



2017 - 2018

LWV-TC

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April 2018

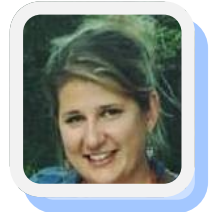
The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® of Tarrant County

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

A Message from your President

Dear Friends,



As Doris and all our LWV-Tarrant County Directors prepare for the approaching Annual Meeting, I am reminded of the fact that our year is quickly drawing to a close. Because of you, our members, we have enjoyed many successes over the past months. We have hosted candidate forums, registered voters, produced our *Voters Guide*, and worked tirelessly to educate and empower voters right here in Tarrant County. Thank you for everything you have done to make this year possible.

Our Annual Meeting is an opportunity to not only celebrate the successes of the past year, but also to plan for upcoming years. We will sign up for committees, vote on Bylaws changes, and even discuss a possible membership dues adjustment. If you haven't already registered, please do so today. Our work in Tarrant County is not over, and we need your continued engagement.

Together, we can continue to *Make Democracy Work* in our community.

See you in a few weeks!

Kate


Kate

LWVTC Annual Meeting will be held on
May 15 at :

Diamond Oaks Country Club
5821 Diamond Oaks Drive North
Fort Worth, TX 76117

Reservations by May 11 are required.

\$35 if paid by May 1 & \$45 if paid May 1-11
The cost will be \$50 if paid at the door.




LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TARRANT COUNTY
Annual Meeting

Diamond Oaks Country Club
5821 Diamond Oaks Dr. N.
Fort Worth, TX 76117

Date: Tuesday, May 15, 2018
Time: 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Dinner will be served. Cash bar.

Cost: \$35 per ticket if purchased by May 1st.
\$45 per ticket if purchased between May 1st - 11th.
\$50 per ticket at the door.

Buy tickets online at:
www.lwvtarrantcounty.org/calendar
Mail checks to LWV - Tarrant County
PO Box 100175
Fort Worth, TX 76185



Guest Speaker:
Dr. Derek City,
retiring superintendent
of Aledo ISD.
Topic: The State
of Public Education
in Texas

-Encourage your friends, family and colleagues to visit us at ~

www.lwvtarrantcounty.org

-Remind your friends, family and colleagues to LIKE us at ~

www.facebook.com/LWVofTarrantCo

April Unit Topic: AN UPDATE ON HUMAN SEX TRAFFICKING

History

– Reed K. Bilz, LWVTC member

The Tarrant County League (LWVTC) has shown an interest in the issue of human sex trafficking since the problem became apparent in Arlington during the Super Bowl XLV in 2010. We held one of our first Hot Topic Lunches on the subject with then Fort Worth Police Chief Thomas Windham as our speaker. LWV-TX selected the topic to study in 2013 and adopted the following position:

The League of Women Voters of Texas is opposed to all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking. We consider human trafficking to be a form of modern-day slavery and support measures to prevent the use of force, fraud or coercion to exploit a person for sexual or labor purposes.

The extended position supported such strategies as required training for law enforcement personnel and treatment for victims of human trafficking. Some bills passed in the 2015 Legislative Session that mandated training and treatment as advocated by the League. However, the mandates were unfunded, and therefore were rarely or never, implemented.

LWVTC again reviewed the situation in Tarrant County at a general meeting in 2016 with the new Fort Worth Police Chief Joel Fitzgerald and an investigator from Homeland Security. The speakers admitted that there was limited training or treatment in the County, and what treatment that was provided was only offered to minors. Adult women were arrested and charged with prostitution because “they chose to engage in criminal activity.”

What is the current situation in Tarrant County?

By Wanda Foster, Executive Director
Human Action

Human Action is a new 501(c)3 public charity fundraising for Tarrant County human trafficking victims www.human-action.org

The bulk of human trafficking in Tarrant County is sex trafficking involving underage U.S. teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17. As for adults in the sex trade, the human trafficking unit of the Fort Worth Police Department continues to arrest adult prostitutes and jail them because by that time many have committed their own crimes and even reoffended. That is not to say pimps do not get arrested. They do when they are caught, but catching them is not as easy as catching a prostitute, who often is recruited online, leaving a path to the victim of the crime, but not the perpetrator.

