



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

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

New Number: Tel. 310-223-6897

LWVTA *Voter*

October 2010

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 martinvoter@verizon.net before the 15th of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.

Editor: Geneva Martin

President's Message By Lola Ungar

League 101, the ABC's of League, was a success, as the participants will tell you. This was a special meeting on September 11 at the Torrance Airport Meeting Room. We were so pleased to have special guests Ruth Nadel, Jeanette Pierson, and Marilyn Van Oppen tell us about the early years of the Torrance Area League which was chartered in 1962. Katy Geissert's name (Charter member and first woman Mayor of the City of Torrance) was mentioned many times as one of the stalwarts and driving forces in the creation of the Torrance libraries along with other successes of our League. Gerry Rische and Kay White talked about the opposition we faced through the intervening years as we gained recognition for our integrity. Pat Kromka explained the role of Voter Service and the activity of the voter resource website smartvoter.org. Kay White talked about parliamentary procedure. I talked about the nonpartisanship of the League regarding parties and candidates; our political action on issues, along with the various duties of the Board of Directors. Finally, we were happy to welcome a new member by the end of the meeting.

Look for an invitation to a special Torrance Area League fundraiser that is being planned by Director Athena Paquette Cormier called **Women in Public Service**. Don't be surprised if you are asked to assist during this special event as we honor notable women in the Torrance Area. It will take place on Oct. 21st, 6:30-8:30 PM, at the Nakano Theater. You will be receiving a flier shortly with all the particulars.

On Saturday, October 23, you can network with state and county (Los Angeles and Orange County) League members when there will be a **LWV California Regional Workshop Luncheon** - from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM at the Irvine Ranch Water District. Topics will include: Redistricting, Advocacy, Membership & Leadership Development, and Walking the Fine Line between Political - Yes and Partisan - No. Call the new League phone number if you want to go - 310-223-6897 - See the attached flier.

Jail Study Consensus - We are gearing up for a unit meeting about the Los Angeles County Jail System researched by Co-chairs Betsey Coffman and Vi Iungerich. Emma Simmons, Mary Lou Busch and I will be working on a presentation in April 2011 for our local League. We will be holding a unit meeting on this eye-opening subject. What do you know about the Jail System from the news media? What did Betsey and Vi learn? There is still room on the Jail Study Committee for anyone who is interested. Let me know if you are.

Natural Resources

Water Conservation in Southern California

By Margaret Carter

While Southern California's population and economy continue to grow, its water supply does not. In the next 15 years, our region is expected to gain as many as 2.6 million new residents. The Metropolitan Water District's (MWD) existing sources of imported water are under constant pressure from competing users, political demands and environmental constraints. This adds greater emphasis on MWD and its member agencies to develop all of the available local supplies.

Conservation is the basic element of long term water management strategy. Outdoor water-saving actions encourage consumers to tune up their irrigation systems and to consider native and California friendly plants for landscaping choices.

Water recycling programs use advanced treatment technologies to clean wastewater that would otherwise go out to sea. Recycled water can be used for irrigation, industrial process water and uses other than human consumption.

When groundwater basins become unusable due to naturally occurring minerals, chemical contamination or increasing salinity, MWD can provide financial assistance to its member agencies to build and operate groundwater treatment projects to recover the groundwater.

You, as an individual, have a responsibility to translate water-saving techniques. Begin now to envision more water-wise landscaping for your home and office. Start slowly to replace thirsty plants with drought resistant vegetation. There are many resources to help in this quest. Trade in toilets and shower heads for low flow units. Don't let showers run during times of "soaping up", but turn the water on and off as needed. Never let water run freely from hoses with the water ending up in the sewers and swept "out to sea". The same goes for water use in the kitchen and bathroom. Don't clean vegetables under running water. Rather, fill a basin and turn the water off.

Become conscious of every drop of water you use. Conserve, conserve, conserve! Water is the new gold in them thar California hills!

