



<http://www.lwvutah.org>

The League of Women Voters  
of Utah

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**April 2021**

## Local Control at Issue for Grand County



**By Barbara Lacy, President LWV-Grand County**

The city of Moab in Grand County is a good distance from Salt Lake City. There are no commercial flights between Moab and Salt Lake City, no bus service and no passenger trains. The small town of Moab has a different vibe than the bustle along the Wasatch Front. We also have much in common with our urban counterparts: concerns about protecting our resources, providing for public health and safety, and funding for education.

Our local league shares and promotes the mission of the LWV, focusing on educating and registering voters and encouraging informed, active participation in government and safeguarding democracy. Our recent experience of monitoring the 2021 legislative session highlighted areas of shared interest as well as some differences in local priorities.

As president, I watched with appreciation and pride as an enthusiastic team led by Bo Kolb monitored bills, noting Utah LWV positions, providing summaries on our website and sending action alerts as needed. This was the first time in many years a group took on the work of monitoring and tracking bills. They alerted members to bills Utah LWV opposed, such as the bill eliminating permits for carrying a concealed weapon, as well as bills supported by LWVUT. From a distance, the team worked tirelessly keeping track of the action and meeting weekly to review and provide updates. Sadly, many issues supported by LWV failed and much of what LWV opposed was passed.

Bills that seemed to uniquely impact our rural area often gave the team members pause and caused us to wonder if our elected officials subscribe to a "one size fits all" model. Bills that eliminate local control of resources and activities were cause for concern. Examples included a bill removing

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the City of Moab's ability to enact ordinances for short-term rental properties, restricting electronic billboards, and implementing a curfew for off-road vehicles to mitigate the impact of the noise on residential neighborhoods.

Watching the action at seemingly breakneck speed was at times exhilarating and often frustrating. For me it was a wonderful learning opportunity and I have a much better appreciation for the work of Bo Kolb, Judy Powers, Jean Binyon and Belinda Ledbetter.

So what's next for Grand County LWV? There is still much to be done. We are passionate about protecting and preserving our quality of life, our environment, and providing better access to healthcare and education.

With the direction and support of our knowledgeable LWV Utah leaders, we will watch and learn. We'll collaborate with partners at the Capitol and partners in the field. We'll express our opinions, ideas and continue to participate in this wonderful effort to engage citizens and defend democracy!

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## Utahns Prepare as Redistricting Remains in Limbo



### By Gigi Brandt, LWV-UT Redistricting and Money in Politics Adviser

As of this writing, the census data release has been postponed, the executive director of the independent redistricting commission has not been announced, the independent redistricting commission has not met, the commission's website is not up, Utah state has not announced the choice of redistricting software, and the Legislature's joint redistricting committee has yet to be announced. What can a citizen do to prepare for this once in 10-year process which affects us at all levels of government?

Under [H.B. 413](#) the dates of Utah redistricting have changed:

- The Commission has until **November 1** to complete the seven or more public meetings throughout the state
- **Fourteen days** after the last meeting, commissioners must submit the maps, including a detailed report on each map as to how it adheres to the commission's redistricting standards and requirements to the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel
- The Legislature's Redistricting Committee must hold public hearings no more than **15 days** after the maps are submitted.

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Some things citizens can do:

1. Find out how many levels of government will redistrict in your area. For example, local governments may or may not redistrict depending on whether members are elected at-large or in districts. School districts that cover more than one municipality depend on county bodies to redistrict. Salt Lake County has three school districts to be redistricted by the county; Utah County has two.
2. Then, think about how the body to be redistricted has changed in the last 10 years. How might boundaries be changed?
3. Each body that redistricts should develop and define standards for the mapmaking. S.B. 200 has “shalls” and “mays” in its standards. Independent of the law, the Legislature’s redistricting committee will develop standards for its redistricting process. Do you have standards that you think should be incorporated?
4. Begin talking to elected officials and friends about redistricting. If you are involved in school PTAs or community councils, ask them their ideas about redistricting the school board districts. Ask about their plans for public participation.
5. Start playing with available software to [draw the lines](#) in Utah’s four congressional districts. Under preliminary population estimates, the current Congressional District 4 will have to shrink its boundaries because of population increases. How might you draw the lines?

