



## 90th Annual Meeting LWV Houston Area

**Special Guest Speaker  
Mayor Annise Parker**

**Thursday, May 13**

Bayland Community Center  
6400 Bissonnet @ Hillcroft

5:00 Wine Reception & Silent Auction

6:15 Buffet

7:00 Annual Meeting & Awards

\$30.00 Prepayment is due by May 10

Send a check to: LWV Houston Area

4001 N. Shepherd, Suite 213 Houston, TX 77018

Call the office with your credit card 713.784.2923

To attend without buying the dinner please

RSVP 713.784.2923

## Annual Meeting Workbook

The Workbook for the 90th Annual Meeting is available on the website. Printed copies of the Workbook will be distributed at the Annual Meeting. If you cannot attend the Annual Meeting and would like a printed copy of the Workbook, please send a check for \$5 with your mailing address to the LWV Houston Area office, 4001 N. Shepherd, Suite 213, Houston, TX 77018.

## CALENDAR

May 13	Annual Meeting 5-9pm
May 15-20	Unit Socials
May 28	Board Meeting 10:00am, at the League Office

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Nancy Parra

I have certainly enjoyed serving as President of this wonderful organization during the past year and want to extend a special thanks to everyone who helped make it so innovative and successful—the League's Officers, Directors, and Committee Chairs, our new Executive Director, and all of the members who have participated and helped with our many activities.

The past year has been memorable from the first general meeting with Ed Emmet, to our very successful Rally on the Green televised by Channel 2, to our first Repast honoring two outstanding men rather than women. This year, we also launched a major update to our website, adding new content about the Houston Area League and increasing the site's functionality. Our Facebook page has over 950 members and we are on Twitter.

In April and May, we are participating in two very important LWVUS projects. We were selected to participate in Connecting Future Legislators with Civil Society, Colombia and Brazil, and hosted two fellows from Colombia. We were also selected to participate in the High School Voter Registration and Outreach program and registered students at over 20 high schools in the Houston area.

Our League has achieved a great deal this year, and we can feel a sense of accomplishment as we move forward. I hope you will join me at our Annual Meeting to help shape the future of the Houston Area League and also to hear our exciting speaker—Mayor Annise Parker.

## Annual Meeting & Silent Auction

Plan to attend this year's annual meeting. It's one of the most important general membership meetings of the year. It gives you a chance to shape the future of the Houston Area League and to enjoy being a member of the organization. We are electing new officers and directors, adopting a budget, voting on a new program, and presenting awards. And you will definitely want to hear our speaker, a long-time League member—Mayor Annise Parker.

We are again holding a silent auction as another way to raise funds for LWVHA. If you are donating items, please bring them to the office by May 10. If you have questions about the auction, please contact Ann Herbage at 713-236-0975 or [herbs@hal-pc.org](mailto:herbs@hal-pc.org).

## Update on Our Two Colombian Fellows

By Nancy Parra

Our two fellows from Colombia, Monica Andrea Arias from Dosquebradas, Pereira, and Ingrid Janneth Alarcon from Bogota, arrived Friday, April 9, in time to attend our General Meeting on Transportation. The next day, Saturday, Mary Schultz held a welcome lunch where many members were able to meet them. They are delightful and eager to learn about Houston and our political system.

I went with the fellows on Monday to meet and have lunch with the Colombian Consul, Maria Matilde Londono. While at the Consulate, we found out about English classes in the Heights very close to where the hosting families live, and our two interns are now enrolled in the classes.

Ingrid began her internship with Council Member James Rodriguez, District I, and Monica with County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia. Monica has already written several press releases in Spanish for Commissioner Garcia.

Monica and Ingrid are riding the bus to and from work and have adapted well to our public transportation system.

## Voting Procedures

By Wayne Derrick

Only 0.80% of total registered voters voted in the Democratic runoff election, and only 2.27% of total registered voters voted in the Republican runoff election or a total of 3.07%. This is a shameful waste of taxpayer money. One of the Democratic voting locations had only 3 voters. The payroll of that location was \$610.00, so the cost of that location was \$203 per voter. Note that this cost is only a fraction of the total cost of running the election.

If each county had the option of choosing a vote-by-mail election, and all registered voters were allowed to vote-by-mail, and all voters were allowed to register to vote-by-mail permanently, millions of dollars could be saved. LWV of the Houston Area and LWV of Texas both have a position in favor of all of these options.

