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2005-2006

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Charlaine V. Reynolds
Pat Schneider

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Janet Wilbur
The Woodhull Institute
Anonymous

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Reather Battle
John Bell
Nancy Bene
Josephine Berg
Rebecca B. Bergstresser
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Virginia Camfield
Mrs. Parks Campbell
Louise Chandler
Dorothea Chessher
Roger Clark
Carolyn Cutbirth
Mary Decker
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Argye Hillis
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Mrs. Andrew Baker
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Colleen Batchelor
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D.C. Boykin
Brenda Brand
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Aurelia Brown
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T.R. Burtis
CharityUSA.com, LLC
Patricia Cheong
Marilyn Cochran
Billie Cook
Joanne Cook
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Elma Holden
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Aileen Horan
Kathleen Hunt
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Johanna Johnson
Reeta Johnson
Vava Johnson
Ellen Johnston
Mary Margaret Johnston
JustGive
David and Shirlene Justice
Edward Kane
James Kanz
Romaine Karl
Grace Kilmer
Martha E. Kissinger
Marian Knox
Patsy Lacey
Virginia Leech
Laura Lein
Sylvia Lester
Lanoiton Home Health
Care of Texas, Inc.
Susan Lichten
Marilyn Lindeman
Lillie Rose Lippe
Marjorie Loehlin
Thomas Lowry
Susan Majors
Judith Mank
Hannah Sue Margolis
Wendy Marsh
Barbara Materka
Josie Matheny

Jean Mather
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Penny Miller
MPG Management
Bernice Murphy
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Susan Tucker
Theresa Vasquez
Sally Vela
Marjorie Walraven
Martha Lyn Ward
Susan Wegner
Barbara White
Robert B. White
Dorothy Whiting
Linda Wild
Catrennia Williamson
William D. Willis
Suzanne Wills
Naomi Worob
Mona Wyatt

Annual Report

League of Women Voters of Texas

League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund

LOCAL LEAGUES

Amarillo
Arlington
Austin Area
Bay Area
Brazos Valley
Comal Area
Concho Valley MAL
Corpus Christi
Dallas
Denton
El Paso
Gainesville
Galveston Area
Hidalgo Co.
Houston Area
Irving
Johnson Co. MAL
Kerrville
Lubbock
Marshall/Harrison Co.
Midland
Montgomery Co.
Plano/Collin Co.
Richardson
San Antonio Area
San Marcos Area
Sherman/Grayson Co.
Tarrant Co.
Tyler
Victoria
Waco
Wichita Falls

2005-2006

“If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost.”

– Aristotle



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF TEXAS

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lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org

A Message from the President

For decades the League has enjoyed a strong reputation as a nonpartisan, highly informed and engaged organization that takes seriously its role and responsibilities to communities all across Texas.

A fundamental component of the League of Women Voters of Texas’s mission is educating people to enhance and encourage their efforts as voters and advocates. The League approaches all issues from a solid foundation of study, analysis and consensus building. This process is why the League

has such a sterling reputation for its grassroots decision-making.

The Texas local Leagues focused on two studies that were completed in fiscal year 2005-2006. Positions based on consensus from local Leagues on Transportation in Texas and Texas Drug Laws and Policies were adopted.

The Year of the Voter was launched with a press conference and kick-off event at the state capitol with local Leagues across Texas participating in a variety of events to engage and connect citizens in the voting process. LWV-TX *Voters Guides* were provided to libraries throughout Texas where there were no local Leagues. The expertise and

The League of Women Voters of Texas, a nonpartisan political organization, promotes informed and active participation by citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Although the League neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, it acts on issues its members have studied.

Membership in the League is open to all women and men. Voting members must be citizens 18 years of age or older. The LWV-TX includes 32 local Leagues as well as members-at-large in communities that do not have a local League. LWV-TX was founded in 1919, one year prior to the passage of the amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote. With assistance from the full-time staff of two in the state office, volunteers contribute tens of thousands of hours (worth more than \$1 million) to conduct League studies, voters service projects, and advocacy based on League positions. Financial contributions to LWV-TX enable it to help local Leagues in their services to their communities and strengthen League advocacy efforts in the public interest.

LWV-TX is classified as a 501(c)(4) organization by the Internal Revenue Service; neither dues nor contributions may be deducted as charitable donations.

The League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund is making democracy work by providing nonpartisan, factual information about voting, government, and public policy to Texas citizens. Contributions to the Education Fund support studies, publications, dissemination of information about issues that affect Texans, and projects to encourage and increase informed voting as well as services to strengthen local Leagues and ensure that League guidelines and nonpartisanship are upheld. Gifts may be designated for specific projects approved by the trustees or for the overall voters service and citizen education activities of the fund.

LWV-TEF has been classified as a publicly supported educational trust in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not taxable as a private foundation, as defined in Section 509 of the code. Therefore, donations to the LWV-TEF may be deducted as charitable contributions.

dedication of League members, and its reach across Texas, make the League an unparalleled organization for **Making Democracy Work**.

