



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

LWVTA *Voter*

<http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>
new number: Tel. 310-223-6897

February 2011

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.

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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 lwv.torrancearea@um.att.com before the 25th of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.
 Editor: Geneva Martin



Members Ruth Vogel, Geneva Martin, Barbara Barker, Hope Witkowsky, Lola Ungar, Sue Herbers, Georgia Perkins, Gerry Rische, Linda Brown and Pat Kromka celebrate the recognition of Kay White (center) for over 26 years of volunteer service as a commissioner at the February 1st Torrance City Council meeting.

President's Message

Welcome to our February Voter. During the past month, we held our General Meeting on the LWV/LACounty Jail Study, attended a Redistricting seminar put on by the LWVCalifornia and Common Cause, almost managed to balance the California state budget at the LWV/LACounty Winter League Day, and supported Kay White at the City Council when they honored her for 26 years of service on commissions and boards. More about these events are included in this article and another article specifically on the Jail Study – Part 1.

Kay White

On February 1, the City of Torrance presented Kay White with a proclamation recognizing her 26 years of service on commissions and boards. Kay served with distinction on the Traffic Commission and for at least 15 years on the Water Commission. She is truly our authority on the Water issue. She was congratulated for being forward looking and problem solving. As you can see from the photo, we had a large turnout of LWVTA members who attended the Council meeting that evening to support our Kay. Hurray, hurray, hurray for Kay! *(Continued on Page 5)*

Visions of Unity Contest Awards Reception

By Ruth Vogel, LWVTA

About 15 years ago, LWVTA joined the Human Relations Forum of Torrance, along with the City of Torrance, the Torrance Unified School District and 100+ civic organizations. The purpose of the HRFT was to identify current and emerging human relations challenges and to promote and foster appreciation of diversity and understanding among all who live and work here. Heidi Ashcraft, then a League member, TUSD School Board member and HRFT member, developed the Visions of Unity Arts Contest in conjunction with TUSD.

The purpose of the contest is to honor Martin Luther King and Black History Month by asking our Torrance high school students to create original artwork, essays, stories and poetry. Each year, the Contest Awards Reception, held at Torrance Memorial Medical Center Conference Hall, brings together school district and government officials, along with parents, teachers and community members and organizations.

This year's 11th Awards Reception will be held on March 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the TMMC Conference Hall. Award recipients will answer the contest's challenge by choosing to create a sculpture, ceramics, painting, digital media, poetry or an essay to express their unique ideas and ideals and to take artistic and creative initiative in enhancing unity among diverse groups within our community.

Continuing sponsors are Torrance Memorial Medical Center, Volunteer Center of South Bay-Harbor-Long Beach, Torrance Unified School District, Palos Verdes Chapter LINKS, Inc. and LWVTA.

Come and be amazed and inspired.

You can contribute to Visions of Unity:
If you are interested in helping encourage the artistic and literary efforts of students, please consider making a donation toward prizes. Checks should be made out to the Volunteer Center, South Bay-Harbor-Long Beach, noting the **Visions of Unity Contest** and mailed to 1230 Cravens Avenue, Torrance CA 90501.

Board of Directors 2010-11

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Land Use: Lola Ungar
Libraries: Judith Gerber
Redistricting: Lola Ungar

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Budget: Dick Smisek
County Jail Study: Lola Ungar & Emma Simmons
Executive: Noted by asterisks
Nominating: Barbara Barker

Facebook: Emma Simmons

Webmaster: Barbara Barker

Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown & Sue Martin

Education Report

By Tom Rische

Questions and answers from Dr. George Mannon, Torrance Superintendent:

1. *What's new on the Torrance Schools budget scene lately? Are you still in a wait-and see mode--or will any new hires be made?* We are currently working on a best case scenario budget, which would be the Governor's proposal and an assumption that the voters will approve the extension of the taxes and fees. We will still be required to make some personnel reductions because the stimulus funds have been exhausted. Also, we are developing a worst case budget scenario in case the voters do not approve the extension of taxes and fees. This would require additional reductions, which would be extensive.
2. *What's happening on the school rehabilitation scene? Is Hull proceeding on schedule?* Hull is right on schedule to open in September 2011.
3. *Does the district have any special plans for the Torrance Centennial Year starting in September?* Laurie Love, the Committee Chair, will be at our February 7th Board Meeting to discuss plans.
4. *What do you think of the governor's budget--and what it portends?* I would give the same answer as #1.
5. *Anything else new?* All of our construction projects are moving. Phase I at Walteria has been completed and teachers moved back into their modernized class rooms last week. Phase I at South (west campus) will be completed by March 1, with teachers being able to move back into class rooms in four wings.

