millions upon millions of dollars are being spent secretly in this election and it threatens to drown out the voices of individual voters. Because of changes in the law brought about by recent Supreme Court decisions, there are no disclosure requirements that let the voters know who is paying for the ads," she said.

"These activities are directly detrimental to our democracy. Voters deserve to know who is paying for election advertising. The League of Women Voters calls on all candidates to disavow secret advertising and asks media outlets not to accept ads unless the names of the true major donors are made public," MacNamara said  
(This article is part of news brief from LWVUS)

### **Current Agenda**

### **2010-2011 Greeley/Weld County LWV**

**Local Government:** Continuing study and support of local government that is accountable, transparent, and representative of Greeley and Weld County, responsive, flexible, efficient, effective, and able to raise sufficient revenues to perform the duties necessary to maintain a health, safe and prosperous community for all citizens.

**Transportation:** A study of transportation in northern Colorado to update the previous study.

**Oil and Gas Drilling (to include uranium mining)** Update the previous study and expand to include uranium mining.

**Greeley/Weld County League of Women Voters January 2011**

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**

-----

**Social Security 2010 Facts & Figures from Alliance for Retired Americans:**

**(Taken from Adams County LWV News, Judy Nicholaisen )**

The Many Faces of Social Security

- \* About 160 Million people contribute to Social Security through payroll taxes.
- \* About 53 million people receive monthly Social Security benefits, including:
  - o 34 Million receive retirement benefits
  - o 4.3 million surviving spouses and parents
  - o 9 million disabled workers and their dependants
  - o 6.5 million children younger than 18 receive Social Security benefits as dependants of deceased, disabled or retired workers.

Spotlight on Social Security & Seniors

- \* Without Social Security, nearly half of American age 65 and older would live in poverty.
- \* For Two-thirds of the elderly, Social Security provides the majority of their income. For one-third, it provides nearly all their income.

Average 2010 Monthly Social Security Benefit

- \* Retired Worker: \$1,164
- \* Retired couple: 1,892
- \* Disabled Worker: 1,064
- \* Disabled worker with spouse and child: \$1,803
- \* Widow or widower: 1,123
- \* Young widow or widower with two children: \$2,391
- \* The income security of many older Americans has been devastated by the collapse of the housing bubble and the plunge in the stock market. Additionally, the decline of American manufacturing and good jobs has taken away private pensions. Social Security

Cont.’

is the one part of the retirement system that is guaranteed and provides cost-of-living adjustments. (Sometimes.) Any cut in benefits would drastically impact the livelihood and well being of older American, leaving large segment of middle-income workers with near poverty level incomes in retirement.

\* Social Security is an extremely efficient program, with administrative costs of only 0.9% of total expenditures.

**Social Security Trust Fund**

\* The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees states that Social Security will have an annual surplus of \$77 billion this year with a reserve of \$2.6 Trillion. (Don’t know if this holds true in light of the tax cut.) This surplus is projected to reach 4.2 trillion by 2024. When you compare this amount with the tax cuts enacted from 2001 through 2006, which will cost 2.48 trillion over 2001-2010 period, it becomes clear that the cause of our fiscal deficit is not Social Security.

**2010 Social Security Contribution Amounts**

\* Social Security taxes are paid on earnings up to \$106,800

\* The current payroll tax rate is 6.2 percent for workers, which is matched by employer at an equal rate of 6.2 percent.

My note to the payroll tax rate follows: As part of bush-era tax cuts extension legislation (Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010), a number of new tax breaks were made available. One was a temporary one-year cut in employee payroll taxes, which funds Social Security and Medicare, of 2% during 2011. The current rate is 6.2%, which will be 4.2% of wages paid next year, and equates to a \$1000 saving for the average American employee. Employers and payroll companies will typically handle the withholding changes, so workers shouldn’t need to take any additional action, such as filling out a new W-4 withholding form. Employers have until January 31, 2011 to implement the new payroll tax rates, and make any necessary adjustments or corrections by March 31, 2011.

