



League of Women Voters Torrance Area
 Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

<http://www.LWVTorranceArea.org>
 Tel. 310-223-6897

LWVTA Voter

August 2012

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**Register
to VOTE**

President's Message

Hello LWVTA Members,

Here we are at the beginning of another League year. The goal for 2012-13 for LWVTA is to be more visible in our community and to our members. Without walking our talk and demonstrating our purpose, there is no reason to exist. The next two years will be very busy and there will be a great need for us. In 2014, our local Torrance elections will be the most active in years, with three councilmen and the mayor terming out.

How we plan to be more visible is through focusing on communication: how we communicate with our membership, how we communicate with the public, with sister organizations (LWV, AAUW, etc.) and affiliated groups of interest (professors, etc).

Our media platforms will be email, Twitter, Facebook, meet-ups, YouTube, and the local newspaper. We will also be more visible by having booths and registering people at local events, companies, and schools, or just plain showing up with our name tags on! Our documentary will also give us visibility and let people know that we are not new but a strong vital part of the local community. We plan to be more visible in all the areas we serve and hope to attract new members by doing this.

Cont'd...

Calendar

Saturday, July 28, 9:30am-2pm **Popovers in Pasadena**, LWV/LA County Annual Summer League Day with Workshops

Thursday, August 2, 7-9pm **Board Meeting***

Tuesday, August 18, 9:30am-1:30pm **Sentencing Reform Forum, Loyola Law School** (see Pg.7 flyer)

Thursday, August 20, **last day to sign up to join us in the Torrance Centennial Parade** (see Pg. 4)

Monday, Sept 3 - **LABOR DAY**

Thursday, Sept 6, 7-9pm **Board Meeting***

Saturday, Sept 16, 12n-2:30pm **Torrance Centennial Community Parade**

Tuesday, Sept 25, **National Voter Registration Day**

*Call for location

Dues for 2012-13 are due

President's Message (cont'd)

We hope you'll be able to volunteer on occasion, or attend meetings, be part of the documentary, or just donate money. Any participation at any level is helpful... and very much appreciated!

In this issue you will read about having the chance to be a suffragette/participant in the Centennial Parade - we are looking for people of all ages. Don't miss the article bringing you up to date on the elections we helped with at the NTCC, official word on the Affordable Care Act, the LWVUS Convention Report, and more...

Upcoming you will see that we are hosting a Voter Registration Day in September, so look for that on our website or in your next Voter issue. There will also be a fundraiser soon showing the movie "Patriocracy" to launch our fall season, so watch for that announcement. We will be putting on a Pros and Cons for the ballot measures, and much more... be sure to check the Calendar and make a note of the dates. We look forward to seeing you at all of these events!

You should be receiving your membership renewal form in the next week. Please send it back as soon as you can (before September 1) so you can be included in the 2012-13 roster.

It's going to be a fun and pivotal year and I am glad we are all here for the ride.

Cheers!

Athena Paquette Cormier

President LWVTA 2012-2014

Board of Directors 2012-13

President: Athena Paquette Cormier
Vice President: Pat Kromka
Secretary: Kay White
Treasurer: Angela Sayers

Directors

Action: Lola Ungar
At Large: Eunice Hargrove
Communications: Sydne Morrison
Education: Gerry Rische
Fundraising: Athena Paquette Cormier
Health: Barbara Barker
Membership: Athena Paquette Cormier
Natural Resources: Margaret Carter
Pro and Cons: Jackie LaBouff
Public Relations: Lola Ungar
Smart Voter: Pat Kromka
Social Media: Emma Simmons
Social Policy: Gerry Rische
Voter Service: Jackie LaBouff
Webmaster: Barbara Barker

The *LWVTA Voter* is published monthly except July and December. All LWVTA members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in the *LWVTA Voter*. Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Email submissions to lww.torrancearea@um.att.net on or before the fifteenth of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.
Editor: Gillian Zali

The Old Board/ New Board Meeting was held on June 3 at the home of Lola Ungar and we thank her for her hospitality!

