



April 2007

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Torrance, 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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All LWVT members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in *The Voter*.

Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Submissions are emailed to barbarabk@sbcglobal.net before the first weekend of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.

Editor: Barbara Barker

LWV Torrance Faces a Leadership Crisis!

If you have reviewed your Annual Meeting material, you will see that, despite their great efforts, the Nominating Committee could not find any members willing to take on the Presidency of the League for the next two years. If there are no accepted nominations from the floor of the convention, the League will not be able to function efficiently.

We are not alone. Several Leagues in California are now run by Committee. One of the Board members allows her/his name to be given as the "President of Record" for communications but the work is done by three co-presidents or even a committee of the entire board. It is time for all members to assess their ability and willingness to serve this wonderful organization. The President position should be filled by someone who has already served on the Board. The other positions – and there are several vacancies among the directors—are excellent ways to learn while serving. If you are considering the presidency, consider asking another member to serve with you as a co-president. Several years ago, three of us served as co-presidents and it was very smooth.

If you look at the roster, you will see that most of your board members have been serving the League for many years, carrying the load for everyone else. The same people consistently show up before every event to help set up and stay to clean up. They have done the planning and advertising, attended all the meetings, coordinated the logistics and they have done these things very well. We have all felt our personal reward in putting our efforts toward educational events for League members and the public. We would all welcome new faces and new hands to work along with us to eventually lift the load away. This is the way that newer members learn the well-respected "League Way" and gain leadership skills. This is the way that any organization continues to thrive.

Please prepare for the Annual Meeting on May 5 by considering raising your hand and taking the leap to join the Board. If you've been there before, consider taking another two year stint in the President's chair. You'll be surrounded by competent willing people who will help share the load. Please keep the League alive.

Your out-going Presidents, Barbara Barker and Linda Brown

This is the last edition of *The Voter*. Anyone interested in taking it over is encouraged to contact the Board Members. There is a template and much of it is done by pasting information provided by members and other LWV levels. A mentor is available to get started.

League of Women Voters of Torrance News

Community Services Director Barnett to speak at Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, May 5, 2007, at the Marie Callendar Restaurant in Restaurant Row near the Torrance Boulevard/Hawthorne Boulevard intersection.

Parks and Recreation Director Gene Barnett will be the keynote speaker. Barnett is retiring in May after 35 years of service with the City of Torrance. He followed Harry van Bellehem as Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, serving during a time of acquisition and development of parks and facilities throughout the City. He oversaw the development of the Cultural Arts Center, known originally as the Joslyn Center Expansion. The transformation of the Naval Station on Crenshaw into beautiful Wilson Park, complete with a state of the art gymnasium and a fully accessible tree house. He worked with neighborhood groups and the League of Women Voters toward the passage of Bond Acts to provide funding for facilities such as Sur La Brea Park, Lago Seco, the Madrona Marsh, Columbia, Greenwood, and most recently, Discovery Park.

In recent years, the City consolidated some of its departments and Barnett was named Community Services Director, in charge of Recreation Services, Cultural Services, Library Services and the maintenance of the Parks and Recreation facilities. He plans to present an overview of what this department offers the citizens of Torrance.

Margo Reeg to offer Assistance at Annual Meeting

Margo Reeg of LWV Whittier has agreed to attend our annual meeting to assist us in understanding our future options in the face of no presidency. If no one is nominated and elected from the floor, we will have to discuss committee leadership, disbanding and any other options. As a Management Training Associate (MTA) of the LWVC and past president of both her own League and the County, Ms. Reeg will be in a position to offer suggestions.

Our regular MTA Mary Ellen Barnes is not available that date but she, as well as Lois Chaney, will be assisting us through whatever transition we undertake in the future.

With more than 86 years of experience and 850 local and state affiliates, the League is one of America's most trusted grassroots organizations..