New Phone Number and email address

Please note we have changed our phone number. The new number is 310-223-6897 and the new email address is lwv.torrancearea@um.att.com. Note email address is incorrect in the roster.

Board of Directors 2010-11

*President of Record: Lola Ungar**
*1st Vice President, Voter Services: Pat Kromka**
*2nd Vice President, Voter Editor: Geneva Martin**
*Secretary: Kay White**
*Treasurer: Sue Martin**

Directors

Natural Resources: Margaret Carter
Fundraising/Program: Athena Paquette Cormier
Communications: Sydne Morrison
Education/Social Policy: Gerry Rische

Off-Board Portfolios

Agriculture: Judith Gerber
Government: Dee Hardison
Health Care: Barbara Barker
Land Use: Lola Ungar
Libraries: Judith Gerber
Redistricting: Lola Ungar

Committees

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

Welcome our newest member:
Jane Aull

Education Report

By Tom Rische

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES from Dr. George Mannon, Superintendent Torrance Unified School District, when school started in Torrance on Wednesday, September 8 with larger classes on all levels due to budget cutbacks.

What are your current thoughts on:

1. California's budget situation?

"The budget struggle in Sacramento continues with little hope of our elected leaders having the ability to pass a budget. This creates a great deal of anxiety in school districts as we start a new school year."

2. New developments in TUSD?

"The Board of Education awarded the construction contracts for the new Hull Middle School-- \$900,000 under the estimates. The new Hull will open in September 2011. The Board will award contracts for modernizing Walteria Elementary at the Sept. 7 board meeting. We expect to award contracts for modernizing South High at the Oct. 4 meeting."

"Karim Gergis is the new Torrance High School Principal. We had very little administrative changes for this school year."

"Watch in the next week or so for an announcement on the Academic Performance Index (API). All indications are that we did very well."

3. Value of publishing teacher effectiveness ratings in LAUSD (in the LA Times)?

"We do not believe that this is an appropriate use of test scores. Our teachers can review test scores in many different ways to assist with the teaching and learning process. "

4. Other?

"We need all of the community support that we can receive because the state has passed

their problems with the budget down to local districts, creating the largest reductions in the history of school districts in this state." (\$27,000,000 this year in Torrance.)

* * *

Interesting also has been Los Angeles Times reporting in the last couple of weeks on "Values-Added" ratings of elementary LAUSD teachers grades 3-5, based on test scores improvement of their classes. It is contained in databases, which can be pulled up by Internet users.

The Times has much data, although not nearly enough to prove the point they want to prove: that teachers are the most important influences on kids' learning, at least outside the home. Many confounding variables can interfere with such evaluations in the Rubik's Cube (or is it a multi-ring circus?) of demands on today's education. Teachers are held responsible for problems they didn't cause-- and can't fix. (Like obesity in kids.)

In the modern gadget-filled world, the educational climate of thought is definitely clouded by the cacophony of sex, violence, and advertising most see daily. Most teachers are competing with what kids are exposed to on TV, cellphones, video games, etc. Some kids are academic; some are not; most fall in the middle. By definition, half are above average and half, below. Teachers do make a difference, but society as a whole seems more interested in celebrities, sports, and violence than knowledge.

Critical thinking is often called for, but little honored:

"It has always seemed strange to me that in our endless discussions about education so little stress is laid on the pleasure of becoming an educated person, the enormous interest it adds to life. To be able to be caught up into the world of thought -- that is to be educated."

-Edith Hamilton, educator and writer (1867-1963).

League California Regional Workshop



LEAGUES OF WOMEN VOTERS ORANGE COUNTY Invite You to Attend an LWV California Regional Workshop

Saturday, October 23 from 9:30am to 2:30pm
Irvine Ranch Water District
15600 San Canyon Ave, Irvine CA 92618-3012

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Redistricting—Tracking and Mapping:
What the League & the Public Can Do to Help the New Process Succeed.
- Advocacy—When, Where & How does the League do it?
Using as Examples, Measures on the 11/02/10 Ballot
- Membership & Leadership Development
- Political, Yes; Partisan, NO! – Walking the Fine Line.

