



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

# LWVTA *Voter*

<http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>  
 Tel. 310-618-8711

February 2010

### Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of 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 LWVT 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 [wuertzvoter@earthlink.net](mailto:wuertzvoter@earthlink.net) before the first weekend of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.

Editor: LaVonne Wuertz

## President's Message

Each of our members has a special issue that brought them to the LWVTorrance Area. (Mine was the preservation of the Madrona Marsh many moons ago). But, if our members didn't have a special issue when they joined then either they became enamored with one along the way or they are still looking. Where are you in this mix? I know that in the League, I feel that I have found a special place. I continue to be amazed and pleased by the variety of our members' interests and most especially, their intellect. In the beginning, I was so wowed by League members' inordinate knowledge but soon grew to understand that they attained their special knowledge through study of certain issues in the League. And, so, I call upon each and every one of you to jump in, take an interest, any interest in some issue that turns you on—local, county, state or national. Perhaps, you can just fill in here and there with our programs—and soon you will also be amazed at your own acumen.

Gangs Around the Corner/A Look at Street Gangs with Law Enforcement and Community Activists was the subject of the LWV/LACounty's 2010 Winter League Day on January 30<sup>th</sup> with LAPD's new Police Chief Charlie Beck as the keynote speaker. He gave a talk about his experiences with policing gangs and how he intends to address this issue in the future. Betsey Coffman (Claremont) and Vi Iungerich

(Palos Verdes Peninsula Area) prepared and distributed a Jail Study Kit that we will be studying and setting dates for our own local study.

R U interested? Our purpose is to study the issues related to the County jails and come to some consensus within our League and then among all the LWV/County Leagues so that we can speak to the Board of Supervisors on issues related to the County jails. Let me know.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, from 2 to 4 PM, we will be asking you to take a break from all those thoughts and join us at the home of Linda Brown to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the League of Women Voters United States (LWVUS) at our annual CHOCOLATE SUNDAY! This day commemorates the brave men and women who fought for the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and precipitated the freedoms we enjoy today. Even if you are chocolate averse or diabetic, we will have something for you, because we are sure you will enjoy just watching our special chocolate fountain. You can even bring your own fruits for tasting.

Next month, we will be the official hosts at the annual Tri-League Lasagna meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2010 from 5 to 8:30PM at the Katy Geissert Main Library Community Room. The speaker and subject will be announced shortly. That evening, we will need to decorate tables in a fanciful way and assist participants in getting their food and drinks. Linda Brown is heading up our hostessing effort so please call her soon at 310-320-3815 and

[Continued on p. 2]

## League of Women Voters of Torrance Area News

ask her for an assignment...No heavy lifting required. On that night, you will have the opportunity to meet and greet many of our members and also members from our nearby Leagues: Beach Cities and Palos Verdes Peninsula. We always have a lovely turnout.

### Lola

Lola Ungar, Co-President

## Agatha Berwanger Remembered

*By Barbara Barker*

Agatha Berwanger moved to Torrance in 1954. By 1955, she had joined with other Torrance women in forming a local chapter of the League of Women Voters. The League was finally formed and recognized in 1962 with Ruth Nadel as President. Agatha Berwanger served as President the following term, 1963-64.

Agatha was an artist with a passion for politics. When her children were older, she became a case worker for the Los Angeles County Departments of Social Services, then Health Services. When they retired, Agatha and her husband Russ moved to Nipomo, where they had built their dream home, joining the "Torrance North Group". They were worldwide travelers and community volunteers. Russ passed away in 1998 and Agatha has recently passed away.

*By Jeanette Pierson*

I first met Agatha Berwanger at a LWV meeting in 1962. She was conducting the meeting (and was wearing a hat!) She and her husband, Russell, co-wrote and published *Know Your Town*—a prerequisite for establishing a local LWV.

In her political activities she worked on a new library system and open space for parks. She and her husband, Russell, worked with me on electing Katy Geissert to Council and Mayor. They block-walked, silk-screened loads of lawn signs, etc.

Our two families socialized, traveled, and camped together. After they joined the "Torrance North" group in Nipomo, we visited them many times, and for years we have kept in touch by phone. I'll miss you, Ag.

*And from Marilyn van Oppen*

Agatha and Russ were very nice people...a joy to have known them!

## Board of Directors 2009-10

President of Record: Lola Ungar\*  
Co-President: Linda Brown  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Pat Kromka  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Sue Herbers\*  
Secretary: Kay White\*  
Treasurer: Sandra Strong\*

### Directors

Advocacy: Lola Ungar  
Communications: Sydne Morrison  
Education/Social Policy: Gerry Rische  
Government/Elections: Sue Herbers  
Membership: Linda Brown  
Natural Resources: Andrea Wagner  
Public Relations: Lola Ungar  
Speakers Bureau/Pros & Cons: Emma Simmons  
Voter Editor: LaVonne Wuertz\*  
Voter Service/Smart Voter:: Pat Kromka

### Off-Board Portfolios

Children & Family Issues: Sandra Strong  
Coastal Issues: Andrea Wagner  
Education/Social Policy: Tom Rische  
Energy: Andrea Wagner  
Financial Development: Sandra Strong  
Health Care: Barbara Barker  
Land Use: Lola Ungar  
Mental Health: Carol Adams Smith  
Open Government: Dee Hardison  
Public Libraries: Judi Gerber  
Water and Agriculture: Judi Gerber  
Webmaster: Barbara Barker

### Committees

Budget: Dorothy Stewart  
Executive: Noted by asterisks  
Nominating: Celeste Bailey

**Tri-League Liaison:** Linda Brown

*Welcome New Member  
Geneva Martin*

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

### The Census

By Emma Simmons

#### What is the Census?

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States, and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years.

