



<http://www.lwvutah.org>

The League of Women Voters  
of Utah

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February 2021

## 2020's Challenges Pave Way for Hope in 2021



By Terri McCulloch, LWV-Weber  
President

The year 2020 provided us with celebrations and challenges that many of us never expected to see in our lifetime. When I was 24 and new to the League, I wouldn't have comprehended that I would be around to celebrate the 100th

anniversary of women getting the right to vote. Even then, I didn't realize what the right to vote really meant for women. Sure, I was able to vote and express my opinions, but the work that made this possible didn't fully hit me until much later in life. For perspective, my grandmother was alive during this fight. While I can't ask her now if she was involved, I can assume she was, knowing her beliefs. Because of my many (and I mean *many*) years in the League, I finally understand how difficult this really was and what this meant for our country, from our state and national governments to the news media.

Another thing to celebrate about 2020 is the feeling of camaraderie and support for others we developed during the pandemic, and the increase in positive family interactions that many of us enjoyed. Spending time with family doing puzzles, playing games, and watching movies helped to build family values in many homes. While facing the challenges of COVID 19, individuals and businesses alike were forced to create alternate ways to meet their needs. The first three months seemed to force a pause in everything. When the realization came that this situation wasn't going to be over quickly, we had to come up with other ways to function. Zoom became something everyone had to have

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access to. Teachers turned their classrooms to online instruction, government meetings were not held in person, religious ceremonies were done through the internet, etc. Everybody became creative in how to continue to conduct business in a totally different way. I do not believe we will ever go completely back to where we were prior to the pandemic because some of the new “normal” actually makes more sense. I do look forward to in-person meetings for the League again, but I also believe that even then we will conduct them concurrently on Zoom for people who cannot attend.

Recent events round out the year on a note of sadness that a portion of society has become what it has. Getting America past this is going to be the biggest challenge our country will face for a long time. We all need to work together to support change in a positive way. Being involved will be integral, tolerance and patience will need to be emphasized, and an open mind is essential. Our country hasn't run from other challenges and should not do so now. Stop and think of the things you can contribute to this healing process and commit to do them! I wish you all a very safe, prosperous, and peaceful 2021.

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## 2021 Legislative Session Kicks Off

**By Vickie Samuelson, LWV-UT Co-President**

Tuesday, January 19 marked the start of the legislative session. The Utah League's Legislative Action Committee has also swung into action. With COVID-19 still out of control, it will be a virtual session, but there may come a time when some of us can attend in person. Right now, it is required that we still attend virtually.

Here is the information that you all need to know so we can have a successful session. LAC meetings began on Wednesday, January 20 at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. The Slack workspace is open. Since we no longer have the dynamic of the cafeteria, online socialization can be a temporary replacement. One useful tool is [our bill tracker](#). This tracker will let you know of any changes made to the bill, the vote, the committee, etc. I follow several bills each session this way. There are also [how-to videos](#) available on how to engage with the Legislature electronically if you are new to the committee or simply need a refresher.

Last but not least, make sure to visit our award-winning Legislature website: [le.utah.gov](http://le.utah.gov). This site is user-friendly and has a lot of detailed information. I would suggest you go in and play around so you can

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become familiar with it. If you have any questions you can reach me at [vlwv0200@gmail.com](mailto:vlwv0200@gmail.com). Remember, all reports are shared in the Google group exclusively. If you want to join our Google group you can contact Emily Walsh or Vickie Samuelson at [actioncorps@lwwutah.org](mailto:actioncorps@lwwutah.org).



## League Joins Virtual Panel on Police Reform

**By Shauna Bona LWV-SL Local and County Government Committee**

Utah lawmakers and community leaders recently discussed opportunities for meaningful police reform via legislation. The January 11 virtual event — “Coming Together on Police Reform: How will the Legislature Make a Difference?” — was sponsored by the Salt Lake League of Women Voters and other community organizations.