See the article on first new school in Torrance in 40 years which appeared in the Daily Breeze on February 1st.

http://www.dailybreeze.com/ci_17263895

Actually Hull, the first new school in Torrance, was, in 1970, the last of 42 "new" TUSD campuses. Its buildings were mostly revamped "temporary" portable buildings moved from Madison Elementary School (1960-76) in North Torrance, which was closed, due to declining enrollment, and its property sold.

The school was named for Dr. J. H. Hull, first superintendent of the new Torrance School District from 1947 to 1970. He presided over building 42 new schools during that period (including remodeling the four then existing schools--Torrance High, Fern, Walteria, Torrance Elementary, and Perry.

This new Hull school cost \$22 million. The first buildings cost \$555,000; the land,\$657,000.

The 42 new schools were built in 1947-70, with about \$38 million in bond funds authorized by voters. Inflation has risen greatly over the years.

When first built, the estimated life of the new schools was about 50 years--and it was estimated that the population of Torrance might be 50,000 someday.

LWVUS

President Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS wrote recently:

Until the ugliness of the 2010 Election, we in the League never challenged the assumption that our reputation for nonpartisanship and competence in such core areas as voter service would allow us to pursue business as usual in an election cycle. Much of what we are experiencing highlights the need for more basic skill building, board training and community outreach. While we are addressing this need through the Membership Recruitment Initiative, webinars and convention workshops, we are reaching a self-selected audience.

With the approach of the 2012 Election, the national Board believes that we need a wider and more intentional initiative to muster our resources, hone our message and focus on our work in order to more effectively implement our core competencies across the 50 states. If the League is known for our work on elections, then a concerted effort, at all three levels, to help each other develop or hone the skills that underpin our brand and reputation is certainly in order. From debates to advocating on campaign finance reform, from fighting unjust ID requirements to registering new voters, elections are for what we are known.

JAILS	LOS ANGELES COUNTY	NEW YORK CITY, NY	COOK COUNTY, IL (Chicago area)
Budget	\$2.5 billion (2009-10) Incl. Jail Hospital	\$969 million (2009) Incl. Jail Hospital	\$217.9 million (2009) Jail Hospital NOT incl.
Population	9.8 million	8.3 million	5.3 million
Area of Jurisdiction	4,084 sq.mi.	305 sq.mi.	1,635 sq.mi.
Daily Avg. of Jail Population	19,699 inmates	14,127 inmates (fluctuates betw. 13,000 & 18,000 inmates)	9,000 inmates
Average Length of Stay	Over 1 yr. and up to 3 yrs.	50.6 days	140 days
Daily Avg. Inmate COST	\$60 - \$70		comparison Matrix by Lola Ungar Jan. 2011
Daily Avg. Inmates W/Medical Problems COST	\$600 - \$700		
Daily Avg. Inmates At Mens Central Jail (MCJ) COST	\$89		
Daily Avg. STATE Inmate COST	\$46		

TOTAL LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S BUDGET (2009-2010)	\$2.5 Billion
1. Court Services Budget Unit	\$216,002,000
2. Custody Budget Unit	\$803,314,000
3. Detective Budget Unit	\$108,467,000
4. General Support Budget Unit	\$454,484,000
5. Patrol Budget Unit	\$786,760,000
6. Administration Budget Unit	\$92,586,000
7. County Services Budget Unit	\$114,942,000

TOTAL LOS ANGELES COUNTY BUDGET	\$24.25 Billion	100% Of Entire County Budget
TOTAL LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET	\$4.746 Billion	20% Of Entire County Budget

Jail Study – Part 1 by Lola Ungar

On January 15, 2011, the first General Meeting on the County Jail Study was held at the home of Mary Lou Busch. The committee included Mary Lou Busch, Emma Simmons and Lola Ungar.

