



League of Women Voters Torrance Area
 Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance
 P.O. Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

www.LWVTorranceArea.org
 Tel. 310-223-6897

LWVTA Voter

September 2012

President's Message

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Dear LWVTA Member,

It's back to school season and boy it is going to be an active season.

There is a lot going on at the local and county league levels. If you are interested in being a speaker for pros and cons, if you want to help register voters at schools, companies or organizations, or if you just want to march like a suffragette in the Centennial Parade, there is something for you this fall. Check inside.

September 29th is a busy day for us. In the morning it's the Pros and Cons speaker training at the Hollenbeck Retirement Community (we'll be carpooling). Watch website/upcoming flyer for details. In the evening...

If you have never seen the *CAPITOL STEPS*, the comedic group that "Put the MOCK in Democracy," then you are in for a treat at the Armstrong Theatre, September 29th. We are FUN!draising so please buy your tickets for \$54 by mailing a check or you can buy on line at www.LWVTorranceArea.org. Also, the League will have a table for Voter Service at the theatre both nights, so we are looking for two volunteers for the 28th and 29th to hand out League info, registration forms, SmartVoter info and flyers to our next events!

Our next FUN!draiser will be movie night October 12th. We're screening "Patriocracy." Watch for the flyer!

This month's Voter has so much info, events and updates... Enjoy!

Athena Paquette Cormier
 President LWVTA 2012-2014

Calendar

Monday, Sept 3 - **LABOR DAY**

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

Sunday, Sept 16, 12n-2:30pm **Torrance Centennial Community Parade** – to join us call 310-375-0191

Monday, Sept 17, 7-8:30pm **LWVTA Communications Committee Meeting***

Saturday, Sept 22, 9am **League Fall Kick-Off Event, The Depot** (see flyer)

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

Saturday, Sept 29, 9am **Ballot Briefing/Training, Hollenbeck Palms, LA** – carpooling (watch website for more info)

Saturday, Sept 29, 8pm **Capitol Steps, Armstrong Theatre** (see President's Message)

Friday, Oct 12, **LWVTA Movie Night, Torrance Airport** – "Patriocracy"

Tuesday, Oct 16, 7-9pm, **Pros and Cons Forum, Katy Geissert Main Library, Torrance**

*Call 310-223-6897 for location

Register
to VOTE



Call Now to Join us in the Centennial Parade!

by *Barbara Barker*

Join LWVTA as part of the Torrance Centennial events, on **Sunday, September 16, 2012**. The parade covers about 12 blocks throughout downtown.

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

There will be other fun events following the parade!

Here's what to do:

- Call **Marla Shwartz at 310-375-0191** to let her know you will walk in our unit.
- 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.

Board of Directors 2012-13

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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 lvv.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

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

Natural Resources Report: Trouble in Lomita Over Well Water and Rising Water Rates *by Margaret Carter*

The Lomita hilltop Cypress Street well was abandoned in the 1990s in part because of taste and odor concerns with the water it produced. Nonetheless, with the rising cost of imported water, a project aimed at reducing the town's dependence on imports by reviving the Cypress well, was begun. The Cypress Street Reservoir and Water Production Facility, at an initial expenditure of \$13 million, had a grand opening in June 2010. The water that was distributed was 100% pumped well water. After only four months the Cypress Reservoir was shut down in September, 2010. Why? Because the residents complained of white scale on water heaters and other appliances, and a 'rotten vegetable' smell coming from the water. (1)

The expenses don't end there. On March 5, 2012, the Lomita City Council spent \$60,000 for a 55 page feasibility study from Kennedy/Jinks Consultants. Those costly recommendations were never implemented partly because there was no guarantee that the recommendations would remedy the problems. (2) Nearly \$4,000 was spent on a public relations campaign to explain the situation to the residents. (3).

To make matters worse, water rates will increase an average of 9.85% a year and, after five years, result in a bimonthly bill \$57.55 higher than it is today. According to Council woman, Margaret Estrada, none of the rate increases will be used to cover the bond debt. (4)

While Lomita is now using 100% MDW water, costs are rising and will continue to do so. 100% well water is not acceptable to Lomita residents and a blending of the two has not yet been agreed to by the City Council.

On June 4, 2012, Mayor Gazeley requested a future agenda item for the creation of a Council ad hoc committee to review the Cypress reservoir issues. On June 18, 2012 the committee was formed with Councilmen Sanchez and Savidan agreeing to serve on the committee.

The recommendations of the ad hoc committee will be of interest to all as Southern California seeks to solve the ever widening struggle for water, the new "California Gold."

