



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF RICHARDSON

Editor: Nancy Wilson

VOTER

CALENDAR

Aug.24, Saturday 9:00 a.m.	CHIP Health Fair St. Barnabas Presbyterian Church 1220 W. Belt Line Road (just East of Richardson HS) First day to apply for ballot by mail for Nov.5 election
Sept.6, Friday Sept.14, Saturday 10-30 a.m.	"The Impact of 2013 Legislative Actions on Collin County" Schimelpfenig Library, 5024 Custer Rd., Plano, TX 75023 LWV-Plano/Collin County (see flyer below)
Sept.27 – Oct. 20	Voter registration at the Texas State Fair (see flyer below)



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Ellen Steger

School is back in session...it's still 90⁺ degrees outside...the League is gearing up for an exciting year. It must be September!

November 5 Election

2013 is considered an off-year for elections. There will be [9 constitutional amendments](#) on the November 5th ballot in Texas. For those of you who live in Collin County, The League of Women Voters of Plano/Collin County is sponsoring "The Impact of 2013 Legislative Actions on Collin County". See their brochure in this newsletter. The League of Women Voters of Texas will produce a pro-con *VOTERS GUIDE* for the constitutional amendments on the ballot. Your Richardson League will make those *VOTERS GUIDES* available as soon as they are ready.

About the Texas Constitution

Did you know that the Texas constitution is among the longest of state constitutions in the United States? Since its initial adoption in 1876, a total of 653 amendments have been proposed, of which 474 were approved by voters and 179 were rejected. An amendment is proposed in a joint resolution that can originate in either house of the state legislature during a regular or special session and must receive a vote of two-thirds of each house. The governor cannot veto a joint resolution. Amendments take effect when the official vote canvass confirms statewide voter approval, unless a later date is specified in the joint resolution.

(from the League of Women Voters of Texas VOTER, July 2013.)

To add to the regular registration and informational activities that precede any election, there are several additional changes that add to the drama leading up to the election. The article below reports two lawsuits that may, or may not, impact the November election.

From the TEXAS TRIBUNE:

On Thursday [August 22, 2013], the U.S. Justice Department announced that it would [file a federal lawsuit](#) against the state over its voter ID law, which went into effect after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a key portion of the Voting Rights Act in June.

The [US Justice] department also said it would join a suit challenging the state's 2011 Republican-drawn redistricting maps.

Both lawsuits will attempt to prove that the state discriminated against minorities and to restore in Texas the defunct Voting Rights Act provision, which required some states, including Texas, to seek permission from the federal government before changing their election laws.

-Texas Tribune

There is additional information on the Voter ID Law as it currently stands later in this VOTER.



Ellen Steger

KNOW THE LEAGUE:

League Principles

The League Principles are concepts of government to which all Leagues* subscribe. They are the beliefs shared by League members everywhere. Principles are the basis upon which national, state, and local program is adopted. The Principles themselves may be used to take action at any level of government. However, because they are broad statements, such action is usually taken in conjunction with current League positions. Additional information on their usage is found in [Impact on Issues](#).

The League of Women Voters believes:

- in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.
- that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible.
- that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.
- that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.
- that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.
- that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

www.lwvtexas.org 2013

*There are approximately 1000 Leagues in the U.S. All have the same Mission and Principles.

VOTING IN PERSON - New VOTER ID regulations:

(Note: the lawsuit cited on p.1 of this article may, or may not, impact the Voter ID law.)