To me it makes no sense to cut this tax on Social Security at a time when Social Security is supposedly under funded. In 2011 some in Congress will be screaming that we need to raise the age limit and or lower the benefits, or privatize Social Security because it is running out of money. #

**Redistricting from Kathleen Milligan:** Sounds boring, but it might not be! The League is looking at Redistricting, which will be happening all across the country. We will look at what is happening in Colorado at our February meeting. There have been a few Denver Post articles on Redistricting. I’ve edited the articles for brevity. This one gives us some idea about the Colorado Legislature’s intentions:

**Measured approach to redistricting tried**

**By Lynn Bartels**

*The Denver Post, December 17, 2010:* Could U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette, a Denver Democrat, find herself in the fight of her life in 2012? Is it possible to make a congressional seat centered in Republican-red El Paso County truly competitive? Statehouse leaders are hoping to find out. Speaking at the Denver Press Club on Thursday, Democratic and Republican legislative leaders announced a special bipartisan

Cont.’

congressional redistricting committee. The 10-member group, to be composed of five Democratic and five Republican lawmakers, will try to bring bipartisanship to a process that in some years created bitter party warfare, court battles and a "midnight gerrymander."

"This is a remarkable opportunity," said House Speaker-elect Frank McNulty, R-Highlands Ranch. "One of our goals is to take what is always one of the most partisan of issues down at the state Capitol, try and take the heat out of it, take the politics out of it. . . . We'll see if it works, but we're certainly hopeful."

Gov.-elect John Hickenlooper said he believes Coloradans want congressional districts that are "geographically appropriate and, if possible, competitive. In a more competitive race, people feel that their votes matter, they pay more attention, they get more involved," the Denver Democrat said. "That's democracy."

The legislature hopes to introduce a bipartisan redistricting bill this session, said Senate President Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont. He said the select committee will hold meetings in all seven congressional districts.

**The legislature is charged with handling congressional redistricting. Colorado is not expected to pick up any more seats but will have to redraw the boundaries of its congressional districts to accommodate population shifts. (my emphasis)**

Former Gov. Dick Lamm said he was impressed by the creation of a redistricting committee. "It is incredible," he said. "Politically, it is an unnatural act." Lamm, a Democrat, said he and Bo Calloway, former Colorado Republican Party chairman, worked together after the 1980 census to try to create more balanced congressional districts. "It was Bo who said, 'Let the bastards earn their seats,' " Lamm recalled. "But we could not sell it to our parties."

DeGette offered support for the new redistricting committee. "Working together, I am confident we can find solutions that ensure every Coloradan's voice is heard from Durango to D.C.," she said in a statement. DeGette and U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn, a Colorado Springs Republican, represent the two most politically lopsided districts in the state — the 1st and 5th, respectively — making it nearly impossible for the other party to win.

Dick Wadhams, the Colorado Republican Party chairman and a veteran of past political campaigns, for years has championed more balanced districts. "I think you get better elected officials that way, but I've never figured out how we get there," he said. "You'd have to split El Paso County and Denver County, and I'm not sure either side would go for that."

A later article tells us who will be on the committee. Alice Ramsey from the state League says, "This was in the Post this morning (Dec. 31). It outlines some info on the Colorado Legislative US Congressional redistricting committee. It looks like maybe the chair may try to do it during the regular session to save money. So we may a VERY interesting session this spring!"

**5 Dems, 5 Republicans to look at congressional boundaries**

By **LYNN BARTELS** *Denver Post Staff Writer*

It looks like Rep. David Balmer, shut out of leadership posts or coveted committee chair slots, is finally getting a high-profile appointment. The Centennial Republican is one of

**Greeley/Weld County League of Women Voters January 2011**

Cont.’