In October 2017, eight male human traffickers in Fort Worth were arrested in a sting. Fox4 News said the men sold five juveniles and two adult women for commercial sex at \$100 for a half hour. They were recruited through Facebook and Instagram. One victim told police she was regularly beaten if she made her pimp angry or failed to follow his directions.

Many questions remain regarding the best way to deal with the human trafficking problem. As part of a new human trafficking 501(c) 3 public charity, Human Action, I see change happening for the better certainly in the Fort Worth Police Department in that it seems better staffed than in the past, and it offers community liaison through the Tarrant County 5-Stones Human Trafficking Task Force, which primarily helps child victims—very important work essential to end the cycle for the future. The Fort Worth Police Department has two detectives and two officers, and Tarrant County also recently added human trafficking staff. In March 2017, Sheriff Bill Waybourn formed a new Intelligence Unit in the Tarrant County Sheriff’s Office. The unit has a supervisor and three investigators primarily charged with investigating human trafficking cases countywide.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING - CONTINUED

My goal as executive director of Human Action, www.human-action.org, is to raise enough funds to help stem the tide of human suffering among all trafficked people regardless of ethnicity, age, or gender and regardless of the type of trafficking involved. Otherwise, this seemingly intractable problem will continue to victimize people, especially women and children at an inordinate rate. The problem has been allowed to continue for centuries, and only now are changes really being made in how we deal with it.

Among my questions is how many of the adult victims who are jailed were brought in by a pimp at the ages of 14 – 17, manipulated, given drugs to addict and control them, beaten, imprisoned, or coerced into the trade? At what point does the trafficked person stop becoming a trafficked person and become a criminal? If trafficked people are drug addicted or beaten, and police admit most pimps are violent, then perhaps they would do most anything to avoid violent injury or other harm over years of abuse. Eventually many, even most, victims protect their captors as part of an impaired psychological state known as Stockholm Syndrome. The pimp's control and abuse at that point have become normalized because the pimp is the only support system the victim knows. To add to the problem, the victim may depend entirely on the violent pimp for shelter, food, clothing, and any substances they have been induced to abuse. All of these situations make it clear how breaking away from a pimp can be overwhelming and frightening for a human trafficking victim.

So whether the person is an adult or a child, if they started in the trade through coercion, force, or manipulation, Human Action's management believes they deserve a chance to leave the trade, as long as they are motivated to leave the trade, undergo drug treatment if needed, and reintegrate into society. Today, the only chance many get is to leave jail with nothing—no shelter, food, clothing, or transportation, in which case many are referred to a public shelter for housing, which creates fear for a trafficked person and re-exposes them to some of the same types of elements they are trying to flee.

They need drug treatment, temporary lodging in an area where they can be autonomous and regain their independence. Effective drug treatment often requires a 30-day in-house stay, followed by having temporary lodging, food, clothing, emergency medical care if necessary, and accessibility to mass transit or help with transportation while they find a job and learn to reestablish themselves in society. We do have many valuable drug treatment assistance programs, particularly those offered by Tarrant County's My Health My Resources (MHMR) system, and Human Action plans to work with those agencies to help stretch every dollar as far as possible. We will assess each applicant for services and work with others across the community to determine how best to serve victims' needs to restore their lives.

Nevertheless, the lack of temporary lodging, food, clothing, and transportation assistance immediately after a period of incarceration or after arrest and release is a handicap to the Fort Worth human trafficking situation and that of other police units around the country. In fact, a recent U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report has highlighted lack of these resources as a key missing piece necessary to end or reduce the prevalence of human trafficking, particularly sex trade.