Please register and pay by credit card at the LWVC website www.lwvc.org by October 15 or write check payable to LWVC and mail form to:
Diane Thomas, 2506 Calle Jade, San Clemente CA 92673

Questions? Call Sharon Holdt (949) 496-3088 or email srholdt@cox.net

✂----- Cut here and return reservation form -----

__ I will attend & buy lunch \$25 (\$30 after 10/15) __ I will attend & bring lunch \$15

Name _____ League _____

Phone and/or Email _____

Name _____ League _____

Phone and/or Email _____

Enclosed is my check to LWVC for \$ _____; Reservations held at door.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
RECOMMENDS

November 2, 2010 STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION

PROP 20 Redistricting of Congressional Districts

OPPOSE

The League **opposes** Proposition 20, which we believe is well-intentioned but premature. California is in the midst of a major reform of our redistricting process, with a new independent Citizens Redistricting Commission drawing the lines for state Senate and Assembly districts. Proposition 20 would significantly increase the commission's workload by adding Congressional redistricting and shortening the time it would have to do its work. We believe the commission should draw Congressional district lines in the future, but the new process should be fully implemented before the commission's responsibilities are expanded so dramatically. In addition, a new definition in this measure could make it harder for the commission to respect California's diverse neighborhoods and communities as it draws district maps. Let's give redistricting reform a chance to work the way the voters intended before we take the next step and add Congressional redistricting.

PROP 23 Suspends Clean Energy and Air Pollution Standards

OPPOSE

The LWVC vigorously **opposes** this Dirty Energy Proposition, funded by out-of-state oil companies, because it would virtually kill AB 32, the landmark Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Proposition 23 would suspend the implementation of AB 32 until the state unemployment rate is 5.5 percent or lower for four consecutive calendar quarters. That has happened only three times in the last four decades! This dangerous proposition would get rid of clean energy standards that will cut air pollution and protect the public health. Proponents say this measure is needed to preserve jobs, but in fact it will jeopardize hundreds of thousands of clean-energy jobs. We must promote California's role as an innovator and investor in a clean-tech economy.

PROP 24 Tax Fairness Act

SUPPORT

Proposition 24 would repeal the corporate tax cuts that were passed in closed-door budget deals of 2008-09. These tax breaks cost approximately \$1.3 billion in revenue to the state, while benefiting only two percent of California's businesses. There is no requirement that they actually result in the creation of private-sector jobs. Proposition 24 will make big multi-state corporations pay their fair share and put \$1.3 billion back into the treasury to help our schools, health care, and other essential services that have suffered severe budget cuts in recent years. The League **supports** repealing these tax cuts because this budget crisis cannot be solved by expenditure cuts alone, let alone expenditure cuts combined with tax cuts with no demonstrated value to the economy.

PROP 25 Simple Majority Vote for Budget

SUPPORT

The LWVC **supports** this measure, which would change the vote required for the Legislature to pass a budget from the current two-thirds to a simple majority. Majority rule is a fundamental part of democracy. The majority should set priorities for spending and take responsibility for them. This measure will change the negotiations over the budget and reduce the stranglehold the minority now exercises over the process. Under Proposition 25, legislators will forfeit salary if they fail to meet the deadline for passing a budget. Budgets that are late and full of gimmicks harm all Californians, damage our economy, and hurt the state's credit rating.

PROP 26 "Polluter Protection"

OPPOSE

Proposition 26 would redefine regulatory fees imposed on companies for harm done to the environment or public health as taxes. Since taxes, unlike fees, require a two-thirds vote for approval, it would be much harder for state and local governments to seek such payments from those making harmful products or creating public nuisances. The likely result is that the fiscal burden of the harm to the environment or public health will fall on the public rather than the businesses involved. The League **opposes** Proposition 26 because we believe that decisions on all revenue measures should be made by a simple majority vote.