* * *

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters Torrance Area, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

League of Women Voters Torrance Area News

LWVTA Administers the Normont Terrace Coordinating Council Election *by Lola Ungar*

Jackie LaBouff, Voter Service Director, and I set off on a long journey back in March 2012 when we met with the President and Executive Director of the Normont Terrace Coordinating Council (NTCC), northwest side of Vermont Ave. and PCH, who asked us to prepare a ballot and administer their nominations and their election. We were told that a court had ordered a third party to administer the election because there was a court case. We prepared a contract according to LWV California guidelines and talked with LWV people from two other leagues, Pasadena and Los Angeles, who had done Homeowner Elections in the past. Our League had never undertaken such a task before but my Dad always told me, "Experience is the best teacher," so with this in mind, we prepared a contract which was signed by the President.

We held the nominating meeting on March 22 at the New Life Church on northeast side of Vermont Ave. near PCH with the aid of LWVTA members Athena Cormier, Tom Cormier, Barbara Barker, Patrick Garvey (Geneva's husband), Pat Kromka, Jackie LaBouff, Geneva Martin, Emma Simmons, Marty Ungar and myself. During the meeting, 14 people were nominated. We prepared a ballot, whereupon we received a copy of the court order and the NTCC attorney changed the ballot accordingly. Then, it was time to set the election date, which was held on April 26. At the meeting, there was a small disturbance when some people presented a number of proxy assignments but Tom Cormier and Geneva Martin handled everything in a League-like manner.

Nancy Mahr, LWV/LA County President, joined us by opening the ballot envelopes with Patrick. Athena read the ballots while Pat affirmed Athena's calls and Barbara and Jackie recorded the count. Geneva, Tom and Marty oversaw the walk-in and provisional ballots, proxies, and the ballot box, respectively. There were 322 ballots and 14 candidates but we did not complete the count for 6 candidates that evening as we had to vacate the room. After many stops and starts about a new date, we went back and completed the task on June 26. There were many discrepancies among the "proxies" submitted. So, we also announced that the Proxy Assignments submitted did not meet the requirements of both the court and the NTCC bylaws.

But, the journey is not over yet. The election has not yet been certified by LWVTA. During this period, we have rebuffed requests by the litigants to copy the ballots. We were also asked to affirm the individual number of ballots versus the number per unit (The bylaws allow voting by every individual resident 18 or older to vote) which we are doing. The litigants are still in contention with the court and we have documented every step of our experience along the way.

Note from the Editor:

Hello everyone ~ I am thrilled to be your new LWVTA Voter Editor and look forward to getting to know you all. We are currently working on transitioning the VOTER to an electronic format ~ an e-VOTER ~ and hope to have this up and running for the September VOTER!

Gillian

League of Women Voters Torrance Area News (cont'd)

Join the LWVTA in the Centennial Parade

by Barbara Barker

As part of the Centennial events, on **Sunday, September 16, 2012**, the City of Torrance will dedicate a time capsule at El Prado Park following a hometown parade. The LWVTA will have a unit in this walking parade as it covers about 12 blocks through downtown.



Come dressed in a style of your favorite decade to parallel the centennial theme of **“Looking Back, Moving Forward”**. Bring a child or grandchild to help us signify our future. Help us have women and men of all ages showing our past and our future.

Here's what to do:

- Call Marla Shwarts at 310-375-0191 **before August 20** to let her know you will walk in our unit.
- Plan to attend a meeting **August 28** to organize.
- Set aside from 10:30am to at least 2:30pm on September 16 to check-in for the noon parade, which will be followed by the dedication event.
- Contact Jamie Watson at 310-320-1544 or hightea322@yahoo.com for any needed assistance in pulling a costume together.