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF TEXAS EDUCATION FUND

Photo ID Required to Vote in Person in Texas Elections

- Texas now **requires one of 7 photo IDs** at the polls:

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) issued

1. Driver's license
2. Personal identification card
3. Concealed handgun license
4. Election identification certificate (EIC)

U.S. government issued

5. Military identification card with photograph
6. Citizenship certificate with photograph
7. Passport

- Photo ID needs to be **current or have expired no more than 60 days** before voting (citizenship certificates have no expiration date).
- The **name on the ID should match** the voter registration card. If names don't match, a voter may be accepted if names are "substantially similar." **Addresses need not match.**
- Voters with a **documented disability** can apply for a voter registration certificate exempting them from the photo ID requirement.
- Voters without acceptable ID can obtain an **Election Identification Certificate (EIC)** from Texas DPS at no cost by providing proof of citizenship and identity and registering to vote at DPS or showing a voter registration card.
- Voters who do not show an acceptable ID at the polls can vote a **provisional ballot** and have 6 days to show the required photo ID.
- **Photo ID is not required to vote by mail.** Voters may apply for a mail ballot if 65 or older, ill or disabled, or absent from their county during early voting and on election day.

Only the 7 photo IDs above can be accepted at the polls.

Other photo IDs including student IDs and employer IDs cannot be accepted.

VOTING BY MAIL

September 6 is the first day to apply for a ballot by mail for the November 5th election. To be eligible to vote early by mail in Texas, you must:

- be 65 years or older;
- be disabled;
- be out of the county on election day and during the period for early voting by personal appearance; or
- be confined in jail, but otherwise eligible.

The new voter ID law does not apply to ballots by mail.

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Make your voice heard!

Make sure you are registered to vote.

Keep watching the League's monthly VOTERs and website (www.lwvrichardson.org) for more election information.

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Informing Texas Communities about the New Healthcare Insurance Marketplace

Access to healthcare has been an important League issue for many years, and LWVUS supported passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Access to healthcare is of particular concern in Texas which unfortunately has the highest percentage of uninsured of any state.

ACA requires individuals to have healthcare insurance as of 2014 and provides new options for those without insurance through the Texas healthcare insurance market place. Open enrollment begins on October 1 and extends through March 31, 2014.

Even in Texas most individuals (roughly 75%) already have health insurance; individuals with coverage through an employer, Medicare, Medicaid, or CHIP do not need to do anything. Individuals without coverage will be required to obtain coverage (or pay a fee) and need to understand how to access the marketplace and where to find assistance in accessing the marketplace or evaluating their options. Although not required to provide insurance, the marketplace will provide employers with fewer than 50 employees new options for covering their employees.

Information for individuals and small employers is available at <http://www.healthcare.gov/>. Information and resources for organizations helping to spread the word is available at <http://marketplace.cms.gov/>.





Members and Friends of the
The League of Women Voters of
Plano/Collin County

*Please join us for a light brunch
and hear The Honorable Cheryl Williams
Collin County Commissioner, Precinct 2*



speaking on

"The Impact of 2013 Legislative Actions on Collin County"

Saturday, September 14, 2013
Schimelpfenig Library
5024 Custer Rd., Plano, TX 75023

Everyone in the community is welcome

10:30 a.m. – Brunch, Mixer

10:45 a.m. – Introductions & Upcoming League Events

11:00 a.m. – Commissioner Williams

No Reservations Required

For more information, contact Elizabeth Erkel at president@lwvcollin.org
or visit our website at
www.lwvcollin.org

Volunteer Opportunities



Voter Registration at the Texas State Fair

In 2010, Texas ranked

- 51st in voter turnout
- 42nd in voter registration
- 49th in the number of citizens who contact public officials
- 44th in the number of people who discuss politics a few times a week or more.

[Texas Civic Health Index Report, 2013](#)

*By the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at UT Austin
and the National Conference on Citizenship*

Dallas County has secured a booth at the Texas State Fair from which to conduct voter registration.

This is a NON-PARTISAN effort. County volunteers will register all who need to be registered whether they are Dallas county residents or not. The County will provide volunteers with forms and information needed.

- Volunteers who work voter registration will get free admission to the Fair.
- The County is working on securing parking passes, though that is not yet a sure thing.

The Fair runs from **Friday, September 27 to Sunday, October 20.**

Want to help? Contact
Suzanne Hickman
Suzanne.hickman@dallascounty.org
214-695-1361