**The 2010 Census will help communities receive more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year for things like:**

- Hospitals
- Job training centers
- Schools
- Senior centers
- Bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects
- Emergency services

The data collected by the census also help determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

**Until you mail it back, we can't move forward.**

In March of 2010, census forms will be delivered to every residence in the United States and Puerto Rico. When you receive yours, just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. If you don't mail the form back, you may receive a visit from a census taker, who will ask you the questions from the form.

The majority of the country will receive English-only materials. Households in areas with high concentrations of Spanish-speaking residents may receive a bilingual (English/Spanish) form.

Any personal data you provide is protected under federal law (Title 13 of The U.S. Code).

**Let's work together to make it happen!**

For additional information visit: [www.2010.census.gov](http://www.2010.census.gov).



members will respond in support of the bill. SB 810 is moving through both houses in a single year as it was in suspension for most of 2009 along with all other legislation and could not move through the committees due to the budget crisis. Organizational endorsements, district lobbying visits, public forums, all need to be done for Senator Leno's SB 810 just as they were done for Senator Kuehl's bills. Ads are being developed to air via the internet and television during the coming year.

Nationally, the health care bills are being considered. The Senate bill does not include the public option, an important component according to LWVUS. Members are being urged to contact their Congress representatives and Senators to show interest in the public option. We are also concerned about a clause that would preclude States from setting up their own health care plans.

Responses to Calls to Action are increasingly important. Additionally, the LWVTA Board has sent a message to the LWVUS Board asking that Health Care Legislation be considered a priority on the National level and that the Board concentrate on educating the public on the value of a single payer style plan. State and local leagues across the country are working toward producing workshops, holding caucuses and supporting a resolution that would support the single payer effort.

### Health Report

By Barbara Barker

In California, SB 810 will be heard by all Senate committees by Jan. 15 and voted out of the Senate by Jan. 30. A large rally was held on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at the Capitol. We are expecting a "Call to Action" will be issued shortly and hope that all League

*Congratulations to  
Kay White  
Re-appointed to a 1-year term on the  
Torrance Water Commission*

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



Ladies, Grab your mothers, girlfriends, and daughters and join us for a day of fashion, beauty, free health screenings, and fun! Come and enjoy specialty exhibitors, product sampling, guest speakers, experts on women's heart health, meal ideas and more! Experience some of the South Bay's premiere shops and boutiques all in one place. Come for the financial advice from

experts, and find out the newest and most innovative ways to stay fit. This is YOUR DAY!

**LWVTA will have a booth at the event. Please stop by.**

## Environmental Fair

The City of Torrance, in conjunction with the Torrance Environmental Quality Commission and the Environmental Priorities Network will be presenting its second annual Environmental Fair Saturday, March 27, 2010, from 10 AM until 3 PM. It will be held at Madrona Marsh, 3201 Plaza del Amo, Torrance. Local government agencies, businesses, and non-profit agencies will be presenting information and displays on environmental and energy conservation issues. Torrance Mayor Frank Scotto states that "The Fair is designed to provide useful information and new ideas to our residents and families to help them green their homes and everyday lives as well as to provide information to help in greening the community."



### About LWVTA

The League of Women Voters of Torrance Area, a membership organization, 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 come to consensus.

*LWVTA thanks the following generous people for contributions to the League during the last half of 2009:*

*Celeste Bailey  
Barbara Barker  
Linda Brown  
Valerie Felix  
Virginia Hilker  
Elizabeth Mathews  
David and Sydne Morrison  
Ruth Nadel  
Ethel Sellars  
Ann Smisek  
Dorothy Stewart  
Lola and Marty Ungar  
Andrea Wagner*

## The League's Democracy Survey

All league members are encouraged to make their voices heard by taking this survey on-line at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). The league's goals are to make sure every American is counted in this year's Census, to protect an individual's vote at all levels of government, to expand citizen participation in the democratic process and to insure the redistricting process is transparent.



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

**Come Join the Fun and Celebrate**

**90th Birthday**

**League of Women Voters**

**Chocolate Sunday**

**February 14, 2010**

**2-4 pm**

**1617 El Prado Avenue, Torrance**

**Call 310-618-8711 for info**



**We are Seeking New Members  
Please join us  
League of Women Voters Torrance Area**



## *League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County and California News*

### **LWV/LA County Convention**

LWV/LA County has set March 27 from 9:30 AM to 2 PM for its annual convention. County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is to be the featured speaker with program planning also on the agenda. Watch for location and other details.