Many improvements are being made regarding prosecution and treatment of victims in Tarrant County. Fort Worth human trafficking units undergo training, including internally provided and nonprofit-provided training. As of this writing the human trafficking program director has not stated whether any county, state, or federal government training is offered, although I know the State of Texas has prepared training videos, whether they are for public consumption or for police.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

HUMAN TRAFFICKING - CONTINUED

[Click here for a link to the resource document](#)

When police were asked if victims are given the opportunity to self-identify their victim status, a Fort Worth Human Trafficking officer, whose name must be withheld for security reasons, said “most officers do that in their own way.” They are expected to understand the signs, but the person is likely to go to jail if they have committed additional crimes. Many are repeat offenders. Some of the signs of trafficked people are things like excess security surrounding the person’s work, i.e., they are not free to move about on their own, and they may show signs of poor physical and mental health and fearfulness. A pimp may transport the person everywhere and monitor them constantly. Other signs are available at <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-signs>, along with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center tip hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

Tarrant County underage victims tend to come from runaway situations involving either troubled homes or the foster care system, which has become a revolving door to the sex trade for some underage teens. The officer said many of the youth take drugs. In fact provision of drugs may be part of the pimp’s grooming process for making the victim dependent. When I asked what is needed to keep underage people in a safe environment, the officer said most are sent back to their parents, which can be a good solution or a bad solution. In some cases, the officer added that the families lack resources to provide a good home situation, so providing additional food and clothing or helping with lodging could actually help the child more than removing them to Child Protective Services (CPS), although foster care is the only option for many trafficked children and teens.

Change is likely to come only when unfilled basic needs are made available to help the trafficked make a real transition away from abuse and toward a productive, independent life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Are law enforcement personnel receiving adequate training in recognizing and dealing with victims of human sex trafficking?
2. Are all victims of human sex trafficking, minors and adults, receiving adequate treatment and services to help them recover from their victimization?
3. If the answer is “No” to question 1 or 2, what needs to be done to improve the situation in Tarrant County?
4. If the answer is “No” to question 1 or 2, what should LWVTC do to improve the situation?
 - a. Nothing
 - b. Ask LWV-TX to re-study the issue and provide an update on our position?
 - c. Take local action such as address City Councils, write op-ed pieces, hold informational forums, etc.?

Additional information provided by Reed Bilz:
 Here is the link to a child sex trafficking meeting taking place Wed. April 25, at the Center of Stop 6 Heritage, [5100 Willie St, 76105](#), (close to Rosedale and Beach) 7-9m, hosted by CommUnity Frontline:

[Community Forum - Child Sex Trafficking Awareness](#)



A SPECIAL WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Barbara Cager, Carolyn Kitchens, Thelma Martin & Carlela Vogel

A BIG Thank You TO RENEWING LWV-TC MEMBERS:

Denise Anderson, Leslee Barnes, Fran Fuller, JD Johnson & Erin Merkel

Remember, your membership must be current to vote during the Annual Meeting.

If you are not sure if your membership is current

Contact Doris at the League office.

Email lwvtarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net or call 817-348-8683.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- There are always elections to prepare for. There are still potential voters to register. Our work of educating the citizens of Tarrant County on issues we are concerned with is ongoing. If you would like to help in any way, please contact the League office at lwvtarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net.
- Check with other groups you belong to. Would they like a **speaker** on one of the issues the League supports? Let us know and we can provide one. If your group would like to discuss any issue we have a position on, we will be happy to help with resources.
- If you have any ideas for upcoming **Unit Meetings**, email the office. We will review them for use next year.



Have you moved or changed your phone number? Please contact the League office at 817-348-8683 or email us at lwvtarrantcounty@sbcglobal.net so we can update our Local and National Roster. Thanks!

Do you know that we have the following social media accounts for the League?

Our Facebook Page is <https://www.facebook.com/LWVofTarrantCo/>

Our Twitter page is @LWVTarrant or you can access us by clicking on <https://twitter.com/LWVTarrant>

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Bring Your Talent into the League of Women Voters

We are the League of Women Voters® of Tarrant County (LWVTC), one of the hundreds of local Leagues across the nation whose members—men and women—are committed to Making Democracy Work. Our nonpartisan political organization encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. LWV does NOT support or oppose any political party or any candidate. Your membership automatically enrolls you in LWV-Texas and LWVUS at no additional cost and provides publications from all three.