Lola reviewed the Los Angeles County Jail system and the Sheriff's role. The sheriff's 2009-2010 budget is \$2.5 billion, a small portion of the county budget (10% of the total expenditures). She also reviewed the various organizations involved in managing and overseeing the system.

Lola distributed a chart that she had prepared comparing the jail population and expenses in Los Angeles County, New York City and Cook County, Illinois (Chicago area).

Mary Lou informed us of the situation on overcrowding and recidivism rates. She pointed out that overcrowding causes stress, especially for the mentally ill. The solutions suggested are early release, education and vocational programs in the jails, as well as other programs.

Emma explained the mental health situation and how the inmates are processed. Many with drug problems are also mentally ill. Health care services, including mental health, for men are currently substandard. Women fare slightly better. She explained various solutions to the problem.

We did not address all of the consensus questions at this meeting and acknowledged that some concepts were unrealistic due to budget constraints. Among some of our consensus answers were:

We opposed building more jails, but accepted the concept of continuing to sentence low-risk offenders to well-monitored rehab programs outside the public jail system. We also felt that the League should advocate revision of the "three strikes law." We felt it was mandatory in many instances that basic and emergency medical care be provided inmates and that diagnostic procedures and telemedicine programs are desirable. We agreed that medical services for the mentally ill and/or drug addicts should be included. And, finally, we determined that inmates

should be released during daylight hours and not at night unless there are special circumstances.

At our next meeting on April 9 at 3 p.m. at the home of Lola Ungar, we will talk about oversight of the County Jail System, voluntary academic and/or vocational education, social rehab programs, and specified standards of the Jail System.



Go to <http://www.smartvoter.org/> for February and March election information

(President's Message continued from Page 1)

Redistricting

Redistricting is all about population and the one person-one vote principle. The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (the Equal Protection Clause) requires that electoral districts afford their residents equality of representation following the census required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years. The lines are drawn to provide that each district contains the same number of people.

The League of Women Voters spent over five years pursuing the concept of an Independent Redistricting Commission and achieved that with the 2009 election. The legislature drew

their own lines and gerrymandered odd-shaped districts throughout the state for the Assembly, the Senate, the State Board of Equalization, and California Representatives to the Federal House of Representatives every 10 years once the population census was conducted.



Now, that task will be conducted by a new fourteen member Independent State Redistricting Commission which will be meeting all around the state and preparing to redraw the lines which are due in reports and maps by Sept. 11, 2011. Citizens can make their voices heard by writing to or speaking at the Commission meetings. Information can be found at <http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov/>

When adjusting county supervisorial district boundaries, the California Elections Code also requires that, "districts shall be as nearly equal in population as may be." That is why the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has appointed ten voting members and ten alternate members (two voting and two alternates by each Supervisor) to meet in the next few months with the aid of staff to secure consultant assistance, and design a website. The U.S. census data is due April 1, 2011 and then throughout the U.S., everyone will be making a mad dash to analyze existing election district boundaries using the new 2011 redistricting data, activate a redistricting public worksite, and the Los Angeles County Boundary Review Committee (BRC) will start deliberations. Following these deliberations

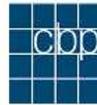


and hearings, the BRC will recommend a redistricting plan(s) to the Board of Supervisors, whereupon the Board will hold public hearings on the proposed redistricting plan during the month of August 2011. It is planned that the Board adopt the plan by Sept. 11, 2011 but no later than Oct.31, 2011.

I have taken on the task of following this process of the Supervisorial Redistricting. You can go to <http://www.healthycity.org/> to figure out and plot spheres of influence, common interests, schools, hospitals, ethnicity, age groupings, and other interesting data along

with estimated data before the actual numbers are published in April from the U.S. Census. By doing this, you can become involved and be able to speak before the Independent California Redistricting Commission, the County Board of Supervisors, or other local boards.

Balancing the State Budget



The voters *can and should be involved* with the process as we learned at the LWV/LA County Winter League Day on January 29 with Jean Ross, Executive Director of the California Budget Project (a nonprofit)



<http://www.cbp.org/>, on that very subject, *Can California's Budget be Balanced?* At that

meeting, 90 participants took part in an online game called the *California Budget Challenge* at the website <http://www.next10.org/> and managed to come as close as \$2.2 billion of balancing the budget and solving California's budget crisis. Sure, we did away with some subsidies and raised some taxes but that's the best way to solve the dilemma. We advise you to go to that website and see what you can do. A gentleman from Redondo Beach wrote to the Breeze and said that the voters couldn't do it but we say the voters can and then they can advise their legislative representatives on the best approach.