I suggest that a group of LWVHA members ask to meet with County Judge Ed Emmett, and ask him to contact legislators to implement these proposals at the next session of the legislature.

**Democracy is  
NOT a Spectator Sport!**

## Update: The Youth Engagement Project

By Christine Gorzsynski

As of April 16, the League has visited the following High Schools in Harris County: Aldine, Eisenhower, Kingwood, Clear Creek, Sharpstown, Carver, DeBakey, Wheatley, Sterling, Nimitz, and Furr. According to the most recent count, we have submitted nearly 1000 registration cards for students under the age of 19 in the last two months.

The focus of the Youth Engagement project is to register high school seniors to vote and engage them in the electoral process.

Based on our success, the LWVHA program will serve as a model for the development and implementation of a nationwide LWVUS youth engagement effort. We have twelve more high school visits planned for May and are so grateful for the unwavering support of LWVHA volunteers!

## League Cosponsors Stafford Forum

By Nellie Gay

As in several years past, the League was again asked to cosponsor a candidates forum with the City of Stafford Channel 16. Carolyn Entricht, Director of Television Production for City of Stafford Channel 16, and Nellie Gay, Fort Bend Unit, arranged the forum scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 7–9 p.m. at the Stafford Civic Center in Stafford. Judy Hollinger will moderate.

All candidates in the May 8 city election agreed to participate, including four candidates for three at-large Council positions and four candidates for three Stafford Municipal School District positions. The format consists of questions by a panel of three people: journalists Seshadri Kumar, Fort Bend Independent News, and Beverly Carter, Fort Bend Star; and Linda Webb of the Houston Community College Southwest, Government Dept. Written questions will be accepted from the audience.

The televised forum will continue to be aired on the local City of Stafford Channel 16 at scheduled times until Election Day.

**Nancy Parra and  
David Crossley  
enjoying the  
April General  
Meeting**



## CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

By Shirley Gibson

### Session March 24, 2010

Mayor Parker appointed the following for the Metro board: Gilbert Andrew Garcia, Allen Dale Watson, The Honorable Dwight E. Jefferson, Carrin F. Patman, and Christo Spieler. Council Members Lovell and Noriega complimented the Mayor for picking these people. Council Members Pennington and Adams also congratulated the board and the Mayor for her appointees. The Coastal Water Authority's board was also appointed by the mayor. They were congratulated by Council Members Sullivan, Pennington, and Jones.

The Ordinance approving the Dynamo Stadium was discussed. It was well thought of since there was no city money to be used for the building of the stadium. The deal with the county was also well thought of too. Council Member Lovell said that it will expand the eastern limits to the city putting highway 59 in the center of the city instead of an eastern boundary. Council Member Stardig asked a question about extending the TIRZ in this area.

The Lakewood Church purchase was the last item on the agenda and it was thoroughly discussed. Council Members Pennington and Costello were against the appraisals and they reminded the council that this was a business deal. Several council members spoke for the sale. Council Member Jones said she had changed her opinion after studying the issue at some length. Council Member Noriega also spoke for the sell after finding out that we were getting fair value. The Mayor called the question and it passed with Pennington and Costello voting no.

### Session, April 14, 2010

The first item of business was the installation of our new Police Chief, Charles A. McClelland, Jr. He was administered the oath of office by Mayor Parker surrounded by his mother, daughters, and grand children. The council each wanted to express their congratulations. Council Member Johnson, welcomed the chief first followed by Council Member Lovell who was glad to see that he was chosen from the ranks of the force. She thanked him for being out in the neighborhoods meeting people and seeing their needs. Council Member Adams also welcomed the chief and was glad that he is a man of his word. She said that she asked everyone she met who they would like for chief and all said Chief McClelland. Council Member Gonzales said that he had the opportunity to work with Chief McClelland when he was on the force and thought highly of him. Council Member Stardig said he is really undertaking a huge job as chief and she appreciates him for taking it.

Council Members Hoang and Anne Clutterbuck congratulated him. Council Member Bradford congratulated the Mayor for choosing Chief McClelland and went on to say "Stay strong. You are well suited." Council Member Jones said that in her district the citizens often didn't think they had a fair shot at justice but she believed with Chief McClelland they will have a fair chance. Council Member Noriega said that she has had a chance to work with the new chief and knows that he will be out in the community. And finally the Mayor offered her congratulations and said that she is glad he is serving. Pictures were taken all around.

