



April 2013

Membership: 29

www.Montrose.co.lwvnet.org

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTROSE COUNTY

Serving Montrose and Delta Counties

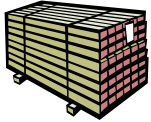
www.lwv.orgwww.lwvcolorado.org

VOTER

PRODUCED IN MONTROSE,
COLORADO

MONTROSE FOREST PRODUCTS An Economic Success Story for the Western Slope

THE LARGEST MILL IN COLORADO, NEW
MEXICO, ARIZONA AND UTAH



GUEST SPEAKER:
NORM BIRTCHER,
GENERAL MANAGER

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2013 - NOON
MONTROSE LIBRARY COMMUNITY
ROOM

More Information on Montrose Forest Products on page 2.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTROSE COUNTY®

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT:
WHAT WILL YOUR HEALTH CARE
LOOK LIKE UNDER IT?



GUEST SPEAKER: **BOB SEMRO,**
BELL POLICY CENTER HEALTH
CARE POLICY ANALYST

INTRODUCING: LINDA GANN, COLORADO
HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE, WESTERN
SLOPE OUTREACH COORDINATOR

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 12:30 PM
MONTROSE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
CONFERENCE ROOMS A & B

League of Women Voters of Montrose County Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 2nd, Noon

Vista Charter School, 1810 St. Mary's Drive (just off Niagara)

Directions may be found on our website on the calendar page.

Special Guest Speaker: Beth Sass, Principal
Beth will talk about the mission of Vista and give us a tour
of their new facility



Box Lunches Catered by Camp Robber
\$11.50 per person

Lunch includes a wrap, fruit salad, dessert and bottled water



Attendees must RSVP to Karen Connor by Thursday, April 25th

Please let her know if you are a vegan and need a lettuce rather than tortilla wrap.

Montrose Forest Products – A Background

The City and County of Montrose and the Montrose Economic Development Corporation collaborated to find a new owner for the Montrose lumber mill that had been in receivership since 2010. In an Outlook publication of the Montrose Daily Press on February 20th, Montrose Mayor Pro-tem, Judy Ann Files was quoted as saying, "It's [Montrose Forest Products] important for the economy and jobs, but also for a healthy forest. The timber industry is important to keep our community's forest healthy for recreational opportunities."

The goals of the mill fit well with The League of Women Voters of Colorado principle on Sustainability: "Sustainability is a way of life, which seeks a balance in meeting current environmental, economic and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the same goal.

The concept of Sustainability is implicit in the Principles of the League of Women Voters. League positions are in compliance with the fundamental principle of Sustainability, recognizing the interdependency among issues of public policy, and the impact of current decisions on the global welfare of future generations."
(Adopted May 2010)

The following are notes taken by Nancy Ball at a Heidi's Forum presentation by James Neiman of Neiman Enterprises, the new owner.

James Neiman, guest speaker and owner of Montrose Forest Products, told the standing-room-only crowd that there are four generations and 76 years of experience behind the Neiman Enterprises name.

Mr. Neiman became interested in expanding his timber business and researched Montrose during the early 1990's with the assistance of Nancy Fishing, Region 10, and Sandy Head, MEDC. He was pleased that our local forests offer a variety of trees---Douglas fir, Engelmann and White spruce, Sub-alpine and Ponderosa pine---and was impressed with the local work ethic. Another company was actually his first choice, but when it was sold to another buyer and after several visits to our community, he purchased the mill out of receivership, with no timber contract in place, last September.

There is a cordial working relationship between the company and the U.S. Forest Service's Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison national forests (GMUG) supervisor, Scott Armentrout. Currently, the company's contract loggers and truckers are going through the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) training that includes CPR, fire fighting, biology, water issues, and safety in order to receive certification. Mr. Neiman is a supporter of the program that he calls "whole forest

health" because of the fragile conditions of our forest. His company operates three mills in the Black Hills National Forest, which have suffered from beetle infestations since 1998, and he stated that our local forest currently have an "extremely serious" infestation. Dead wood/salvage is the highest priority now but he hopes to focus on "green wood" in the future.

In talking about plans for the mill, there has been a \$1 million outlay for upgrading three computers (logs are cut via software), and he would like to get enough product to run a double shift but that requires timber and demand. The company participated in four sales recently but they have restrictions due to elk calving and snowmobiling, so logging cannot begin until July, which means the mill will have down time; also, the new sales amount to only four months of work.