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS! Torrance's 2012 Continuing Council Members



Gene Barnett



Pat Furey



Susan M. Rhilinger

Visit our Web site and Social Media Pages

by Barbara Barker

The LWVTA Web site is undergoing changes including a new, easier address. Go to www.LWVTorranceArea.org to see the transition and expect more to come. League Easy Web, the service we use to produce our site template, is working with LWVUS to make the local League sites reflect the branding images of the new National site.

When you receive your new roster, look for the address for our “members only” pages.



If you have not yet “liked” our Facebook page, please go to

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-Torrance-Area>

and follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/LWVTA>

We welcome any member to join our Communications Team to keep these sites lively and timely.

League of Women Voters of California News

Our Health Care Future

by Barbara Barker



On July 28, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Affordable Care Act (ACA) constitutional. “The Court recognized health care reform for what it is: a legislative response to complex issues threatening the health and well-being of Americans that was best resolved by the elected branch of government – the Congress. The Court upheld this historic, transformative act of Congress,” said Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the League of Women Voters.

“Upholding the ACA brings our nation closer to the goal of this law: to provide universal health care for all Americans. There are still threats to these critical reforms and the League will continue its work fighting for progress on many fronts,” MacNamara said.

“Now that the law has been upheld, children will no longer be denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions, young adults can stay on their parents’ health plans as dependents until age 26, Medicare participants will have annual check-ups and mammograms, and many uninsured Americans will now have health care coverage,” continued MacNamara.

In California, legislation has already been passed to reflect the changes provided by the Affordable Care Act so that there will be a smooth transition. Additionally, the LWVCalifornia has agreed to continue as a member of the coalition promoting single payer insurance in California and SB810 is expected to be introduced again in early 2013.

Local Leagues are being encouraged to provide information to the public about the ACA. Members interested in this effort can contact Barbara Barker 310-530-3750 to form a committee.

About the League

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

The League has two separate and distinct roles. The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, which conducts our voters service and civic education activities, is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational organization.

The League of Women Voters Torrance, a membership organization, conducts action and advocacy and is a nonprofit 501(c)(4) corporation. The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and on which they have come to consensus. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League’s advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.

With membership comes the opportunity to work with well-informed, grassroots activists on a broad range of public policy concerns. The League provides members with opportunities to learn valuable, transferable skills, including how to organize and run productive meetings, write more effectively, speak in public, organize and run effective campaigns, conduct research studies, and coordinate general civic leadership training.

Keep up-to-date with important League of Women Voters communications. Check out national, state and county issues on line at:

National: www.lwv.org

League Easy Web Help at:

<http://lwvnet.org/easyweb/help>

Smart Voter: www.smartvoter.org

California: www.lwvc.org

California Education Fund: www.cavotes.org

Los Angeles County: www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

Torrance Area: www.lwvtorrancearea.org

Notable State Events:

LWVC Council - Held in May in even-numbered years. The last one was on May 19-20, 2012.

LWVC Convention - Held in May in odd-numbered years, next one is May 17-19, 2013.

League of Women Voters of the United States News

LWVUS 2012 Convention Report

June 8-12, Washington DC

The 2012 LWVUS Convention was educational and inspirational. Of course, we accomplished the business of Convention: we elected officers and directors, including the re-election of President Elizabeth MacNamara; we passed the budget with a \$1 increase in PMP; we amended the ByLaws; and we adopted program elements for the coming two years.

But it was a series of outstanding speakers that took the spotlight. The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton who has been the District of Columbia's sole representative in Congress for many years, welcomed the League to DC and praised the League for its support of the effort to bring full representation to the District.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Professor of Communications at the Annenberg School, addressed "Flack Checking Political Sleaze" and encouraged Leagues to work with local media to expose contributors financing third party campaign ads. More information on the project can be found at FlackCheck.org.

An impressive panel with political journalist Eleanor Clift, former Congressman Mickey Edwards from the Aspen Institute and former FEC Chair Trevor Potter from the Campaign Legal Center commented on various elements of government dysfunction: voter rights, special interests, campaign finance, lack of the will to find compromise positions. They encouraged Leagues to continue to work for change, from the grassroots up to the national level.