Privatization

Finally, save the date for the 49th LWV/LA County Convention with a theme related to Privatization (and related to the LWVUS Study) that will take place on March 26 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at Recreation Park Golf Course in Long Beach. Our League can have three delegates for this convention and all members are encouraged to attend. You shall hear more later on the speaker and breakfast details.

Sincerely,

Lola Ungar

LWVTA News

Budget and Nominating Committee Reports are due at the March 3rd board meeting. Nominating Committee is reporting good progress.

No changes have been proposed to the by-laws. Any changes must be submitted by March 3rd.

Save Saturday, May 14th, for LWVTA annual meeting.

The 65th State Convention of the League of Women Voters of California will be Friday, May 13, through Sunday, May 15, 2011 at Crowne Plaza Ventura, 450 East Harbor Blvd., Ventura, California 93001.

Member Georgia Perkins was appointed to the City of Torrance Library Commission.

Pat Kromka has provided a document showing the comparison between charter and general law cities. Please let her know if you would like a copy.

Pat noted that only four of the eight candidates in the special 28th district state senate election had put their information in Smart Voter

The LWVTA received a request from David Gamboa, Director of Community and Government Relations, at California State University, Dominguez Hills. CSUDH is interested in partnering with the League to host a candidates forum for the City of Carson municipal election. The forum would be hosted in partnership with the either the business and/or public administration colleges at the end of February. There are five candidates for City Council and four for City Treasurer. The City Clerk is running unopposed.

LWVTA has asked member Hope Witkowsky to help with our proposed Torrance Centennial Anniversary Event to produce one or more shows on Torrance Cable that would recognize women, some of them League members, who have played and continue to play a role in the growth of the City of Torrance. A committee is forming for this project; let us know if you would like to be on it.

Congress proposes to neuter EPA

A request from the LWVMN:

Join the "We ♥ EPA" campaign: Visit <http://www.weheartepa.org/> to sign a Valentine stating, "We love the EPA's role in protecting our water, air and health." We want this campaign shared across the state and across the country. The signatures will be delivered to the EPA on Feb. 14.

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.



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.

50% off

Join for year 10-11. Dues are now half off of amounts below.

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). Please send form and check payable to **LWVTA**

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO **LWVTA - EdFund - separate check**

\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT OF ENCLOSED CHECK(S)

\$ _____

Mail to **LWVTA**, P. O. Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

Calendar

Monday, February 14 - **League's 91st Birthday**

Tuesday, February 15 - **State Senate Special Election**

Sunday, February 20 - **Fundraiser for Health Care for All San Gabriel Valley Chapter - Dangerous Beauty**, 2 p.m. Pasadena Playhouse - tickets \$65 - contact Susan Braig -ssbraig@earthlink.net

Thursday, March 3, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting** (Call for location)
Budget and Nominating Committee Reports are due, as well as proposed changes to bylaws

Tuesday, March 8 - **Carson Election for City Council, Clerk & Treasurer, also elections for LAUSD Board Members & LACC Board of Trustees**

Saturday, March 26, 9 a.m.-noon - **County Convention**, Recreation Park Golf Course, Long Beach

Monday, March 28, 6:30 p.m. **Visions of Unity Event**, Torrance Memorial Medical Center Conference Hall

Thursday, April 7, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting** (Call for location)

Saturday, April 9 3 p.m. - - **County Jail Study Unit Meeting 2 & Consensus**, home of Lola Ungar

Tuesday, April 19 **State Senate Special Election Runoff**, if needed

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

Smart Voter:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/>

California: <http://ca.lwv.org/>

California Education Fund:

www.cavotes.org

Los Angeles County:

www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

Torrance Area:

<http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>

For protection of privacy, when sending emails that include anyone outside this membership, please address the names on the Blind CC (BCC) line so that the addresses do not show.

Board Meetings are open to all members and held on the first Thursday of each Month except May.



League of Women Voters Torrance Area

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