### **LWVC Co-Chairs California Fair Elections Campaign**

The California Fair Elections Campaign in mid-January announced that LWVC, the California Clean Money Action Fund, California Common Cause, and the California Nurses Association would co-chair the campaign to pass the California Fair Elections Act. This measure would establish a voluntary campaign spending limit for elections for Secretary of State in 2014 and 2018.

If passed, the California Fair Elections Act would impose strict reporting requirements and prohibitions on campaign spending for participating candidates. Participating candidates would be banned from raising or spending money beyond the limited public financing. Violators would face fines, possible jail time, and prohibitions from running for office in the future.

The Governor has signed the measure.

[Source: Campaign for Fair Elections press release dated January 11, 2010]

### **Redistricting Reminder**

Friday, February 12, 2010 is the date applications for membership on the new California Citizens Redistricting Commission are due to the State Auditor's office. If you are interested, apply online at [www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov).

LWVC President Janis R. Hirohama has sent out an appeal urging interested leaguers to apply.

As a commissioner, you will help draw fair electoral districts in which voters choose their elected officials, instead of politicians choosing their voters....

Here's why it's so important that ordinary citizens—people like you—apply to serve on the commission. For decades, the state legislature designed the electoral districts for legislative, Congressional, and state Board of Equalization seats. The system was rife with self-interest and backroom deals. The result? Strangely-shaped districts that practically guaranteed reelection for incumbents—protecting the interests of politicians and political parties while ignoring community interests.

Under Proposition 11, the new Citizens Redistricting Commission, using a fair and open process, will draw the lines. This important task is now in the hands of ordinary citizens, not politicians.

For more information on the commission and how to apply, visit the State Auditor's website [www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov) and LWVC's [www.redistrictingca.org/more-info/](http://www.redistrictingca.org/more-info/).

[Source: Hirohama email dated January 8, 2010]



## ***Every car counts!***

**Donate your car, truck, motorcycle, RV  
or boat to the League of Women Voters.**

**Call 800 320.0476**

**League of Women Voters of California Education  
Fund**

We'll pick it up. You'll support the League,  
get a tax deduction  
and avoid the headache of disposing of an unwanted vehicle.

## League of Women Voters of the United States News

### Grading the Obama Administration

*By Dee Hardison*

This month the US League of Women Voters and other groups published a report grading the Obama Administration on its first year of achievements in the areas of ethics, lobbying and government transparency. They identified and gave grades to seven areas where the administration had implemented government reforms.

- Revolving Door Lobbying Ban – A
- Open Government – A
- Reverse Revolving Door Restrictions – A
- Lobbyist Gift Ban – B
- Preventing Lobbyists from Serving on Advisory Boards – B
- Restrictions on Seeking Stimulus Funds – A
- Restrictions on Seeking Financial Bailout – No Grade

Chapman Catt proposed the creation of a league of women voters to “finish the fight” and aid in the reconstruction of the nation. And so a League of Women Voters was formed within NAWSA composed of the organizations in the states where woman suffrage had already been attained.

The next year, on February 14, 1920, six months before the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution was ratified, the League was formally organized in Chicago as the National League of Women Voters.

*[Reprinted from The League of Women Voters Through the Decades compiled by Kay J. Maxwell. It is located on the LWVUS website.]*

### February 14<sup>th</sup>—The League’s Birthday

From the spirit of the suffrage movement and the shock of the First World War came a great idea—that a nonpartisan civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded on that idea.

In her address to the National American Woman Suffrage Association’s (NAWSA) 50<sup>th</sup> convention in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1919, President Carrie

**JOIN THE LEAGUE Yes! I want to make a difference!**  
I want to make a difference in the decisions that affect my life. I know every new member makes the League more effective in influencing public policy on issues I care about.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (Day) \_\_\_\_\_

(Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \$60

Household \$90

Student \$30

Please make checks payable to: League of Women Voters of Torrance

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Torrance  
Post Office Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

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.

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](http://www.lwv.org)

State: [ca.lwv.org](http://ca.lwv.org)

County: [www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org)

Torrance: <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.

## 2010 Calendar

Feb. 4, 7-9 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
Feb. 6, 9-3 pm	South Bay Girl Talk, Torrance Marriott
Feb. 14, 2-4 pm	Chocolate Sunday, Linda Brown's home
Feb. 26, 8:30-3 pm	South Bay Council of Governments Annual Assembly, Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center, Carson
Mar. 4, 7-9 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
Mar. 18, 6:30-9:30pm	Tri-League Lasagna Dinner, Katy Geissert Library Meeting Room, Torrance Civic Center
Mar. 22, 6:30 pm	Torrance Mem. Health Center
Mar. 27, 10-3 pm	Torrance Environmental Fair, Madrona Marsh
Mar. 27, 9:30-2 pm	LWV/LACounty Convention
Apr 1, 7-9 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)



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*Torrance, CA 90508*

Address Service Requested  
Time Dated