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## Cottonwood Heights Joins ERA Ranks

**By Deborah Case, Cottonwood Heights Observer**

For most people, the Equal Rights Amendment is simply a beautiful and historic dinosaur — a strong and magnificent beast that roamed the Earth in the '70s and left us with an amazing and long-lasting legacy.

But that's just folklore.

Today, in 2021, most people are shocked to know that the ERA was never passed. Nope. Never amended into our United States Constitution. Women, still, do not have equal rights legally in our nation.

Yet, the fight for the ERA is alive and well. Especially in Cottonwood Heights, whose city council just recently passed a resolution to show their city's support for the ERA.

On February 16, Cottonwood Heights City Council members voted 4-to-1 in favor of supporting the ERA with a city-wide resolution. This vote

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succeeded last year's tabled attempt, which failed 3-to-2. Cottonwood Heights not only gained a win, it flipped the vote of two out of the three male city council members. Only one council member, Scott Bracken, chose to abstain from the vote, citing the city's absence of jurisdiction.



Councilwoman Bruce, Mayor Peterson, Councilwoman Mikell recognizes the ERA's importance and reinforces our beliefs as a city to uphold these rights.

A broader hope is that Cottonwood Heights' resolution will help guide other municipal efforts in passing their own ERA resolutions. Businesses and people moving to our cities care about the culture we have and want to feel secure in being recognized, paid, and protected, legally and equally.

The Salt Lake City Council passed an ERA resolution in December 2019. Murray City passed its resolution in March 2020. There are other cities in the Salt Lake League that are interested in learning more about the ERA Resolution and expanding the dialogue. Some cities contacted did not respond to informal requests, some cited other legal anti-discrimination laws their city had, but most indicated that they were unaware of the ERA Resolutions and that it had not been introduced to their city councils.

Cities like West Jordan and West Valley City gave enthusiastic, detailed instructions on how best to introduce the dialogue. Their advice? Contact your city council members, get them to sponsor a resolution, send emails, and speak or submit comments at city council meetings. If you don't have the contact information, go online, or call the city and ask. Most cities do try to respond to their citizens, and they get excited about what excites you!

Currently, Utah is one of 12 states that has never ratified the ERA Amendment. Utah boasts having the first women in the nation to vote and equal political rights. Ironically, Utah also has the highest wage gap for women in the entire nation, and an astoundingly high sexual assault rate. Utah women's equal rights need to be spotlighted and made legal.

A city resolution is very important. What it lacks in legal impact, it more than makes up for in its strong symbolic and unifying strength. It provides a solid set of principles to follow, as set by our leaders. It tells its citizens and businesses alike, new and old, what sort of city we are. It



photo courtesy of NC University Library

In honor of Women's History Month: learn about one of the forgotten figures in the fight for equality and women's rights — Pauli Murray.

Read about her in The New Yorker:

<https://bit.ly/2NnmCn>



There are people still under the false impression that the ERA will lead to negative effects. Those have been largely hypothetical and unproven. Right now, women (and gender) are not a protected class, like race or ethnicity. Cottonwood Heights Council Member Tali Bruce states that the ERA is "... critical from a legal standpoint." Women are not only paid 30 percent less than men in Utah; they are half as likely to receive a pension, as they are described as dependents."

The 2021 legislative session tabled the solidly bi-partisan ERA Bill (SJR8) supported by Sens. Kathleen Riebe and K.A. Cullimore, and Rep. K. Kwan. Sen. Riebe says she will gladly sponsor the bill again next year.