Article References:

1. **Update on the Status of the Cypress Street Reservoir and Water Production Facility** Alicia Velasco Lomita City Hall (310) 325-7110 ext. 122
2. **Lomita Moves to Clean Up Water Well** Nick Green, Staff Writer, Daily Breeze
3. **City of Lomita City Council Report** Gary Y. Sugano, Interim City Manager; Vince Damasse, P.E. Dir. Public Work/City Engr
4. **Lomita residents boil over City's water problems at meeting** Nick Green, Daily Breeze

* * *

Note from the Editor:

*We encourage and welcome
LWVTA Voter article
submissions from all our
members.*

Gillian

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

NOVEMBER INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM PROS/CONS FORUM by Jackie LaBouff, Voter Service Director

There will be eleven measures (11) on the November 6 ballot for our consideration. We will be holding a pros and cons discussion of these propositions at the Katy Geissert Main Library in Torrance at 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance on Tuesday, October 16, 2012, 7:00-9:00pm. It is both critical and our responsibility to encourage all voters to attend and become informed at this turning point in California history.

Voter Service has three responsibilities: (1) Voter registration, (2) Educating the public about initiatives and referenda and holding Candidates Forums, and (3) Speakers Bureau. Voter Service Director is a new job for me. I learned at the Popover's gathering on July 28, that other local Leagues are much more active than we are, so I'm looking forward to fulfilling our responsibilities more efficiently. I am open to any and all suggestions.

In order to "legally" register voters you need to become certified but you can pass out registration forms to the public as long as you do not give them direction. Because of redistricting our area has many more candidates to learn about. The city of Torrance alone has been divided new ways for Congressional Districts, Assembly Districts, and State Senate Districts. There are other issues to overcome in finding meeting spaces and our members' time to offer many different forums. If you want to be sure who your candidates are, go to www.smartvoter.org, type in your zip code and find out.

I look forward to meeting members who will take note and let me know if you have any ideas or are interested in becoming involved with my team. Thanks!

Visit our Web site and Social Media Pages by Barbara Barker

Go to www.LWVTorranceArea.org to see our web site and find information.

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

We welcome any member to join our Communications Team to keep these sites lively and timely. Check the Calendar for our monthly Communications Committee meeting dates. Contact Barbara Barker at 310-530-3750.



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>

BREAKFAST AT THE DEPOT



For our Fall League kick-off event with LWV Beach Cities & Palos Verdes Peninsula, we are excited to have Breakfast at The Depot with Michael Hiltzik, Pulitzer prize and Gerald Loeb Award winning journalist, who has written extensively on business and finance for the L.A. Times.

Come and hear his take on the League's Initiative and Referendum Study – Michael is always razor sharp, so it's sure to be very interesting! Reservations will be \$25 (\$35 non-members). Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 22 at 9am... and watch for the flyer!

League of Women Voters of LA County News

Report from LWV/LAC Popovers 2012

Update on Los Angeles County Department of Health Services

by Sally Seven, LWV Claremont Area (excerpted by LWVTA Voter editor)

LWV/LAC Summer League Day, also known as Popovers in Pasadena, featured Wendy Schwartz, Director of Board Relations for the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. DHS is a public agency that provides medical, mental health, public health, and educational services for Los Angeles County residents. Dr. Mitchell H. Katz is its director. In Los Angeles County, DHS, the Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Public Health are three separate departments. It's a big system, with lots of facilities.

Each year DHS treats about 800 thousand unique patients, about 70% of them in DHS facilities. The other 30% are served in the facilities of community partners. There are almost three million outpatient visits each year, about 750 thousand of them made to community clinics, about three quarters of them in the 25 to 64 age range. Those over 65 have Medicare; children are covered by other programs. About 64% of those served are uninsured, about 27% are in Medicaid, and only about 9% have some sort of private coverage.

DHS is moving toward the medical-home model of care, providing integrated services rather than one-time screenings. Clinics can even serve as an entry to the foster care system and, when necessary, provide forensic exams to assess possible neglect or abuse. The medical-home concept can help with prevention. Disease registries are being implemented, with built-in management and follow-up for diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.

One of the big issues for DHS currently is determining what changes are necessary in the county safety net in order to accommodate the Affordable Care Act as it is phased in. There are about 2.2 million people in LA County who are uninsured; about 80% of them should be ACA eligible. About 900,000 should be covered by the Medicaid expansion. Another 750,000 will be health-care-exchange people, those making 400% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Others, however, including the undocumented, will remain uncovered. Of the uninsured, about 195,000 are children; about 60,000 of them will remain uninsured. Among the other challenges for DHS is the episodic nature of services usually provided. Client contacts have typically been event-oriented. If patients can come to identify with those providing services and shift to the idea of a medical home, they can be better serviced and costs can be reduced.

County facilities generally provide very high quality care, but the path is not always easy; care needs to be user-friendly, quick, efficient, supportive. DHS is working on the patient experience to make it as good as it can be. It already rates higher than average on surveys asking if a patient would recommend the facility to friends and family. Some facilities are exceptional. Rancho Los Amigos rehabilitative care ranks year after year in the top 10 or 20 such institutions in the country. Other outstanding areas are pediatrics and the burn victims center, with very good facilities and highly skilled staffing.