Panelists identified upcoming bills on mental health, qualified immunity, accountability and transparency, forcible entry, and use of force by police. They agreed on the importance of collecting and sharing the data necessary to end targeting of minority communities and addressed issues of racial equity and the militarization of police departments. A [recording of this event](#) is available on the Utah League website.

The event was moderated by Jason Groth, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah, and included four panelists who have been actively engaged in promoting or answering citizen demands for equity and justice in policing. They included Jani Iwamoto, (a Utah state senator representing Holladay), Molly Davis (Policy Analyst at Libertas Institute), Carl Moore (co-founder and chairperson of Peaceful Advocates for Native Dialogue and Organizing Support [PANDOS]), and Eric Hutchings (former state representative from Kearns).

It was the third in a series of panel discussions sponsored by the League in collaboration with Better Utah Institute, NAACP Salt Lake Branch, ACLU

### Utah League

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of Utah, Utah Black Roundtable, and Journey of Hope. A final virtual panel will be held Monday, March 8, at 7 p.m., focusing on results from the 2021 legislative session and the next steps in reform efforts. More information and RSVP links will be available in the Briefing and LWV-UT calendar later this month.

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## Want to Do More? The Utah League Can Help

**By Millie Fletcher, LWV-SL Unit Coordinator**

We dutifully make it to the polls and proudly wear an “I Voted” sticker for a few days. We try to stay informed by paying attention to our favorite media sources so that our vote is a well-informed one. Sometimes, though, that doesn’t feel like enough. We all need to feel better informed, more useful, and more effective. If this is the case for you as well, the League of Women Voters provides an ideal place from which to channel energy into effective action in the company of other committed people.

In this amazing and pivotal year I learned and continue to learn about the issues facing our communities. One of those is police reform. The League joined with Better Utah Institute, NAACP Salt Lake Branch, Journey of Hope, Utah Back Round Table and the ACLU to plan four panel discussions that will provide a public forum for all points of view to be aired and understood. Law enforcement, mental health professionals, legislators, advocates for the unsheltered, community activists, sociologists, and others will participate and give us a view from each unique perspective. It is becoming obvious that there won’t be just one solution and that the issue requires continual community input, wise leadership, and a steady and skillful hand.

Another topic on which I became better informed is the effort to transfer public lands to private interests. While most of us already know this is an enduring issue with deep roots in the West, the study presented by the Grand County League gave us the history of how and why these lands were established and an understanding of the broad efforts to divest the public of them. This, and all recent studies, with reference to other informative sources, can be accessed on the [LWV-UT website](#) under the tab [What We Do](#).

I have highlighted only two topics we discussed this year in our Zoom meetings. There have been others: racism, the balance of the Supreme Court, voting rights, climate change, and more. The Utah [League of Women Voters](#) website and [Facebook](#) pages provide information on unit

## Presidential Pardon Power Explained

Did the events of January, 2021 leave you wondering what the scope and history of Presidential pardon powers are?

The Brennan Center for Justice has [an excellent breakdown of the issue here](#).



meetings, topics and meeting times, and with Zoom links, anyone can attend. It is a learning adventure.

The League of Women Voters provides a way to do more than vote; it provides a way to become a better informed and more active participant in our grand experiment in democracy. It's a good place to be even for those of us who want and need to speak our mind even when our voices shake.

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## Make Your Voice Heard in 2021 Elections

**By Shelly Jackson, LWV-UT Director of Voter Services**

Utah, and the nation, saw record-breaking voter turnout in the last presidential election, but did you know that Utah will be holding elections again in 2021? Many people are unaware of or uninterested in off-year elections, but these are the elections that have the most direct impact on citizens' lives. In Utah, odd-numbered years like 2021 are when we elect our mayors and city or town council members. The decisions made by these people have a direct impact on our daily lives. We need to urge our friends and neighbors to vote during these elections, too.

