

League of Women Voters
of Dallas

A nonpartisan organization that encourages informed participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

VOTER





**Women's Equality Day
August 26, 2019**

*From left to right:
Beverly Tobian, Clare Chaney, Sally Branch,
Eileen Rosenblum, Cecilia McKay, Becky
Brakke, and Dr. Sherry Johnson at the
99th Women's Equality Day, Flag Room,
Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla St., Dallas, TX*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DALLAS

A special Susan B. Anthony luncheon commemorating the

100th

anniversary of the League of Women Voters

**Thursday Feb. 13th 2020
11 AM - 1PM**

LAKWOOD COUNTRY CLUB:
6430 Gaston Ave., Dallas TX 75214

SAVE THE DATE

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



2019 - 2020

LWV Dallas

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From the President's Desk: Let's Vote!

In the 2018 election less than 10% of registered voters in Dallas County voted. The good news is that your vote counts far more than you realized. The bad news is that 90% of registered voters in Dallas County are letting someone else determine the laws, the taxes, and so much else affecting their daily lives. It's like letting a stranger drive your car. Tell all your friends how much their vote counts!

On October 21st early voting begins in Dallas County. Election day is Tuesday, November 5th.

There are three big changes affecting voting beginning this November:

Good news: Dallas County has new **voting equipment**. They generate paper ballots so you can see that the votes you cast are being correctly recorded. For more information our website has a "How To": <https://my.lwv.org/texas/dallas/how-use-new-voting-machines>

Good news: Dallas County has adopted **Vote Centers** for election day. This means that if you live in Dallas County you can vote at any polling location in Dallas County on election day. It's like early voting. No longer do you have to vote in your neighborhood. Use this link to a map of voting locations:

<https://dall1229.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0cb1bc299694e94bb30622b1b13bcad/#>

Mixed news: Straight ticket voting has been eliminated (the Texas legislature voted for this change in 2017; it went into effect Sept. 1, 2019). This means you should consult www.Vote411.org before you go to the polls so you can save time in the voting booth.

www.Vote411.org. This League tool is a big help to those who feel stymied by the partisanship which clouds civic engagement and the time it takes to be an educated voter.

- a. This is the digital Voters Guide. LWVD volunteers work hard to gather and provide **non-partisan information** to voters on all issues and candidates on the ballots in Dallas County.
- b. The **timesaving feature** of the website: enter your address and it will display all races on your ballot – no need to wade through races you can't vote on. Suggestion: Make notes and take them with you to vote.
- c. Vote411 went "live" on October 1.
- d. Tell your friends, especially commuters, that Vote411 is a national website. There are several local League chapters in North Texas and their volunteers are also dedicated to getting all candidates and issues on Vote411.

The printed Voter Guides will be distributed on October 12.

We have much more voting information on our website:

<https://my.lwv.org/texas/dallas/voting>.

If you are reading this and don't have access to the internet, please call our office to find out where there is a printed Voter Guide near you. 214 688-4125.

Thank you for voting and Making Democracy Work®!!

Diane Tasian

President - League of Women Voters of Dallas

VOTING MATTERS

Vote Centers and other Dallas County Election Changes:

Starting in November 2019 Dallas County has announced several major changes to the way we vote. The big change is that on election day, voters will be able to vote anywhere in the county that is convenient, as we currently do during early voting. Voters will no longer be compelled to vote at designated precinct polling places on election day. **Polling places that permit voters to vote anywhere in the county are called “vote centers”.** In the past, many votes have been lost and voters frustrated trying to find the right place to vote on election day, and voters wasted precious time traveling to locations that were not convenient. These inefficiencies will be alleviated through use of election day vote centers. Election day vote centers are currently used in many Texas counties including Collin, Lubbock and Travis. These counties will soon be joined by Harris, Tarrant and Dallas among others.

Although state law permits a county to reduce the number of election day polling locations when using vote centers, Dallas County plans to keep many locations open. The proposed plan is to put vote centers at virtually all the precinct voting locations that have been used in the past plus keep open the early voting vote centers on election day. After the 2020 general election, the county will assess which sites are most popular as well as where they are needed and analyze whether to keep all the sites or pare them down in 2021. The LWV is advocating the designation of Dallas colleges and community colleges as full-time vote centers for both early voting and election day voting.