LWV-TX joined LWVUS in an amicus curiae, or “friend of the court” brief, to argue that the Texas legislature’s mid-census redistricting was unconstitutional because it was carried out solely to achieve partisan advantage. The Supreme Court’s decision was to allow legislatures to redraw boundaries at any time. We will continue to work to have a fair process in the Texas Legislature by supporting the establishment of a bi-partisan committee to draw the initial map after each regular census, which would then be approved by the legislature.

League leaders were involved in the special legislative session for financing Texas public schools. The League has worked during the interim to influence public policy by contacting legislators and agencies and testifying before committees on issues important to the League.

In a time of widespread apathy and cynicism, the League has never been more important! League members will continue to work to provide the tools that citizens need to be informed voters.



Darlene Hicks,
President and Chair

CITIZEN EDUCATION

- Project Voter**
- Distributed *Voters Guides* in English and in Spanish for the November 2005 Constitutional amendment election and the March 2006 primary election.
 - In cooperation with local Leagues, made available 244,000 *Voters Guides* in print, on the LWV-TX web site, and through newspapers for the March 2006 primary election.
 - Provided audio taped versions of the *Voters Guides* for blind and

- visually impaired citizens upon request.
- Distributed nearly 18,000 *Voters Guides* to libraries across the state which are not served by local Leagues.
- Received and applied funding from the LWVUS Education Fund and the Program on Constitutional and Legal Policy of the Open Society Institute to provide additional information on judicial independence, the Texas judicial system and all statewide judicial candidates in the March 2006 primary *Voters Guide*.
- Developed a televised forum on Texas Constitutional Revision with the distinguished panel of former Lt. Governor Bill Hobby, Lt. Governor Bill Ratliff, Senator John Montford, Speaker Pete Laney, and Judge Nelson Wolff . It was produced by PBS station KLRN of San Antonio and taped for distribution to other PBS stations.

Project Citizen

- Adopted positions on Transportation and Drug Policy in Texas at convention in April 2006. These positions will be advocated during future Texas legislative sessions.
- Adopted a new study of “Mandated Achievement Testing in the Public Schools of Texas” at convention in April 2006, for completion in early 2008. A committee has been organized and has begun research for summer 2007 publication of a *Facts and Issues* on the subject.
- Published an update for members on the history of Texas Constitutional Revision.
- The 2006 Excellence in Environmental Awareness Awards were presented in the following categories: Catherine Perrine Award League member—Mary Vogelson of Dallas, individual—John Sproul of El Paso, non-profit—Robin

Schneider and the Texas Campaign for the Environment, media—The Houston Chronicle and reporter Dina Cappiello, government—The City of Plano and the City of San Marcos, and corporate—Texas Instruments.

ADVOCACY IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

- Celebrated the first Women’s Independence Day on August 26, a commemoration of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment that guaranteed women the right to vote, with Secretary of State Roger Williams and Representative Ruth McClendon in attendance. HB 67 (McClendon) (2005) designates August 26 as Women’s Independence Day.
- Covered two 79th Legislative Session special sessions on public school finance, which did not resolve the contested and complicated issues.
- Adopted the following issues as the 2006 interim legislative priorities: capital punishment, judicial selection, election reform, public school finance, transportation, and water issues. Used the new transportation position as LWV-TX followed the House Transportation Committee deliberations on its interim charges.
- Monitored the education reform and public finance special legislative session in the Spring of 2006, supporting bipartisan solutions and expanded sources of tax revenue, after covering the meetings of the Senate Select Committee on Education Reform and Public School Finance in preceding months.
- Continued to work to create a coalition that will look at election and HAVA implementation issues such as voter ID.
- Continued our long history of fighting against attacks on the basic constitutional right to fair and equal representation guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution by seeking reforms to assure that the redistricting process is nonpartisan, equitable and open. These are core rights for citizens of a free

and democratic nation.

- Joined the League of Women Voters of the United States to urge the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn the partisan gerrymander imposed on the citizens of Texas in 2003 (LULAC v Perry). In an amicus curiae, or “friend of the court” brief, the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Texas argued that the Texas legislature’s mid-Census redistricting was unconstitutional because it was carried out solely to achieve partisan advantage.

SERVICE TO LOCAL LEAGUES

- Provided support toward the formation of a new League in the Concho Valley area.
- Trained local Leagues through a state-wide Leadership Institute, eight workshops at convention, and League-specific training in local cities.
- Shared good ideas and best practices by writing “Around the State” articles for the *Texas VOTER* with local success stories and by putting local *VOTERS* on the state web site.
- Gave tips in the *Texas VOTER* and in periodic email information sent to local League leaders on recruiting and maintaining membership.
- Supported Members-at-Large (members not in areas where there are local Leagues) with periodic mailings and publications.
- Strengthened local Leagues with organizational tips in periodic email information sent to all local Leagues and through contact with individual Leagues by state board liaisons.
- Used the “Why Women Don’t Vote” survey around the state to raise awareness of the voting process and gather information for future voting campaigns.
- Developed a Services to Local Leagues procedure book for the state office to ensure consistency.
- Trained leadership trainers to assist local Leagues in their planning, goal setting, and work.
- Recognized local Leagues at convention for outstanding contributions in various areas of League work such as advocacy, program, membership, and fundraising.