The next item of business was the juvenile curfew law that was passed in 1999. It has been reviewed in a timely fashion and the attorney, Michelle said that the law has been tested in the courts and proven sound. There was no one to speak against the law so it was renewed.

The Mayor's report was the last item of business. She spoke about the law suit filed by the firewoman who was harassed at Station 54. Mayor Parker said that even

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## Air Quality News

By Laura Blackburn

I serve on both the HGAC Air Quality Committee and the Houston Partnership Air Quality Committee. Both have an "industry" slant, though the Partnership is more so. For example, the Houston LWV recently joined testimony with LWV-Texas supporting new (and better) ozone standards proposed by EPA.

While there was significant argument in HGAC, we were able to at least get them to "not oppose" the new standard, though they did point out the cost to industry. Not so for the Partnership! While we were able to get them to "oppose" less stringently, they did oppose.

It's a demanding effort, though we do make progress from time to time!

### Thank you for your contributions:

Ann Herbage  
Stephanie Hrabar  
Ellen Cohen  
Barbara Yantis

### Welcome new member:

Cynthia Blizzard  
8025 Sandringham Dr.  
Houston, 77024

## The Nominating Committee Presents the Slate for the Annual Meeting:

### Officers (2010-2012)

Community Relations VP Shirley Gibson  
 Organization VP  
 Advocacy Vice President Laura Blackburn (2010-2011)  
 Secretary Alice May Berthelsen  
 Treasurer Barb Swartz

**Directors (2010-2012)** Mary Lee Burrus  
 Gwen Essinger  
 Penny Milbouer

**Nominating Committee (2010-2011)**  
 Betty Oertel  
 Millie Whittington  
 Ann Herbage

### Officers and Directors continuing for 2010-2011:

President Nancy Parra  
 Program Vice President Lynn Walshak  
 Directors: Linda Cohn  
 Marlene Lobberecht  
 Louise Greeley-Copley  
 Leslie Taylor  
 Wayne Derrick

### Biographies of the New Nominees

**Alice May Berthelsen**, a longtime League member, served as president three times with many portfolios in between. Upon meeting a former member of the Houston Planning Commission who served on the commission at the same time as she did, he said "you are still with the same organization!" and Alice May said "of course!"

**Laura Blackburn** served the League in many capacities, including two terms as president and two terms as Advocacy VP. She has been active on the NR Committee and currently serves as Air Quality and Climate Change Chair. She served on the state board, was on the LWVUS energy committee, and is currently on the LWVUS Nominating Committee.

**Mary Lee Burrus** was active in the Houston League in the late 60's, serving on the HR committee and as a unit discussion leader, but dropped out when she returned full-time to the work force. Since her retirement from the staff of the Association of Rice Alumni in 1999, she returned to active membership in the League and focused her energies on discussion leaders once again, resurrecting a monthly briefing session.

**Gwen Essinger** joined the League in the early 70's because the League cared about recycling. After joining and learning the many facets of the League, she became a devoted member and served in many capacities in the Houston League, the Montgomery County League and the Texas State League.

**Shirley Gibson** joined the League in 2004. She has been board secretary, City Council reporter for the Voter, and membership chair. She was also discussion leader for the Southwest Unit and is currently Discussion Leader for the New Member Unit. Shirley also chaired our LWV gala 89<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Parties.

**Ann Herbage** has been a League member for several years and has been involved in volunteer work since her early retirement from an airline. Another rewarding activity is volunteering for a scholarship foundation and study group called the Delphians. Recent activity with LWVHA includes acting as Marketing Coordinator for the Voters Guide, serving as Development chair and as Organization Vice President.

**Penny Milbouer** came to Houston in 1984 as a Property Analyst in oil and gas at a major law firm after a career of teaching German language and culture. She ran the Studies Abroad Office at Boise State University and was appointed a visiting professor at the University of Florida. The twelve years before she retired, she was a paralegal in the law firm's health section, where she worked on Medicare and Medicaid provider enrollment and legal and policy research. Penny also wrote and edited a monthly newsletter on HIPAA (patient privacy law) topics and was web mistress for a client consortium. People she had come to respect and admire attracted her to join League of Women Voters, whose approach to issues fits her idea of what active citizenship should mean.