Ambulatory outpatient care is good now, too; quality used to have a tendency to go down as care moved out from the hospitals. DHS created a new division, with all outpatient care as its focus. Although it's only a year old, there are now about 250,000 patients with it as their medical home. That's real progress.

Healthy Way LA is a program designed to help the transition to ACA for those aged 19 to 64 who earn 133% or less of FPL (citizens or those who have been legal residents for five years or more). For those who will qualify in 2014, this is a program they can access right now. We are hoping they will want to stay with county services after 2014. For those who do, the county will receive 50 cents in federal funds for each dollar spent on care, so it's a help all around.

/cont'd on Pg. 6...

League of Women Voters of California News

November 6, 2012 Statewide General Election

The League Recommends

We recommend a YES vote on Proposition 30, Proposition 34, and Proposition 40.

We recommend a NO vote on Proposition 31 and Proposition 32.

Read a more detailed web summary of our recommendations at www.lwvc.org/lwvonly and [print the PDF flyer](#)  to give to your friends.

The League occasionally takes a *neutral position* on ballot measures that deal with issues we have studied, either because there are conflicting League positions or because there are aspects to a measure which in our judgment make our support or opposition inappropriate. The League remained neutral on **Propositions 38 and 39**.

The League has not studied the issues in the following measures, and so *has no recommendation* on **Proposition 33** (Auto Insurance Rates), **Proposition 35** (Human Trafficking), **Proposition 36** (Three Strikes Reform, and **Proposition 37** (Genetically Engineered Foods).

Popovers Health Services Report (cont'd from Pg.5)

Information Technology is another challenging area, and DHS has initiatives underway to improve access to records. It's a problem for specialists, and "E-consult" is just being rolled out. By the end of the year, DHS expects to have a substantial contract for an electronic health records program in place (about \$280 million). Once implemented, it will greatly increase efficiency, making it possible to access patient records, use the results of tests already done rather than having to repeat them, etc.

There was a brief discussion of availability of providers, and of compensation and reimbursement problems. Many decisions are yet to be made and there will be provisions for higher pay for the first couple of years. In a capitated environment, the patient mix determines the outcome. We don't yet know whether there will be too few providers, too few specialists, and the system needs to become more efficient before we'll know what will happen. There are many challenges ahead.



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.

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

Voter ID Laws = Voter Suppression

by Helen Hutchison, LWVC Second Vice President for Program and Advocacy

The League of Women Voters is all about voting: encouraging voting, educating voters, helping people make their voices heard by voting. We educate and advocate about voting. Then why do we protest so loudly about voter ID laws? Because these laws are a form of voter suppression; they are a solution to a problem that doesn't exist.

Supporters of voter ID laws point to charges of voter impersonation or voter fraud. The facts simply do not support this charges. Despite many allegations and frequent careful examinations of voting records and patterns, little or no evidence of voter fraud has been found. When studies are done, they consistently point at vote by mail (absentee) voting as the place where most voter fraud might occur. Voter ID laws deal only with voters at the polls, and not vote by mail voting.

What has been shown, repeatedly, is that voter ID laws reduce access to voting and do this disproportionately among the elderly, students, women, people with disabilities, low income people, and people of color. In a study commissioned by the Brennan Center for Justice, eleven percent of those surveyed did not have a government-issued ID that would be required for voting. Using census data, this means approximately 21 million otherwise qualified voters who would be turned away at the polls. Of these 21 million:

- more than 70 percent are women
- over one-third are seniors
- approximately 20 percent are between 18 and 24 years old

Even among those with a government-issued ID, many do not have an ID that shows their current address. This is even more likely among those who earn lower incomes and young people, regardless of income level, because they tend to move more frequently than average. These same groups of people—women, the elderly, students, people with disabilities, low income people, and people of color—also are more likely to have difficulty obtaining the required photo ID to be able to vote. They may not have the required back-up documents, and they may have more difficulty taking time off work during business hours, getting transportation to the government offices that issue the IDs, and finding the money to pay the application fees.

Voting is a fundamental right. The League of Women Voters stands with those who protect access to voting rather than those who would disenfranchise eligible voters. The impact of voter ID laws is to restrict voting, especially among certain groups of voters. We **do not** need to protect ourselves against a problem that doesn't exist. We **do** need to ensure that the greatest number of people possible is offered the chance to exercise their right to vote.

For a graphic version of this article, see www.craigconnects.org/voter-protection-infographic

For more information on voter ID laws:

Project Vote: www.projectvote.org

The Brennan Center for Justice: www.brennancenter.org

LWV Minnesota: www.lwvmn.org The Web site includes a series of videos produced by the LWV Minnesota.



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Dues paid to LWVTA automatically include
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Please check membership category:

- INDIVIDUAL DUES \$ 70
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GOLDEN (50-YEAR MEMBER) Donation \$
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Contributions can be tax deductible by making out a separate check
to the LWVTA - EdFund because we participate in the non-taxable
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