As part of the transition to election day vote centers, the County convened a citizen advisory committee and held a number of public hearings to solicit opinions on the plan. Diane Tasian, Barbara Larkin, Karen Bassett and Elizabeth Walley participated in these meetings on behalf of the LWV Dallas. Later this year the County will make its final decisions regarding the implementation of election day vote centers.

To enable the change to election day vote centers and to improve election security, the county has purchased touchscreen voting machines that are similar to the early voting machines we are accustomed to but with an important difference. The new machines produce a paper ballot which voters feed into a locked box. The paper ballots are then kept as back-up for recounts if needed. The new equipment will be used during both early voting and election day voting.

Another change on the horizon is that due to legislation passed in 2017, straight ticket voting during general elections will no longer be an option. In Dallas County, nearly 70% of voters, both Democrats and Republicans, took advantage of this option in 2018. The LWV needs to spread the word that straight ticket voting is not legally an option anymore and voters need to be prepared. It will take voters more time to complete a ballot without the straight ticket option but the hope is that having more and more efficient polling locations on election day will keep the lines from getting longer.

The Dallas County Elections Department and the political parties will be recruiting poll workers intensely in advance of the big elections coming up over the next couple of years. With more polling locations there will be an increased need for paid poll workers. LWV Dallas will help spread the word about this need. **If you are interested in a well-paid short-term opportunity during elections, start making your plans now. Not only would you be compensated but you would also be helping to make democracy work.**

We need to connect all the voters to Vote411 before they go to the polls!

By Karen Bassett

PROGRAM- MEETINGS



Unit Meetings were held on October 9th and 10th regarding the new Dallas voting centers and equipment.

Our NOVEMBER Unit Meeting will include guest speakers from Moms Demand Action. Please check your inboxes for dates and locations.



“Moms Demand Action is a grassroots movement of Americans fighting for public safety measures that can protect people from gun violence. We pass stronger gun laws and work to close the loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our families. We also work in our own communities and with business leaders to encourage a culture of responsible gun ownership. We know that gun violence is preventable, and we’re committed to doing what it takes to keep families safe.”

Additional topics for Unit Meetings in 2020 will be announced in a future “Voter”

WANT TO SERVE ON THE LEAGUE BOARD?

The Nominating Committee is looking for people who are interested in serving on the board or on a committee that a board member heads up. The board meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 am until noon, usually at the League office or at the Meadows Conference Center. Meeting on Saturday was done to accommodate the schedule of working board members. In the past, the board met on the first Thursday of the month at noon.

If you have any questions or want to explore the idea of board service more thoroughly, please contact chair Eileen Rosenblum (eileen.rosenblum@gmail.com; 469-879-8801) or Linda Wassenich (LindaVote@gmail.com; 214-368-5305).



What Will You Do?

If you have read *The Founding Brothers* by Joseph Ellis, you will know that the tension between individual liberty and the common good has been present since the United States was founded. The creation of our form of government with its checks and balances written into the Constitution is simply amazing.

The story is that Benjamin Franklin, as he was leaving after the constitution had been written, was asked, "What kind of government did you give us? A Monarchy, or a Republic?" Franklin replied, "A Republic, madam, if you can keep it." Archibald MacLeish said, "Democracy is never a thing done. Democracy is always something that a nation must be doing."

Our democracy is under assault, and we must respond to the challenge. People need factual information to assess issues and the candidates' responses in their own words to unbiased questions about current policy issues. People need to "interview" the candidates at candidate forums when they are applying for a job as an elected official. People need a neutral resource that studies issues and produces reports called *Facts and Issues*.

You as a member and many others know where to turn—the League of Women Voters. Later this month you will receive our annual appeal for contributions. Please give generously—as if our democracy depended on your gift—because it does.