Mr. Neiman stressed the fact that the stud market is quite variable, although prices are good now. As by-products such as particle board, pellets, laminated beams, slash/waste for bio-diesel production, co-generation, and wood flour are also important to the success of any mill, he is hoping to get some of those operations running before long. He has been talking with a company that makes laminated beams located in Montana about this area. He sees the potential business area geographically to extend about 200 miles, although the price of diesel fuel is a real factor as are maximum truck tare weights. Colorado's is less than those in South Dakota.

Also underway at the mill is a safety program that focuses on cleanliness, mainly focusing on dust because an accumulation of dust plus static electricity can lead to explosions.

Mr. Neiman is optimistic about the future of the timber industry and feels that within the next decade logs will be cut using MRI's!

Being a hunter and having grown up around forests, Mr. Neiman is an environmentalist of sorts, however, he feels scientists should be allowed to do their jobs, not political scientists. It is important to know the annual growth potential of each forest and to determine what amount of log footage should be removed to keep a healthy forest. About 1/10 of 1% of the acreage in Colorado is being logged now.

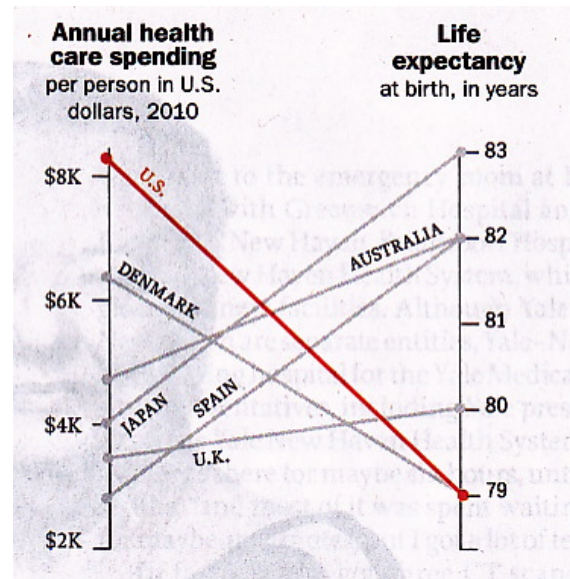
He professed a lack of knowledge of how our local forests "work" because there is a vast difference in altitude, saying that the highest altitude his company logs in the Black Hills is the lowest altitude here. He wants to gain knowledge and to talk with government officials, having met with Governor Hickenlooper recently.

Planning For The Affordable (Health) Care Act

The April 26th presentation by Bob Semro of the Bell Policy Center, will be filled with valuable health care information. Mr. Semro spoke at Colorado League Day in September and will go on to make other presentations for Montezuma and La Plata County Leagues. He asked each league to submit questions that each sees as important to people of their area. The Montrose County League submitted the following areas of concern:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Implementation Costs | Covered Services – meaningful coverage? |
| Premium costs | Penalties |
| Policy maximum payout limits | Pre-existing conditions exclusions |
| Subsidies – income groups | Effects on employer covered health care plans |
| Effects on Medicare | Is it affected by Tabor? |

Graphics from Time Magazine
Special Report on Medical Bills
March 4, 2013



Materials on the Affordable Care Act, its implementation in the states and benefits to individuals and small businesses are available from many sources including:

- Kaiser Family Foundation** - one of the best sources for nonpartisan information about health care reform. Website includes a great summary of the ACA, a comparison of the ACA and alternative legislation, and a detailed timeline for the ACA's implementation.
 - <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/8061.cfm>
 - <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/sidebyside.cfm>
 - <http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/trackingpoll.cfm> latest health care tracking opinion polls
 - <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/> State Health Facts
- Congressional Budget Office** – the nonpartisan office, which provides objective and timely analysis to aid the Congress in making budgetary and economic decisions. The CBO scores the cost of all legislation, calculates the cost of alternative health care proposals and projects the costs of Medicaid expansions among a number of other subject areas.
 - <http://www.cbo.gov/topics/health-care/affordable-care-act>
- Health Care Reform in Colorado** - our state's health care reform website which includes the useful "Roadmap for Colorado", an implementation time line. <http://www.colorado.gov/healthreform>

Why Medical Bills Are Killing Us, Time Magazine Special Report, March 4, 2013: Not about the AHA, but is a good resource for information about escalating medical costs in the U.S.