City officials generally have responsibility for police and fire departments, housing services, emergency medical services, transportation services, and public works. These are the things in your community that directly impact your daily life. Compare that to your vote for president. When you vote for president, you are really voting for an elector from the winning party – in Utah there were 1,488,289 votes cast for president. Those votes led to six electoral votes for the State of Utah. Those six votes represent a tiny fraction of the 538 available electoral votes.

In a city election, on the other hand, each vote is a direct vote for your chosen candidate and many outcomes in city elections are won by razor-thin margins. Your vote in a local election has a direct impact on the election results and on issues that impact your daily life.

So, how can you get involved?

As discussed above, voting makes a huge difference in local elections, but if you want to take a further step, file paperwork to run for office. In the next few weeks, each city recorder will post the open seats up for election on their website. Residents who wish to run for office need to file their declaration of candidacy at their City Hall between June 1-7. If a primary election is needed, it will be held August 10. Municipal general elections

## Hear More About Abortion Laws Study

A panel discussion

**Date:** Thursday, February 18

**Time:** 6:30-8 p.m.

The League of Women Voters of Utah Study of Utah Abortion Laws is an educational study that provides an in-depth look at Utah legislative bills from 1975-2020 and how they affect a women's right to health care decisions.

Join us on Zoom:  
<http://bit.ly/39mflWN>  
Passcode: 830564

You can download and  
[read the study here.](#)

will be held November 2.

Don't be nervous, and remember: the people currently elected to these positions are your neighbors, friends, and acquaintances. Why not you? Remember, the 2021 elections will matter!

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## The Utah Inland Port Battle Continues

**By Ann O'Connell, LWV-SL Natural Resources Chair**

Perhaps perceived by some as nothing but fringe groups spouting negative slogans about the polluted future of the Salt Lake Valley, the Stop the Polluting Port Coalition continues to follow the path of civil discourse with community leaders and the public about the costs and dangers of port development.

For example, the Stop the Polluting Port Coalition has requested meetings with Gov. Spencer Cox and Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall, and meetings are even anticipated with legislators. One objective is to create a friendly relationship and demonstrate that port opponents are knowledgeable, sincere, civil – and also very determined -- in their campaign to stop the port. As you might guess, a meeting with the mayor is likely to happen, though the governor has not responded yet.

Another reason for these meetings is to ask for help in funding a "Human Health Risk Assessment" for the port at future total build-out, which is not as wild an idea as you may think. The cost is small, possibly as low as \$20,000, and coalition members have already raised half of the required funds. A donation from the city or the state would only be a gesture, but it would be a significant one because this dialogue provides an opportunity to educate leaders about the Inland Port Authority's failure to do real research into all the pollutants the port will produce: air, water, light, and noise. It is a chance to start them down the road to realizing that an inland port is a polluting port.

To keep up with League involvement, join the Inland Port Google group by contacting the League office manager: [office@lwwutah.org](mailto:office@lwwutah.org).

## Save the Date

**Date:** March 16

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Virtual

Redistricting: How Citizens  
Can Have a Voice

League Co-President  
Catherine Weller will  
conduct an online  
conversation with David  
Daley, author of Ratf\*\*ked:  
Why Your Voice Doesn't  
Count

and

Unrigged: How Americans  
are Battling Back to Save  
Democracy.

Watch for more  
information.

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## Utah League's 2021-2022 Program Planning Underway

**By Nickie Nelson, LWVUT vice president of Programs, and Tina Hose, LWVUT board leadership adviser**

In the coming months, the Utah League will be sending out a survey to its

membership statewide via email. The goal is to help determine the state League's Program for 2021-2022. We need your response to guide our League's educational efforts and lobbying positions.

"Program" is the term used by the League to define those governmental issues chosen each year for concerted study and action. Studies are defined as educational or consensus. Educational studies are written to educate and inform members and the public. Consensus studies are used to develop an agreed-upon position for lobbying at the Utah State Legislature.