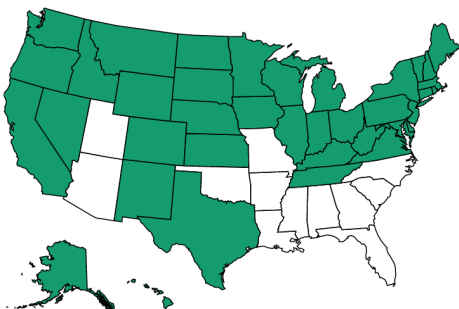
Grassroots efforts at a city level affects your city's appeal — for residents, families, and businesses. Over 94 percent of Americans, and 71 percent of Utahns support equal rights for women, but we haven't voiced it prominently enough. These local, city efforts affect your state legislators, and provide them with the desire and powerful ammunition to push, and pass, the ERA in Utah, and create widespread change.

When cities pass a resolution, they not only represent their citizens, but showcase their citizens' strengths, beliefs, and support. They send a message, a larger message.

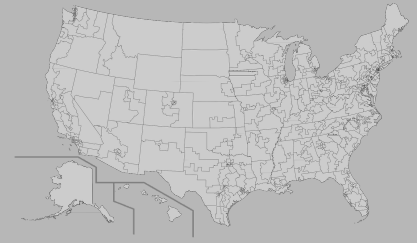
The most important thing you can do as an individual is to speak up. Begin the dialogue. Call your local city council and ask them to add the ERA Resolution to their agenda. Call or write letters to your city and state representatives and let them know how you feel, and where you stand.

**"I'll be voting in favor of it.  
...it's worth passing to state  
that clearly."  
—CH Mayor Mike Peterson**

## ERA Fails in Utah — Again



**Vickie Samuelson, LWVUT Co-President**  
Another failed year for the ERA!  
Once again, advocates and the League couldn't get the resolution out of the Rules Committee. This time around we had by-partisan support with Sen. Kathleen Riebe and Rep. Kirk Cullimore to sponsor the



## **The LWVUS Redistricting Day April 29**

The League has designated Thursday, April 29, as a Day of Action for redistricting. Each state and local league has been urged to plan something to publicize redistricting.

At press time, the LWVUT is finalizing plans. Watch for further information.  
#meant2represent

resolution, but it did not move forward.

The Utah ERA Coalition and the League of Women Voters of Utah held rallies at the Capitol twice this past year although the pandemic kept attendance low.

The Salt Lake Tribune's Robert Gehrke told the Town Club unit meeting that the ERA wasn't a priority among legislators. How do we make this a priority for our representatives on the Hill? They have seen the latest polling that 70 percent of Utahns support it — so why can't it move out of committee?

Here is my request for League members. We need new ideas, and more help to make the new ideas work. Do you have stories that have impacted you or someone you know because of unequal treatment. We're interested in anything you think might help.

You can contact me at [vlwv0200@gmail.com](mailto:vlwv0200@gmail.com).

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## It's a Legislative Wrap for 2021

**By Emily Walsh, Legislative Action Committee Director**

The 2021 Legislative Session is over, thank you to everyone who participated this session by observing committees, testifying, strategizing, doing outreach, advocacy or directly lobbying your own legislator. I hope you realize you made a difference this session. The League of Women Voters of Utah is dedicated to making a long-term difference in Utah and this takes time.

We tracked 174 bills during the legislative session. We had positions supporting 96 of those bills and opposing 15 of them. The Utah Legislature voted in line with the League's positions on 59 percent of bills we had positions on. This number skews low because there were several duplicated/overlapping bills, passing all of them was not practical or desirable. The remaining 63 bills we watched because we either had no position for those bills, had conflicting positions for those bills or we became neutral due to the ways they were modified. Requests for clarification on conflicting positions were made to National, but responses were not always received in time for action on the bill. Our watch list is an important resource for indicating where we may need to do future studies.