2012-2013 LWV Community Support

The Montrose County League of Women Voters thanks these local businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated financial and in-kind support for the 2012 year. Please add your thank you when you visit these businesses or visit with these individuals.

Alpine Archaeological
Montrose District Library
City of Montrose
Mountain View Winery
D.M.E.A.
Ardi Halverson
Montrose Community Foundation

Montrose Bank
The Montrose Mirror
Francis Serles
Coffee Trader
Camp Robber Café
Ted Devlin
Horsefly Brewing Company

Dennis Olmstead
Alpine Bank
Stone House Restaurant
Phil Ellsworth
Nole Ryder
Montrose Daily Press
Red Barn Restaurant

February Planning Meeting

The League planning meeting scheduled in March wasn't large in attendance, but was large in ideas. A precursor to the business section of the May annual meeting, members identified topics of discussion in which they would like to be involved during the 2013-2014 League year.

Considerations:

Identify league members who would attend fall registration at the high schools and give eligible students assistance in registering to vote online.

A presentation on options for uninsured individuals and small businesses to register in the Colorado Health Exchange, which goes into effect next fall.

A ballot issues presentation

Presentation on immigration reform at the state and federal level

Discussion of climate change particularly as it affects water

Presentation on options for the growing of hemp in Colorado

Forum for City Council positions

Educational and Consensus question meetings related to an agricultural study from the LWVUS

A 2014 state Legislative analysis by LWVColorado lobbyist, Chris Watson

Expansion of the Making Democracy Work Award

Consider being a member of the board that will make final program decisions - say, "yes" when you are asked to take a board position.

All League members were sent a copy of the actual 2012-2013 budget and a budget proposed for our 2013-2014 fiscal year (July 1st to June 30th). Please look it over carefully. The proposed budget will be discussed and voted on at the annual meeting.

Our League was fortunate to receive a state League grant of monies used to "kick off" the first Making Democracy Work Award and to help defray rental costs for holding the 2012 General Election Candidates Forum at the Pavilion.

In a written evaluation of the events sent to the state League, the board deemed the MDWA a success while identifying areas that we would like to improve in the coming years, including community contacts, improved media connections and growing the number of participants at the presentation ceremony. Our biggest goal is to begin making this a regional event starting this fall by identifying two recipients – one from Montrose County and one from Delta County.

Thank You, Nancy!

At the February meeting, President Karen Connor also announced that she has nominated Program Chair and Secretary Nancy Ball for LWVColorado "Energizer" Award.

Nancy has worked tirelessly to ensure that our own members and citizens of the area have benefitted from meetings/presentations that are apropos to current topics and interests of people on the Western Slope. She makes initial contacts with presenters, interviews them to make sure they are on topic, puts out all of the publicity and then wraps the event up with a thank you to each person involved. The nomination says, "Nancy Ball is the epitome of a dedicated League member. The entire League of Women Voters of Montrose County is thankful to her for her expertise, thoroughness and love for the League. We are proud to nominate Nancy Ball for the LWVCO Energizer Award".

The recipient will be announced at the State Convention in May.

Sunshine Week

The League of Women Voters has long been involved in recognizing Sunshine Week, a nationwide effort to open up dialogue on the importance of transparency in government and freedom of information. In case you missed it, the following letter to the editor from President Karen Connor was published in the Montrose Daily Press on March 10th.

SUNSHINE WEEK

March 10 – 16 is Sunshine Week, an annual nationwide effort to call attention to transparency in government and freedom of information. It is a reminder to us about how important it is to make our voices heard all year long, not just on Election Day.

We all have the right to know what our government is doing – both its successes and failures. Exercising our right to know gives us – the public – power. It allows us to contribute to our government and hold elected officials accountable. The laws that govern us are only as effective as we demand they be.

For decades, members of the League of Women Voters have worked diligently at monitoring all levels of government in an effort to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions. Our local League observes Montrose Board of County Commissioners and Montrose City Council meetings, monitors budgetary decisions and sponsors public meetings that educate citizens on decisions made.

Make your voice heard and join us in keeping Montrose a healthy, vibrant and strong community for all.

Sincerely,
Karen Connor, President
League of Women Voters of Montrose County



846 Main St. Montrose, Colorado

*Support the Montrose County
League of Women Voters
At the Community Tap Night*

**Tuesday, May 28th
5:30 PM to 9:00 PM**

\$1 for every pint sold that evening will be donated to the League

The Horsefly Brewing Company offers hand crafted beers and sodas as well as a full grill menu featuring sandwiches, burgers, soups and salads.