For example, this past year you saw, and possibly participated in, these educational studies: [Utah Abortion Laws](#), [Recycling in Utah](#), [The Ballot Initiatives in Utah: How and Why](#) or one of two consensus studies: [Transfer of Public Lands Movement Study](#) and [Utah's Transition to Clean Energy Study](#).

Each year, the Utah League's vice president of programs collects study suggestions from its membership through a survey. With the data obtained from this survey, the board reviews and presents selected studies for adoption by the membership at the Annual LWV-UT Convention in May. In the coming months, please make sure to look for and complete the LWV-UT's 2021-2022 Program Survey. Again, your responses are critical in developing a program that is engaging, current, and educational.

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## Zoom Refresher and Tips

**By Tina Hose, LWV-UT Board Leadership Adviser**

This past year, the League managed programs and communications with its members through Zoom, a video conferencing computer program. This refresher offers information about Zoom meeting formats and provides tips for Zoom attendees in the areas of muting and how and when to have your photo/video on and off.

### Background

Zoom *meetings* and webinars are two different platforms that offer similar features, but also have some important differences. Zoom meetings are used for collaborative events (study group meetings, board meetings, unit meetings, etc.) where there is screen sharing and attendees are able to turn their own microphones and video on and off as well as see who else is in attendance.

Zoom *webinars* are designed so that the host and designated panelists

## Ranked Choice Voting Sees Success in Alaska

The LWVUT is working to make *Ranked Choice Voting* a widespread voting system in Utah. Most members are beginning to understand how to select representatives through *Proportional Representation*. Will *Top Four (or Five) Primaries* be next? Read about the successful Alaska ballot measure for [Top Four Ranked Choice Primaries](#).

Also, keep up-to-date with the RCV bill in the Utah Legislature:  
<https://le.utah.gov/~2021/bills/static/HB0127.html>

**-Ann O'Connell, LWV-SL  
Natural Resources Chair**

share their video and audio with view-only attendees. Attendees interact via the Q&A or Chat buttons, located at the bottom of the Zoom screen.

### **Tips for Zoom Attendees**

First, be mindful of background noise and *mute your microphone when you aren't speaking*. This helps to manage your unexpected background noise, i.e. your dog barking, family coming in to ask questions of you, the neighbor's lawn mower/snowblower, etc.

Muting (not being able to be heard when speaking) is indicated by a red, crossed-out microphone in the corner of your photo/video box. To unmute, on your Zoom photo/video box, check the upper right-hand corner for three dots. Clicking on those dots gives you the option to mute and unmute your microphone. Tip for a quick unmute: hold down your space bar and speak once you are unmuted.

Your Photo/Video Box keeps your face/photo on screen, or it can also show a black square with your name only if the video and images are disabled. To manage your photo/video box: As a courtesy to the meeting leader, if you want to "leave" momentarily, click on the three dots in the corner of your photo/video box and click off your video option. That will replace your face/video spot with your name only. Leaving the meeting on-camera and displaying only your empty seat can be distracting. Attendees' eyes and concentration move from the speaker when you move, and connection with the speaker can suffer as a result. As noted above, it only takes a second to move from video to name-only; do it as a sign of respect for the speaker and other attendees. To return to your live video, go back to three dots on your name box and click on video.

Our League office manager and Zoom administrator is Peggy Carrico. She has been *the* source for getting the League on Zoom, setting up League meetings, counseling attendees out of trouble spots, getting meeting links sent out, and using special Zoom features such as screen sharing, screen background changes, question polling, etc. Email or call her with your tech-y questions regarding your next Zoom meeting: [office@lwvutah.org](mailto:office@lwvutah.org) or 801-938-4308. Happy Zooming!