Attorney General Eric Holder received a standing welcome from the assembly. He stressed the importance of voter registration and voter participation, and decried efforts at voter suppression. He commended the League for its work in voter protection.

Political pollster John Zogby spoke on poll results relating to the presidential candidates. He detailed various voting groups and the way in which their numbers and outlooks will impact the coming election.

League program adopted at Convention included the following:

- Retain current positions
- Educate members and communities on campaign finance
- Concurrence with LWVDC Sentencing Policy – alternatives to imprisonment based on nature of crime; opposition to mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses
- Review and update our agriculture position (1988), investigating genetic modification, consolidation in food industry, money in the regulatory process, and accurate and comprehensive food labeling

The Convention also approved a resolution to include "a constitutional amendment" among measures to be considered to set reasonable regulation on campaign finance contributions and expenditures.

President MacNamara noted some of the challenges facing the League: money in politics, misleading campaign ads, the divisive impact of radio and TV personalities, and state action to limit voter rights. The legislative priorities of the League were reviewed: environmental defense (clean air/clean water), health care issues, campaign finance reform, and voter protection.

The national League launched the *Power the Vote* program at Convention. This is geared to make sure voters are prepared to vote, registered to vote, and go to the polls.

The item on this page is from LWV/LA County.

*LWTA Local Note: Athena Paquette Cormier was our voting delegate at the Convention.



Sentencing Reform Forum

August 18, 2012 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Loyola Law School
919 Albany Street
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Discussing changing attitudes, changing laws, changing supervision, changing costs!

Keynote Speaker

Dean Erwin Chemerinsky

Panelists

Superior Court Judge David Wesley
Professor Laurie Levenson, Loyola Law School
Laurel Gord, Chair, Friends Committee on Legislation
Kaile Shilling, Exec Director, Violence Prevention Coalition
Representatives from Probation Dept and other organizations



Supporters/Cosponsors:

Center for Restorative Justice, Loyola Law School • Violence Prevention Coalition
Project for the Innocent, Loyola Law School • Drug Policy Alliance
Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnerships • Friends Outside in LA County
Friends Committee on Legislation in California
Valley Sunset District Business and Professional Women
League of Women Voters/Los Angeles County



PAYMENT OPTIONS

To pay (\$30) online by credit card, go to: lwwlosangeles.org

To pay by Pay Pal: call the League office (213) 368-1616

or complete form below and mail to:

LWV of Los Angeles; 3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 310; Los Angeles, 90010



SENTENCING REFORM FORUM August 18, 2012 REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Ph() _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____

No. reservations _____ @\$30 Total _____ Email _____



League of Women Voters Torrance Area
Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance
Post Office Box 964
Torrance, CA 90508

Address Service Requested
Time Dated

JOIN THE LEAGUE

Be a part of an organization where
smart, active leaders create lasting
change in their communities.

Name(s):

Address:

City: Zip

Preferred Phone:

Cell Phone

Email(s):

Check here if you want to begin or continue to receive your
VOTER (newsletter) by E-MAIL.
(E-mail saves us printing and postage expenses).

Dues paid to LWVTA automatically include membership at the
national, state and county levels.

Please check membership category:

- INDIVIDUAL DUES \$70
HOUSEHOLD DUES \$105
STUDENT DUES \$ 35
CONTRIBUTION TO LWVTA \$
(Dues + contribution are not tax deductible)
OTHER \$

Contributions can be tax deductible by making out a separate check to the
LWVTA EdFund. We are part of the LWVC Education Fund and can use these
donations for Voter Service, public meetings and to offset some of our Voter
(newsletter) expenses.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO LWVTA EdFund \$
\$

TOTAL AMOUNT OF ENCLOSED CHECK(S) \$

Please send form and check payable to LWVTA
Mail to LWVTA, P. O. Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

Or pay on-line thru the website: www.LWVTorranceArea.org

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of
voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as
associate members.