**Betty Oertel** has been a member of the Houston LWV since the 60's. She served as secretary on the state board and several years on the local League board. She was th Domestic Violence Chair and Child Abuse Chair for many years. Betty chaired the child abuse study for the state League in the late 80's and helped with the formation of the domestic violence unit at the DA's office. She recently passed the Child Issues Chair to Marlene Lobberecht.

**Barb Swartz** joined the League in 1965 when a new League was forming in the Pittsburgh area. Since then she has served in many capacities in Leagues in Dade County, the Pittsburgh area, and in Houston. She was VOTER Editor for the past few years and sits on the LWV-TX Board as Secretary. She looks forward to serving as Treasurer, a position she held before in the Houston League.

**Millie Whittington** is a teacher, and for the last 17 years taught conversational English to foreign students at the University of Houston. She has been the chair of the LWVHA International Affairs Committee and is an active member of several foreign affairs organizations. The League is of primary interest to her because of its principles, goals and strength.

## 48 Nations Join in Nuclear Agreement

By Marge O'Conner

At a summit in Washington, D.C. called by President Barack Obama, 47 other nations responded to his urging to safeguard nuclear material that might otherwise fall into the hands of terrorists and rogue states. Their April 14, 2010 agreement commits all to strive to secure vulnerable nuclear materials over the next four years, and to meet to measure their progress in 2012. Four nations even committed to give up their weapons-grade material: Ukraine, Mexico, Canada, and Chile.

The summit closely followed two other Obama initiatives to reduce the threat of nuclear winter: a treaty with Russia commits both nations to substantially reduce their arsenals, and the President's announcement of a "Nuclear Posture Review" limiting those circumstances in which the U.S. would use nuclear weapons.

While reducing the nuclear threat has long been a bipartisan effort in Congress, there has been substantial opposition to the Nuclear Posture Review by those who believe it reduces the deterrent effect of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. They argue deterrence in fact makes it most unlikely the weaponry would ever be used. The 48-nation agreement, on the other hand, was generally applauded, albeit receiving mixed reviews on how effective it would be in the face of continued nuclear development in North Korea and Iran, and continued fear over the instability of nuclear Pakistan. None of those countries participated in the summit.

## LWV National- Global Climate Change

Global climate change is one of the most serious threats to the environment, health and economy of our nation. Recent scientific studies show that global warming is already causing environmental changes that will have significant global economic and social impacts.

The League believes that now is the time to act on global climate change. We can reduce global warming pollution by using existing technologies to make power plants and factories more efficient, make cars go farther on a gallon of gasoline, and shift to cleaner technologies.

Cities, states and individuals are already adopting many of these solutions, which also reduce our dependence on oil, reduce air pollution, and protect pristine places from oil drilling and mining. State and local initiatives are proving that answers exist.

To reinforce and expand on those efforts, the League urges federal action that reduces global warming pollutants on a national and global scale.

For more information, fact sheets and ways to participate go to [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) and click on Global Climate Change

## Know Your LWVHA Office



**Secretary Michelle Brown**



**Executive Director. Christine Goczynski**



**Christine & President Nancy Parra**



**The Houston VOTER**  
**League of Women Voters – Houston**  
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## **MAY UNIT MEETINGS**

**In May the Units meet socially**

**Third Monday, May 17**  
**Southwest Day**  
Rhoda Haddox  
(713)667-5952

**West Harris Co.**  
Joan Golding, 281-596-0935

**Citywide Evening**  
Jackie Friedman  
(713)521-0702

**Third Tuesday, May 18**  
**Spring Branch**  
Margaret Kolodzie  
(713)465-1068

**Third Thursday, May 20**  
**Midwest**  
Yvette Calloway  
(713)747-6555  
Millie Whittington  
(281)752-0446

**Third Saturday, May 15**  
**New Member/Saturday**  
Shirley Gibson  
281-493-2875

## **HELP WANTED!**

### **Calling All Event Planners!**

We are looking for volunteers to assist with Debates and Forums, Repast, and the Fall Fundraiser 2010-2011.

Interested contact Christina:

[director@lwvhouston.org](mailto:director@lwvhouston.org)

The Houston VOTER is published 10 times per year by the League of Women Voters of the Houston Area. This newsletter is provided as part of yearly membership dues. Non-members may purchase a subscription. Contact the office for details.

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Christine Gorszynski – Executive Director  
Barb Swartz – Editor  
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