



The Anchorage VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ANCHORAGE
PO Box 101345
ANCHORAGE, AK 99510-1345
907-274-8477



MARY ROSENZWEIG, PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's that time of the year when it's hard to keep track of all that's going on! I hope that you all are able to take a few moments out of your busy schedules to consider all of the blessings you have shared over the past year. I for one am most thankful for my wonderful family, which includes husband Ted and daughter Sierra (10), and for my many friends that support and humor me each and every day. Like many transplanted Alaskan families, we are here without extended family and rely heavily on the goodness of the Anchorage community to fill that void.

This leads me to inviting you all to join your fellow League members at our annual Holiday gathering. This year, board member **Barbara Norrell** will host us for hors d'oeuvres on the evening of December 18. Not only will this be our traditional fun, but this will be the third year where we gather items to share with others in the Anchorage area that need support from their community. This year we will gather

household items through December 20 for delivery to the Safe Harbor Inn. An invitation that contains a list of suggested items will be mailed separately.

For those of you not familiar with Safe Harbor, it is a hotel where homeless families and individuals with disabilities can have safe, affordable, comfortable lodging until they are back on their feet and self-sufficient. Residents are very low income and have no other options for safe housing. Items donated by the community provide them with the basics to get them on their feet at Safe Harbor, and eventually into their own housing. For more information go to www.safeharborinn.org.

Shifting gears just a bit, I would also like to take a moment to thank members **Marie Lavigne** and **Carol Dickason** for putting together an outstanding forum on immigration this past month. Seventeen individuals

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Contact us at 907-274-8477
league@lwvanchorage.org
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ORDINANCE UPDATE....

In our last newsletter, we highlighted several proposals by assemblyman Dan Sullivan that would change how Anchorage municipal elections are conducted. To date, two of those proposals have been introduced as ordinances:

AO NO. 2007-152

Public hearing: December 11, 2007

Proposes a charter amendment that would require a run-off election if no candidate for the office of mayor receives more than fifty percent (50%) of the votes cast for the office.

AO NO. 2007-153

Public hearing: January 22, 2008

Proposes a charter amendment that would establish a three-year term of office for assembly members if single member districts are established.

If passed by the assembly, both propositions would be placed on the April 1, 2008 ballot and would take effect immediately upon passage.



You and your guest are invited to join us on

December 18, 2007

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

at the home of Barbara Norrell

5018 Knights Way

Anchorage

Items benefiting Safe Harbor Inn will be collected.

Director Lynn Ballew will make a short presentation.

Additional information is being sent in a separate invitation.

LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY—CONSENSUS PHASE

We have reached the member consensus phase of the LWVUS Immigration Study – the first national study in 15 years. Grassroots agreement on positions is one of the League's greatest strengths; however, the input of all members is essential to coming to consensus on a series of questions dealing with immigration issues. It is only after a position has been reached through consensus that the National LWV can affect public policy.

A meeting has been scheduled for

Thursday, January 24, 2008

**BP Energy Center
900 E. Benson Blvd.
6:00 - 8:15 p.m.**

Mark Your Calendars and Plan to Attend!

Background materials available at www.lwv.org include:

- Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration
- Effect of Global Interdependence on Migration
- Immigration and the Economy
- Immigrants: Diversity and Inclusion
- Overview: Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms
- What Motivates Immigration to America?
- U.S. Immigration Policy: Family Reunification
- Federal Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues

If you would like materials mailed to you, please call the League Office at 907-274-8477 and we'll get a copy to you.

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gathered at the YWCA meeting room to hear from immigration attorney Lea McDermid and John Myatt, Jr. of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services on the complexities of immigration law and the consequences it often has on families.

We learned that U.S. policy gives preference to relatives of U.S. citizens and secondarily to immigrants living in the

U.S. and those with special skills needed by American companies. Additionally, the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program allows up to 55,000 persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the US to apply (on-line) each year; a computer-generated random lottery chooses selectees for these diversity visas. Individuals from several countries, including Canada, Mexico, Philippines, and Russia, currently are not eligible to apply because these countries sent more than 50,000 immigrants to the U.S. over the previous five years.

It was quite an informative presentation and discussion, and certainly illuminated for us many of the complexities of immigration law from both a legal and individual perspective. This forum now leads us to the third and final in our series on immigration. The **Consensus Meeting** is planned for January (more information is contained in this newsletter). I hope that many of you will join us as we deliberate and then add our thoughts to those of local Leagues around the country in the formation of a national LWV position statement on immigration.

I will close by saying that I hope to see many of you at the holiday gathering—but if not, I wish you a very happy holiday season, and safe and happy New Year.

Warmly,
Mary Rosenzweig



Youth Vote's aim is to **build enthusiasm** for life long engagement in our local, state and national electoral processes, and to provide the skills to do so. This non-partisan student-directed program engages students in grades 5-12 to participate in the political process through a computer-based mock election and a live telecast political debate.

We are gearing up to start our fund raising efforts for Youth Vote '08; to date, we have just over \$9,000 towards our goal of \$22,500. Fund raising letters will go out to members, friends of League and businesses in the community. Early in 2008, the Board will be contracting with a project coordinator. If you are interested in helping, please call the League office at 274-8477 or email league@lwvanchorage.org.

COMING TO ANCHORAGE IN MARCH: The LWV of Alaska Annual Convention!

The Anchorage LWV will be hosting the State League's annual convention March 28-30, 2008.

Delegates from the Tanana Valley LWV, Juneau LWV, Upper Kenai Peninsula LWV, and Anchorage will be attending. We will need volunteers to transport delegates to/from the airport, food for the meeting, and possibly providing a bed or two for delegates. All members are welcome to attend the meetings.

Please contact the League office at 274-8477 if you can help.