The Legislative Action Committee made two study recommendations to the State Board at its March meeting based on the list of bills we watched. The first is a study on youth voting and the second is a study of local vs. state control. There should be more information at the state Convention about studies and how to get involved (if they pass a vote by membership at Convention). Convention may not seem related to the work the Legislative Action Committee does, but it is extremely important. Convention is when program and studies are approved. The League's



## Join Us Virtually

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way our events and meetings happen — and it has opened a new world of engagement for League members.

If you missed “Redistricting: How Citizens Can Have a Voice” - the recent conversation with author David Daley and Co-president Catherine Weller - you can view it [here](#):

You are invited to join any of our Utah or local League events posted on our [website calendar](#). If you miss any, check out our [videos on YouTube](#).

If you would like your event on the League website, send to [communications@lwvutah.org](mailto:communications@lwvutah.org)

ability to take a position on a bill depends on our having done a study on the issue and having come to consensus on a policy position. The information in our educational studies help us discuss and shape opinion on issues at the Legislature. Your involvement in a study can have an impact at the state level.

The Three Quick Picks we did weeknights on KRCL during the General Session were a hit. There is a SoundCloud playlist available on the Legislative Action page at [lwvutah.org](http://lwvutah.org). We have been asked to continue doing those on KRCL 90.9FM's RadioACTive show through Interim.

I expect the Legislative Action Committee will continue to meet virtually through interim until the majority of the committee feels it is safe to begin meeting at the Capitol again. All are welcome to join the Legislative Committee. To sign up for emails reporting on the Utah Legislature's interim committees send a request to join the Google group to [action@lwvutah.org](mailto:action@lwvutah.org). We hope to see you on line or in person May through November as the League continues to monitor "the people's business" at the Utah Legislature.

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## Recycling Became Difficult During Pandemic



**By Susan Skordos, LWV-Weber County**  
In February, the League sponsored a presentation about the current issues with recycling in Ogden. The speaker Gina Hughes, Ogden City Refuse Supervisor, reported that Ogden curbside recycling began in 2002; however, in 2018, China, which had previously been a buyer for recycled materials, banned importing them. The materials had become too dirty and were

contaminated by other wastes. China wanted materials to be 99.5 percent "pure," but that could not be achieved.

This put recycling in a tailspin, resulting in all wastes from Ogden ending up in the landfill. To return to "single stream" recycling, allowing people to put paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and aluminum containers in the bins, the public had to be educated as to what could actually be recycled. The costs to recycle had risen to \$80 per ton in 2019. With public education concerning what items could be recycled, the costs in 2021 have dropped to \$50.08 per ton. Costs of regular garbage disposal is presently \$40.49 per ton.

## In Memory: Marelynn Zipser

Marelynn Zipser passed away on February 17 at the age of 83.

Marelynn had a Ph.D. in food service and nutrition. When she and her husband Ed lived in Colorado, she worked for Celestial Seasonings where she formulated the seasoning of Lemon Zinger and other teas.

When she and Ed moved to Salt Lake in 1999, she joined and volunteered for the League. Dynamic and outspoken, she served on League boards and was a reliable volunteer. Among her many accomplishments she informed League members about the prospects for climate change. The League is listed as one of the organizations to honor her memory.

You can read more about her fascinating life [here](#).

Plastic wrap, garbage and grocery store plastic bags have become the biggest contributors of contamination. Some stores offer to collect these bags in bins located in the stores.

Plastic recyclables with the numbers 1 and 2 are the more valuable. Plastics numbered 3-7 are not desirable and should not be placed into recycle bins. Metal cans should be rinsed before placing in bins. Glass needs to be taken to bins that are specifically labeled for glass.

Ms. Hughes discussed the future of recycling and waste collection costs, which have been unstable with COVID-19. At the beginning of the pandemic shut-downs, many people were at home and doing yard work. Waste collection, particularly with green waste, struggled to keep up. Collection route drivers, as well as workers for repairs and replacement of equipment, became difficult to keep. She and her employees were working multiple shifts and becoming exhausted with trying to pick up all the materials. A future minus COVID-19 will be most welcome.