Beer pints are \$3.75

Invite your friends and family for dinner and make a toast to the League.



Red Barn Restaurant
1413 E. Main St.
Montrose, Colorado

*Include your friends and neighbors
and...Support the Montrose County
League of Women Voters*

**Wednesday, June 5th
Starting at 3 PM**

**Get there early/avoid the crowd
Order off the regular menu**

10% of proceeds tonight will go to our League.

Will Uranium Mining Return to the Western Slope?

The Colorado news media has announced that the U.S. Department of Energy is proposing opening up 25,000 acres of land in western Colorado to uranium mining. 31,000 federally managed tracts would be opened in Mesa, Montrose and San Miguel counties.

On April 22nd hearings will be held in Grand Junction, Montrose, Telluride and Naturita. Watch the local media for more information about time and location of the hearings.

Consider Attending the Leadership Conference

Learn new skills for our League, meet Leaguers from across the state, enjoy beautiful Frisco, Colorado! All this and more are possible at the 2013 Leadership Retreat.

Past trainings have included:

- the Membership Leadership Development program, with useful ideas for nurturing membership and new leaders,
- Forms of local League organization, and
- Voter Service how-tos

***Friday, June 21 – Saturday, June 22, 2013
Best Western Lake Dillon Lodge, Frisco, Colorado***

Call Karen Connor **today** and tell her you'll attend!

League Calendar

Make sure these dates are on your family calendar:

Thursday, April 11th, noon, Montrose Library

Community Room: Montrose Forest Products Sawmill presentation by Norm Birtcher

Friday, April 26th, 12:30, Montrose Memorial Hospital, Conference Rooms A and B: Bob Semro will speak on the Affordable (Health) Care Act.

Thursday, May 2nd, noon, Vista Charter School: Annual meeting; Principal Beth Sass as main speaker/tour director.

May 10th/11th, Crowne Plaza, Colorado Springs: 2012 League of Women Voters of Colorado State Convention

Wednesday, May 15th, DMEA Offices, Montrose: League moderates forum for DMEA Board Candidates

Wednesday, May 22nd, Location TBD, Hotchkiss: League moderates forum for DMEA Board Candidates

Tuesday, May 28th, Horsefly Brewing Company, Montrose, 5:30 – 9:00 pm: League Fundraiser

Wednesday, June 5th, Red Barn Restaurant, Montrose, 4-9 pm: League Fundraiser

June 21st/22nd, Best Western Lake Dillon Lodge, Frisco: LWVCO Leadership Retreat

2012-2013 Board Members

President: Karen Connor, 249-2135
kconnor@1941gmail.com

Co-Vice President: Peggy Baxter, 856-6225,
peggybax@gmail.com

Co-Vice President: Martha Grewall, 856-4748, grewalmartha@yahoo.com

Secretary: Nancy Ball, 249-8963
nancyball@montrose.net

Treasurer: Kathryn Carson, 249-3776,
pkcarson@bresnan.net

Membership: Kathie Stigall, 249-6648
lnk@frontier.net

Voter Service: Barb Krebs, 249-3989
stukrebs@hotmail.com

At Large: Bette Nickell, 252-0616,
b_nickell@q.com

At Large: Rod Britten, 240-1119,
rodbritten@montrose.net

Voter/Website: Bonnie Koch, 252-1110
touray@aol.com

Join League of Women Voters of Montrose County

2012-2013

Not for Women Only!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (H) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail _____

Individual \$55 *(Of this amount \$31 goes to National League; \$18 goes to State League; \$6 is retained by the Montrose League)*

Household \$90 – Two members in one household *(National League \$46.50; State League \$27; \$16.50 is retained by the Montrose League)*

I understand that I can join without being active, and this is my intent at the present time.

I would like to make a contribution beyond regular dues – It will go directly to our local League (Thank You!).

Sustaining Member \$100

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Montrose League. *Write a separate check to LWVCO Ed Fund – League of Women Voters CO Education Fund. Write "Montrose" on the check's memo line.*

Please make checks payable to **League of Women Voters of Montrose County**. Mail to Treasurer Kathryn Carson, 62431 N. Star Dr., Montrose CO 81403

Questions? Contact Kathie Stigall, 249-6648, lnk@frontier.net



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

OF MONTROSE COUNTY

Box 3321

Montrose, CO 81402

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.