10 lawmakers named today to a special legislative bipartisan committee on redistricting that will draw new congressional boundaries. Balmer will co-chair the group. The appointments were made by House Speaker-elect Frank McNulty, R-Highlands Ranch, Senate President Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, Senate Minority Leader Mike Kopp, R-Littleton, and House Minority Leader-elect Sal Pace, D-Pueblo. There are five Democrats and five Republicans on the committee:

**Senate:** co-chair Rollie Heath, D-Boulder, Gail Schwartz, D-Snowmass, Morgan Carroll, D-Aurora, Greg Brophy, R-Wray, and Mark Scheffel, R-Parker.

**House:** Balmer, B.J. Nikkel, R-Loveland, Rep.-elect Don Coram, R-Montrose, Rep.-elect Dan Pabon, D-Denver, and Ed Vigil, D-Fort Garland.

Balmer is currently the House assistant minority leader, and some lawmakers expected him to receive some sort of post when Republicans won control of the House in November by one seat. But when committee chairs were announced in November, his name was noticeably absent. McNulty today called Balmer “an experienced and thoughtful legislator,” and Balmer said his goal was to get the job done without the intervention of the courts, which has happened previously.

“Colorado’s state constitution specifically states that congressional districts should be drawn by the Legislature,” Balmer said. “We are going to work hard during the 4-month session to finish the job and pass a redistricting bill. It’s our job, and we should not leave it to the courts.” Balmer pointed out that finishing the redistricting process during the 2011 Regular Session would save taxpayers the additional expense of calling a special session to resolve redistricting issues. According to legislative research, foregoing a redistricting special session during the summer of 2011 would save taxpayers about \$181,780.

**The select committee is charged with holding at least one public hearing in each of Colorado’s seven congressional districts to hear public testimony. Additionally, the committee will evaluate proposed maps, seek public feedback, and make recommendations to the General Assembly. The boundaries of Colorado’s seven seats will change because of population shifts recorded in the 2010 census.**

Former Gov. Dick Lamm earlier said he was impressed by the creation of a nonpartisan redistricting committee. “It is incredible,” he said. “Politically, it is an unnatural act.” Redistricting, done every 10 years, has been a bruising partisan battle in Colorado that wound up in the courts.

**Active voters in Congressional Districts through November 2010**

**Source: Colorado Secretary of State**

District	Repubs	Dems	Unaffiliated	Total
1	44,724	114,766	54,393	215,847
2	79,426	107,051	80,171	268,819
3	113,233	89,680	64,627	269,567
4*	118,407	75,757	75,480	271,452
5	126,486	53,131	59,401	240,503
6	166,036	91,644	88,007	347,527
7	74,360	82,550	59,122	217,512

\*Congressional District 4 includes Greeley/Weld County

## Greeley/Weld Community Support For League

The Greeley/Weld County League of Women Voters thanks these local businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated financial and in-kind support for the 2010-2011 year. Please add your thank you when you visit these businesses or visit with these individuals.

Dick and Reva Bond  
Debra Bennett-Woods  
Gail Cotton  
Ed Phillipsen  
Tom and Sandy Selders  
Shigeko & Karl Yamaguichi  
Sharon McComb  
Cynthia Hayes  
Cornelia Dietz  
Pam Brinker  
Deb DeBoutez  
Sue Dodge (memorial for Verdie)  
Atmos Energy  
Stacia Heikes  
Carol Riggs  
Julia Richard  
Joyce and Neil Best

Anderson and Whitney (Ken Whitney)  
Marnie Hines  
Sylvia Perchlik  
Dick & Jean Hoffman  
Bernie & Ginny Kinnick  
Sandi & Tom Sanders  
Al & Carol Burkhart  
Sheri & Dwight Sullivan  
U.S. Bank  
Ann Copeland  
Patricia Graham  
Stow Witwer  
Karen Inglis  
Greg & Stepahnie Hoffman  
Jalein Arnold  
Janine Reid and High Plains Libraries  
Cheerful Learners



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF GREELEY/WELD COUNTY**  
343 50<sup>th</sup> AVENUE  
GREELEY, CO 80634  
[www.lwvgreeleyweldcounty.org](http://www.lwvgreeleyweldcounty.org)

The LWV, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.