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League of Women Voters of the Huntington
Area Bulletin 1990-1999

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5-1999

LWV Bulletin, May, 1999

League of Women Voters of the Huntington Area

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Huntington Area League of Women Voters

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May 1999

LWVUS
www.lwv.org

(then link to LWVWV's site)

League schedules meeting on Mountaintop removal

The Huntington Area League of Women Voters is sponsoring a meeting on mountaintop removal. It will be held on May 17, 7:30 p.m. at Enslow Park Presbyterian church. Speakers will be Jan Fout, OVEC (Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition) and David Todd, Arch Coal Company. Both are strong protagonists for their sides of the issue.

Mountaintop Removal Mining is probably the most controversial and well known environmental issue in West Virginia. Currently a study of the mining method is underway by federal agencies. Furthermore, a federal judge is to rule this summer on the legality of an Arch Coal-permit for the Spruce 1 Logan County mine.

Those who oppose MTR believe that the WV DEP (Division of Environmental Protection) is not strictly following the law when issuing permits. They oppose the valley fills that come from removing the overburden from the coal. They are concerned for the people who live nearby the mining operations. Many oppose leveling the mountains and destroying the way of life of those who live there.

Those who favor MTR say that many coal deposits can only be mined by this method. The coal in the southern part of the state is valuable because of its low sulphur content. They cite the employment of the miners and supporting businesses and the taxes that come from mining as beneficial to the state. They also say that West Virginians are fortunate in having cheap electricity that is enabled by the MTR process.

Come to the League's last meeting of the year. Bring friends and your questions for these two knowledgeable speakers.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Summer Fun. We need people to count flyers for distribution to the schools and people to distribute the flyers. Contact Helen Gibbins, 736-3287 or Rose Riter, 522-4459 if you can help. Frances Huddleston has been receiving and organizing the surveys of recreation providers. Rose Riter will type them to send the format on to the printer.

Thank you to our additional contributors

Betty and Ed Barrett, Laura Gilliam, Nancy Francis, Mr. and Mrs. Boz Johnson, Lynn Mayer, Julie Damewood, Nancy Taylor, Dr. and Mrs. James Taggart, Martha Woodward, Mildred Vaughan, and Dr. and Mrs. Gilbert Ratcliff

ACTION ALERT CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

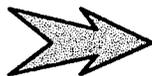
Contact Congressman Rahall asking him to sign the discharge petition to allow Congress to debate and vote on campaign finance reform. Mr. Rahall is one of 27 Democrats who have not signed the petition. He believes the League supported Shays-Meehan bill to be unconstitutional because it regulates issue advocacy. Issue advocacy often takes the form of "sham issues", big-dollar negative issue ad campaigns associated with candidates but without accountability.

The League supports true issue advocacy. We oppose undisclosed, unlimited funds to buy election results. The loophole can be closed in a constitutional fashion. Any paid broadcast communication with the general public within 60 days of the general election that uses a federal candidate's name or likeness would be considered a campaign ad and would be covered by rules pertaining to campaign ads. These rules include the prohibition of financing with corporate funds or union dues; disclosure of donations; and reasonable contribution limits. No group would be prohibited from running any advertisements, regardless of content.

Shays-Meehan also bans "soft money" which allows unlimited contributions from special interests outside of campaign finance laws.

The discharge petition is needed because Speaker Hastert has made it clear he will not support real reform. He maintains that Campaign Finance Reform is not an important issue. The discharge petition, H. Res. 122, provides a procedure that is fair to both political parties and to reformers by allowing debate and votes on a variety of measures, including the Shays - Meehan bill supported by the League.

Contact Congressman Nick J. Rahall II by mail - 2307 Rayburn Building, Washington, DC 20515-4804; phone - 202-225-3452; email - nrahall@mail.house.gov; or FAX - 202-335-7856.



ACCOLADES TO:

The Greater Huntington Park and Recreation District for its web site - www.ghprd.org

It includes upcoming activities and a description of the parks.

A look at some of the 1999 Legislation, which passed

-Senate Bill 591

- * allows children 14 years and under to accompany their parents into voting booths.
- * removes the penalty for signing petitions of people wishing to get on the ballot from third parties. The number of names needed on the petition as been increased from 1% to 2% of the people voting for that position in the previous election.
- * Placed a \$5,000 limit on the amount of money a person may contribute toward the Governor's inaugural celebration.
- * All contributions and expenses for candidates will be placed on the internet by the Secretary of State's office.

-The Women's Commission was reauthorized until 2002.

-Legislation was passed which would not count a parent's or a child's Supplemental Security Income (SSI) when figuring out whether a family can collect welfare. This legislation also requires DHHR and the colleges and universities in WV to develop a plan to utilize college programs to assist welfare participants enrolled in two and four year programs to meet the work activities requirements of the federal and state governments.

Some environmental websites

Environmental Defense Fund -- www.edf.org
Natural Resources Defense Council -- www.nrdc.org
Sierra Club -- www.sierraclub.org
National Audubon Society -- www.audubon.org
WV Highlands Conservancy -- www.wvhighlands.org
WV Environmental Council -- www.wvecouncil.org
WV Rivers Coalition -- www.wvrivers.org

\$ Dues \$

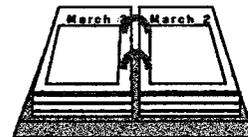
Please make sure you have sent this year's dues to Ann Speer, 706 Ridgewood Rd. Huntington, WV 25701. Thank you!

The LWV is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to women and men of voting age. Annual dues, not tax deductible, are \$35 individual, \$50 for two in one household.

To join, send your check to : Ann Speer, Treasurer, 706 Ridgewood Road, Huntington, WV 25701

LWV Huntington Area
BULLETIN

Sally K. Adkins, Editor



Calendar

May 17 Mountain Top Removal Meeting, Enslow Park Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m.

August 16 Tentative date for fall planning meeting for Huntington Area LWV, Nancy Taylor's home.

Recent League Activities

- * Elinore Taylor spoke to a MU dorm on Campaign Finance Reform.
- * League had a display at Earth Day at MU.
- * Action letter to US Senators concerning the Patients Bill of Rights. If you would like to take action on this issue sign the Patient's Bill of Rights petition online at LWV.org

TRUE TO OURSELVES

True to Ourselves is a book of essays by accomplished women from many segments of society. It is available from the LWVUS and would make a fine gift. By ordering at least 11 copies, the books will cost \$17 each. Please contact Nancy Taylor, 522-3361, if you are interested in ordering a book. The Huntington League plans to give copies to the public high schools and library.

Speeches for organizations

The League offers speeches on Campaign Finance Reform, Get-Out-the-Vote/Elections, and Environmental Shopping. Organizations which wish to schedule speakers may contact Nancy Taylor, 522-3361.

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