Mail your membership application, dues, and contributions to LWVTC, P. O. Box 100175, Fort Worth, TX 76185 or enroll online at lwvtarrantcounty.com

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Basic Membership:

- \$70/yr **Regular** full voting member
- \$105/yr **Family** (two members in one household)
- \$40/yr **Student**

Or

Supporting Membership:

- \$100/yr **Sustaining** Membership – Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- \$150/yr **Advocate** Membership – Carrie Chapman Catt
- \$200/yr **Patron** Membership – Mary McLeod Bethune
- \$300/yr **Benefactor** Membership – Eleanor Roosevelt

THE VOTER NEWSLETTER BY U.S. MAIL

- \$10/yr (*online VOTER is no additional cost*)

Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City/Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____ (Mobile) _____ (Fax) _____

Would you like to attend one of our Unit meetings? If so, please indicate which Unit would best suit your needs.

- Arlington Area Downtown Fort Worth Area Northeast Tarrant County
- South/Southwest Tarrant County

\$ _____ For a tax deductible donation, write a separate check payable to:

LWV Texas Education Fund.

APRIL - MAY 2018 CALENDAR

April 2018 ~ Study Topic for all Units - Human Trafficking Update

- April 16** ~ Arlington Area Unit will moderate the Arlington City Council & ISD Candidate Forum, **6:20 PM**, Pantego Lions Club, - doors open at 6:00 pm
- April 17** ~ NE/Mid-Cities Unit Meeting; **7 PM**, Barnes & Noble in the Shops at NE Mall; Melbourne Rd. next to Best Buy; Reservations suggested. Call Margaret Martin, 817-503-0180, for information
- April 19** ~ Fort Worth Downtown Lunch Unit; **NOON**, Trinity Terrace, Blue Spire Room, 1600 Texas Street; Reservations suggested but not required. Lunch is optional, cost is \$16. Call Marjorie Montgomery, 817-885-8372 for reservation.
- April 19** ~ South/Southwest Dinner Unit; **6 PM**, Olive Garden at I-20 and Hulen in the shopping center; Reservations suggested. Call Mike Baldwin, 817-249-2193, for information
- April 23** ~ Monday Matinee, **11AM**. Arlington Police West Service Center, 2060 W Green Oaks Blvd, Arlington. The movie this month will be *"Total War: World War II and the Home Front."* Bring a sack lunch and a friend.

May 2018 ~ Annual Meeting

Units "Do your own thing"

May 5 ~ Local Elections

VOTE411 software will be uploaded by the 16th. Log into your personal ballot at VOTE411.org after that date

May 11 ~ Reservations due for LWVTC Annual Meeting

May 15 ~ LWVTC Annual Meeting; 5:30 - 8:00PM Diamond Oaks Country Club.

Local League members will moderate several **Candidate Forums** for the upcoming Local Elections.

They are:

- April 12 - Kennedale City Council, 6 pm, Kennedale High School, 901 Wildcat Way, Kennedale, TX 76053
- April 13 - Hurst City Council, 2 pm, Hurst Senior Citizen Center, 700 Heritage Cir, Hurst, TX 76053
- April 16 - Arlington City Council & ISD, 6:20 pm, Pantego Lions Club, 3535 Marathon Street, Pantego, TX 76013 - doors open at 6:00 pm
- April 18 - Euless City Council, 6:30 pm, Euless Library, 201 N Ector Dr, Euless, TX 76039
- April 19 - Grapevine Colleyville ISD, 6:30 pm, Heritage High School Library, 5401 Heritage Ave, Colleyville, TX 76034
- April 23 - Hurst City council, 7:00 pm, Hurst Library, 901 Precinct Line Rd, Hurst, TX 76053
- April 25 - Keller City Council, 7 pm, NorthWood Church, 1870 Rufe Snow Drive, Keller, TX 76248



In Memorium

Please consider making a donation to LWVTC in honor of someone special.
Make your check out to **LWV Texas Education Fund** to take advantage of the Tax Exemption.

All Members and Guests are welcome and encouraged to attend any League event.

League Office Hours: M, W, F / 8:30am—12:30pm

~ we are on the web! ~

www.lwvtarrantcounty.org