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### **She Is Me — Charles Bernard** *An ongoing feature about LWV volunteers*

I'm a writer and administrative worker who lives in (and is madly in love with) Salt Lake City. I serve on the Board of Friends of Gilgal Gardens, a group not unfamiliar to many League members, and also volunteer with a service garden for low-income and disabled seniors at St. Mark's Millcreek. I am an extremely active member of the Satanic Temple, and serve in multiple volunteer capacities in Utah Friends of the Satanic Temple — we should be an official chapter by Pioneer Day of this year! I was originally born in Grand Junction, Colorado and spent my childhood in Bountiful, but I've now lived in Salt Lake longer than anywhere I've hung my hat. Utah — and Salt Lake — is my home.



Which is why I became active with the League. Several years ago I resolved to take a more direct role in making Utah's democracy function better. It took almost no time or research to conclude that the single most effective way to do this (and the most ethical) is the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan, thoroughly scientific, pro-voting-rights organization with a storied and amazing history of effective action. I couldn't wait to get involved — and my decision has proved to be the right one over and over again. The League is an organized, efficient, pragmatic group that accomplishes more in one legislative session than most groups can claim in a decade. Not to mention — the company is fantastic! I hope to stay involved as long as possible.

## **Activism Matters**

That's the name of the League's 5K Fun Run this year. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 18. We will be live at Liberty Park, but also plan a virtual run after 2020's successful "100 Years Running" 5K in honor of our century of work.

Join our team! We can use all the volunteers we can muster for as much or as little time you can spare. You won't regret it.

Let us know what you'd like to do, what you have to offer, or what you'd like to learn:  
[comms@lwvsl.org](mailto:comms@lwvsl.org)



To me, the League represents everything that is worthwhile about American Democracy. That is a tall statement, but one I will stand by: we promote reasoned discourse, community betterment, political involvement by disenfranchised communities, and, above all, the belief that American Democracy matters and is something worth preserving through effort and commitment. If you want to get something done, to improve a situation or to accomplish a seemingly-impossible task, the group you should go to for help is the League of Women Voters.

## Water in Utah

Join the League for a vibrant discussion of water in Utah. Steve Erickson of the Great Basin Water Network will speak on the Cedar City Water Grab and give an update on the Cover Reservoir.

Questions and discussion will follow the presentation.

Because this will be a virtual meeting, all leagues and friends are invited to join.

Wednesday, April 7  
6:30 p.m.

Watch the League calendar for Zoom information.

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

### Our first Presidents

Emily S. Richards 1919  
Leah Widtsoe 1922  
Margaret Lane Cherdron 1923  
Lottie Dern 1924  
Mary Copley Hogle 1925  
Mts. J.J. Fitzgerald 1928  
Mrs. D.D. Kipp 1930  
Nina Brockbank 1937

Betty Bailey  
Barbara Burnett  
Jean Porter  
Doris Wilson  
Ruth Draper  
Lloyd Bliss  
Lee Brennan  
Lynette Wilson  
Gina Reike  
Ruth Petajan  
Nancy Carter  
Alice Griffith  
Deanna Clark  
Nanette Benowitz  
Diana Allison  
Jill Lesh  
Pat Braun  
Terri McCulloch  
Karil Frohboese  
Carenlee Barkdull  
Sharon Walkington  
Nancy Cooper  
Janice Gygi  
Joyce Davis  
Nanette Benowitz  
Nelda Bishop  
Jenn Gonnely  
Lola Britton  
Peggy Carrico  
Catherine Weller  
Vickie Samuelson

We take time to honor the past presidents of the League of Women Voters of Utah and the countless men and women who have worked with us over the years to Defend Democracy and Empower Voters.



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