PROP 27 Eliminates State Commission on Redistricting

STRONG OPPOSE

This measure would kill the major redistricting reform voters just approved in 2008 and return the authority for redistricting to the backrooms of the Legislature. Proposition 27 would allow politicians to draw their own districts to protect their jobs. It would take us back to the days when bizarrely shaped districts were drawn in secret, carving up neighborhoods and communities to keep incumbents safely in office. **Vote NO** to keep the power with voters and the voter-approved independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

NO RECOMMENDATION ON THE OTHER MEASURES ON THIS BALLOT

PROP 18 Water Bond Measure

REMOVED FROM THE BALLOT

On August 10, the Legislature and the Governor moved Proposition 18 from the November 2010 ballot to the November 2012 ballot.

PROP 19 Legalize and Regulate Marijuana

NO POSITION

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Proposition 19, the LWVC is **taking no stand** on this measure.

PROP 21 \$18 Vehicle License Fee for State Parks and Wildlife Programs

NEUTRAL

Proposition 21 establishes a new earmarked fee. The League does not generally support earmarks but is **neutral** on this measure because there is little left that can be done to raise money for the state parks, which provide a valuable recreation and natural preservation resource for the state.

PROP 22 State Government Prohibited from Taking Local Funds

NEUTRAL

This measure would provide some stability in funding for local government. However, it would freeze in place the current dysfunctional system of funding local governments in California. The League will remain **neutral** on Proposition 22.

August 24, 2010

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 2!

10-10-10

Sustainability Summit 2010 • Climate. Oceans. Community



Working Together to Protect Our Planet

10 - 10 - 10
A Day of Eco Activism!

Join the City of Manhattan Beach as we work to protect our environment on a global day of eco-activism! We will have a full-day of activities to teach the community about sustainability.

The theme of the Summit is: "Climate. Oceans. Community. Working Together to Protect Our Planet." Come for part of the events, or stay all day!

Sunday, October 10, 2010

Sustainability Summit 2010 (10:00 AM – 12:30 PM, Manhattan Beach City Hall)

- Featuring interactive panel discussions on:
 - Water conservation through sustainable landscaping
 - Climate change & solutions

Learning Garden (1:30 – 3:30 PM)

- Help install drought tolerant landscape outside City Hall with the Manhattan Beach Botanical Garden

Eco-Fair (11:00 AM – 4:00 PM)

- Showcase of green technology vendors, solar, water efficiency, and environmental organizations

For more information, or to participate, please contact Sona Kalapura, Environmental Programs Manager at (310) 802-5058, or via email at skalapura@citymb.info.



THANK YOU to our partners for making this event possible:



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.

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 \$70 Household \$105 Student \$35

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

Additional contributions are always welcome.

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

HELP WANTED

Membership Team Leader, someone who can aid us in rejuvenating our relationships. We have members who have offered to be on your team. As a volunteer organization, we must always be working on growing our membership. People will want to join the League if they believe we are doing important work and if they are asked to join. Our League must make this a focus of every activity that we do by simply and intentionally building membership "asks" into all of our work and creating a welcoming presence in our meetings and events. Are you that person? The Torrance Area League meets at 7:00 PM on the first Thursday of every month. Please call 310-375-7410 for the location and come check us out.

The LWV Torrance Area Board

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

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.



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

Calendar

Thursday, October 7, 7 p.m. Board Meeting (Call for location)

Thursday, October 21, 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. Women in Public Service Panel

Saturday, October 23, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. LWV California Regional Workshop, Irvine, see flyer for details

Sunday, October 10 (10-10-10) – Clean Air Day Activities throughout the South Bay Area

Tuesday, November 2 - Election Day – Don't forget to VOTE!

Thursday, November 4, 7 p.m. Board Meeting (Call for location)

Saturday, November 20, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.. County League Day on Jail Study, Taix Restaurant, L. A

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