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### **She is Me: Gigi Brandt**

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

I joined the League in Massachusetts in 1967. My first job in the League was as an observer at the Board of Selectmen in Bedford. Bedford was a

### **Join Us Virtually**

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

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](#).



small enough community to be governed by an annual town meeting in which all were welcome to participate. This experience cemented my belief that an open government, where any citizen's concerns were weighed in policymaking and implementation, is the most desirable form of government. My first League board job (in Massachusetts ) was Voter Service chairman.

I have had many positions at the board level: as *Voter* editor, chairs for Energy, Voter Service, Environmental Policy, Education, Government, unit organization and president and vice president. I have served on many study committees at the local, state, and national levels. I have made many friends during my League association and have met many interesting policymakers and politicians. I like the League because generally we look at problems from many angles and frequently are prescient about future problems. One never struggles to make conversation with a new or old League friend. A friend of mine put it well—she told her husband she would move anywhere as long as there was a League nearby.



## League Highlights 'She is Me'

The Salt Lake League will be offering profiles of our amazing volunteers in an ongoing series called "She Is Me."

Our national League is exploring diverse stories of women who have shaped past and present progress for voting rights in celebration of 100 years of fighting for democracy. The Utah Voter invites any local leagues to submit profiles for this series.

Send to:

[thevoter@lwwutah.org](mailto:thevoter@lwwutah.org)

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## LaWanna 'Lou' Shurtliff, 1935-2020



**By Terry McCulloch, LWV-Weber President**

Weber County lost an important member and a true advocate for citizens last year. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff passed away on December 30, 2020, of an unexpected respiratory infection. This was 28 days before she was to begin her term in the Utah Legislature. She had previously served in the House of Representatives from 1999 to 2008. She did not seek re-election in 2008 as her husband was ill and required her attention. After he passed away and after

two Weber State students asked her to, she threw her hat in the ring in the 2018 election.

Lou taught English and business in the Ogden School District and was an advocate for students. She was always a voice for the underdog. She initiated bills against domestic violence and stalking and to increase funding for public schools. She also worked diligently toward justice reform and to combat substance abuse. She listened to her constituents and represented them, not her own agenda. Lou was a person of integrity,

compassion, and dedication. She had been an active member of the League for many years and will be missed greatly. We will not be the only ones, either: Gov. Spencer Cox's [first legislative act of 2021](#) was to sign a resolution, [HCR 7](#), honoring her legacy and her contributions to the State of Utah. As she said from her hospital bed, "I've lived an incredible life."

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## Karen Louise McCoy, 1945-2020

By Lola Britton, Past President LWV-SL and LWV-UT

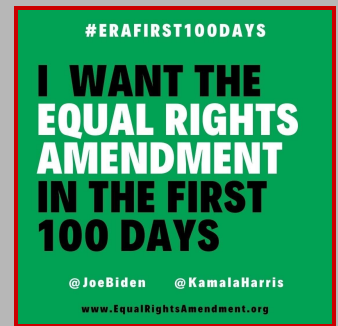
On December 29, 2020, Karen McCoy passed from complications of multiple sclerosis. Karen was an active member of the League, even before accepting the nomination for co-president of the Salt Lake League in 2014. Karen was soft-spoken, always willing to compromise, but able to lead with firmness. Karen's husband, Don, always watched with admiration as Karen planned and directed events which he never failed to attend.



Among her many contributions, she worked as the nominating chair for the 2015-2017 board elections, led the Salt Lake League's 63rd Annual Meeting, worked with the committees on Voter Outreach (the Farmer's Market and Wheeler Farm), naturalization ceremonies, arranged tours of the Jordan Valley Conservancy Garden, and supported the Road Home and the Fisher House (located at the Salt Lake Veteran's Hospital). She was instrumental in a state agriculture study, which was most recently updated. Karen even enlisted her daughter Chante to assist with graphics.

Many things have changed since 2014; however, Karen's influence on the Salt Lake League remains as an example to all of us, and a reminder of the tremendous difference that one person can make. Read [her obituary](#).

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