By Linda Wassenich

DONOR HONOR ROLL

A hearty thank you goes to the following donors who have contributed since June through the middle of September:

Undesignated Contributions: Shirley Cooper, Lucy and Dan Polter, Audrey Curtis, Shirley Haspel, Martha Coleman, and Margaret Scott

Scholarship Fund: Barbara Lynn, Susybelle Gosslee, and Scherry Johnson

Patron Members: Molly Van Ort, Chris Guldi, Pat Sabin, and Karen Bassett
Benefactor Member: Carol Barger

Memorials: Molly Van Ort remembering Pat Vaughan and Essie Reed; Julie Lowenberg and Linda Wassenich remembering Robert Adams, husband of Ann Adams; and Joyce Forney remembering Lila Cockrell. Tributes in memory of Barbara Materka were made by Julie Lowenberg, Rosie Stromberg, Pat Sabin, Janet Eickmeyer, Genie Fritz, Becky and Larry Sykes, Sue Lichten, Linda Wassenich, and the Women's Issues Network

Honor gifts: Mona Hersch Cochran honoring Eileen Rosenblum, Terry Greenberg honoring Susybelle Gosslee, and Julie Lowenberg honoring Elaine Wiant and Linda Wassenich

Grant: Sally King Charitable Fund



The LWV-Dallas received about \$5,500 in donations from the following people through the North Texas Giving Day sponsored by the Communities Foundation of Texas:

Sara Brown

Susan Oviatt

Allan Cano

Courtney Fadley

Sydney Herndon

Barbara Larkin

Jani Salyers

Jennifer Elbert

Steve & Cathe Schmitt

Janet Hunter

Brenda Nibert

Kathy Carson

Rebecca Acuña

Peggy Dowdey

Courtney Hogan

Katrina Johnson

Sally Branch

Betty Ann Ablon

Elizabeth Walley

Fred Grinnell

Shannon FitzGerald

Stacy & Jeff Duryea

Lisa Sherrod

Lois & Ross Finkleman

Nia MacKay

Beth Scalise

Jean Conway

Janet Eickmeyer

Cecilia McKay

Sandy Thornton

Diane & Berge Tasian

Wendy Johnston

Melina Neely

Katherine McGovern

Chris & Richard Guldi

Elaine Wiant

Carole Cohen

Jeanne Reinelt

David Collins

Dee Lersch

Karen Bassett

Linda Wassenich

Janet Follstaedt

50-YEAR MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Linda Wassenich



In 2020, Linda Wassenich will join the exclusive group of League members that have been with us for 50 years. She was born in Washington, D.C. and raised in Houston, Texas. She and husband Mark spent two years in Germany. Mark was in the Air Force serving as a photo interpreter. While Mark was involved in a secret mission, Linda taught adult high school at the German Air Force Base.

While attending TCU, Linda was selected as a United States delegate to the International Student Movement for the United Nations conference in Geneva. That might have been when her considerable fundraising skills started to develop since she had to raise funds for her trip. It was a very memorable experience.

Linda and Mark moved to Dallas in 1970. Soon after arriving, Linda attended a Unit that met at SMU and she was impressed by the level of dedication of the Leaguers. Right then she decided that this was the organization for her. The League's community work and issue discussions aligned with her own desire to serve. As the years passed, Linda has brought to the League her knowledge of development skills, interest in good public policy, and her desire to make society better. She also brought the ability to listen to different sides of opinions and find a common ground.

She served as President of the League of Women Voters of Dallas for two consecutive terms, 1995 to 1999, while working full-time for the Visiting Nurses Association. At the LWV Texas Board, she was Development/Marketing VP for nine years. She was also appointed to the LWVUS National Board where she chaired the Development Committee.

Linda was a member of Women's Council of Dallas County where she was voted to the Board as Newsletter Editor, Communications V.P. and later President. Linda earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and history from TCU and a Master of Social Work from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She has been recognized for her work in social work and as a fundraising professional.

Her years of experience have taught her to always enjoy what you are doing, choose those activities that add meaning to your life, and do your part beyond your set of skills. She has done this with grace and efficiency while raising two boys and now enjoying a grandson. The League has been a great part of her life. She says: "I wish the League would attract members interested in being active, be financially able to have a full-time staff and be able to match members with their skills."

By Cecilia McKay

IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory: Lila May Banks Cockrell

Joyce Forney, one of our 50 Year Members, informed me of Lila Cockrell's passing. Here is Joyce's memory of Lila: "Lila Cockrell was a League of Women Voters Legend! ... In 1949 she established the Horseshoe Trail unit of the Dallas League. It met in her home: moms in the living room and toddlers in a bedroom. She met me, a new arrival in Dallas, at a General Meeting of the League and urged me to come to the unit meeting at her house.

A number of years later she and Sid and their two little girls moved to San Antonio. Lila is credited with the conception of the River Walk as well as being the first female Mayor of a major American city."

Thank you, Joyce, for that brief portrait which so clearly describes Lila's love of people!

Lila was the first woman to lead one of American's 10 Largest cities. In San Antonio she served two terms as mayor. Her first term was from 1975 to 1981; then she stepped down to take care of her ill husband. She ran again in 1988, 2 years after her husband's death, and served from 1989 to 1991. Other firsts she accomplished were first woman to chair the City Public Service Board in San Antonio, and the first female president of the Texas Municipal League. She was a "steel magnolia" and through the force of her personality changed the political tone of San Antonio in the 1970s and '80s. Her civility did much to bring together the majority and minority populations. Her autobiography, "Love Deeper Than a River" was published this year.

She served as the first head of the San Antonio public integrity committee; as president of the San Antonio Parks Foundation; was co-chair of the city's River Oversight Committee; a national trustee of the San Antonio Museum of Art; and a trustee of the Southwest Research Institute.²

Lila was born in Ft. Worth. Her father was from San Antonio. She graduated from SMU in 1942 and married Sidney Earl Cockrell, Jr, a reserve officer in the Navy, soon thereafter. She joined the Navy WAVES and was commissioned an ensign. In November 1943, she graduated from Smith College officer training school. The family moved to Dallas and she served as President of the League of Women Voters (LWV) of Dallas from 1953 to 1955. In 1958 they moved to San Antonio when Sid accepted the post of executive director of the Bexar County Medical Society.

She was soon elected president of the LWV San Antonio and served in that capacity until 1963 when she ran for City Council backed by the Good Government League, a group of conservative businessmen. "Reflecting the era, she files as Mrs. S.E. Cockrell Jr. She won the election, becoming only the third woman in the city's history elected to the City Council. She was re-elected to the council in 1973 with more votes than any of the other 62 council candidates.

Two years later, she ran for mayor and won in a runoff.” She is credited with the concept of the Riverwalk. And for attracting the Marriot Rivercenter Hotel, the Rivercenter mall, and the HemisFair Arena.

Bruce Bugg Jr, an attorney and fellow alumnus of SMU, galvanized her San Antonio friends to create an endowment at the request of officials at SMU who were impressed by her autobiography. Her friends were glad that as she was declining she knew they were working to found the endowment. SMU awarded Cockrell the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1967; an honorary Doctor of Human Letters in 1981; and in 2014 during its Centennial Celebration honored her as a DAA Centennial History Maker. To create the endowment, the goal of \$100,000 must be received by December 31, 2019. If that goal is not met the funds will go to current students through SMU scholarships. Contact giving@smu.edu if you are interested.

Another endowment is being created at the San Antonio Women’s Hall of Fame. Lila was one of its first honorees in 1984. All donations will go to students at Young Women’s Leadership Academy, a San Antonio ISD school, to help with their college expenses. Contact information: San Antonio Women’s Hall of Fame, PO Box 461104, San Antonio, TX 78246



Susan B. Anthony Luncheon

Susan B. Anthony Luncheon

Attention members! The 2020 League of Women Voters Susan B. Anthony will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at the Lakewood Country Club from 11am-1pm.

The time has come to submit your nominations for the 2020 Susan B. Anthony Luncheon. Nominate a person who has devoted years to voting rights, women's rights, or civic engagement. You can nominate for the Susan B. Anthony 2020 award [here](#).

We are also accepting nominations for the Champion Volunteer to recognize the efforts and achievements of an outstanding volunteers in the Dallas Community. You can nominate a Champion Volunteer [here](#). **Nominations are due by end of day on October 31, 2019.**

Who is your voting rights hero?

Send us your nominations today for the 2020 Susan B. Anthony Award and the 2020 Champion Volunteer.

Nominations must be received by Thursday, October 31, 2019 to be considered.



We will have our next planning meeting via conference call. We are working on a host committee to include State Reps and city council members. Please contact Rebecca Acuna if you would like to be involved:

Rebecca.Acuna@Gmail.com