Board of Directors 2006-07

Co-Presidents: Barbara Barker
Linda Brown
1st Vice President: Eunice Hargrove
2nd Vice President: Sue Herbers
Secretary: Kay White
Treasurer: Sandra Strong

Directors

Action: Lola Ungar
Communications: Sydne Morrison
Ed./Juvenile Justice: Vacant
Government/Elections: Sue Herbers
Land Use: Lola Ungar
Membership: Eunice Hargrove
Observers: Vacant
Public Relations: Lola Ungar
Social Policy: Barbara Barker
Voter Editor: Barbara Barker
Voter Service: Pat Kromka

Off-Board Portfolios

Telephone Tree: Sydne Morrison
Nominating Committee: Adriene Henry, (chair), Dee Hardison Ann Smisek, Barbara Barker, and Eunice Hargrove

Committees

Fundraising: Janice Steffen

Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown



Mission

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.

League of Women Voters of Torrance News

Torrance begins OneCareNow Event Planning

Dee Hardison and Barbara Barker have set a planning meeting on April 24, 7 p.m. at Dee's house, for the July 12th OneCareNow Event.

All members are welcome to become part of the Steering Committee, which is a coalition of individuals and groups supporting SB840. All members are also encouraged to mark July 12th on your calendars as the day to participate and show the League's support for this important legislation.

A Glance Back and a Peering Forward

During the past year, LWVT has been very busy. We have held two general meetings on Health Care, conducted Candidates' Forums for Torrance Mayor and City Council, Congressional, State Senate and Assembly elections, hosted the Tri-League Lasagna Dinner, registered voters at the Torrance Farmers' Markets and participated in the Torrance Middle School Leadership Conference.

In addition our members have attended and/or participated in the Judicial Independence Conference at Loyola Law School, the LWV/LAC Annual Meeting, the Tri-League Kickoff with Dr. Irene Vasquez of CSC Dominguez Hills as speaker, the Visions of Unity Recognition Reception, the Educational Conference of Torrance meetings, the City of Torrance Planning Commission, City Council and General Plan meetings, the Tour of the Redondo Beach AES Plant, and the LWVC Leadership Conference, and marched in OneCare Now Parades and rallies.

In the next year, the emphasis on health care will continue and will be working in coalition with other groups and individuals on the OneCareNow Campaign supporting SB 840. The Torrance event date is July 12 and, as always, we are going to nearby cities to support their events.

We are in the first year of a two year Immigration Study. General meetings will be held this year to educate the membership.

The City of Torrance is forming a Strategic Plan Committee and the LWVT is expected to have a seat there.

We may decide to act on upcoming School District issues such as a bond and Long Range Planning Goals.

As usual, we will be presenting forums for all the elections in the coming year.

We will also be participating in the Middle School Leadership Conference, the Visions of Unity Reception, the Educational Council of Torrance, and may be embarking into the conduct of elections for homeowner associations.

Immigration Study Information Meeting set for Monday evening, April 23

Mary Lou Busch has joined the LWV Beach Cities committee in the LWVUS Immigration Study. They have set Monday, April 23rd for the first Information Meeting on this important issue. It will begin at 7 p.m. at the Manhattan Beach Library.

For more information, please visit the LWVUS website.

Conny McCormack very informative at the Tri-League Lasagna Dinner



The ever-popular Tri-League Lasagna Dinner was held at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Meeting Room, Torrance, on Tuesday, March 20th. Following the socializing and dining, LWV members were treated to an informative address by Los Angeles County Recorder Conny McCormick.

Ms. McCormick told us new legislation creating a Federal Primary adds a third election in 2008. They will be conducting elections on February 5, June 2 and November 4 in 2008. With 3 elections, 5,000 machines have to be loaded, tested, used and then deprogrammed by the County Recorder's staff. Each statewide election costs the County of Los Angeles 20 million dollars.

Last November 79% of eligible voters used the new machines that provide second chance voting by the use of a ballot checking machine. Her statistics showed that 10% of the voters made mistakes and said "thank you" when given the opportunity to correct their ballots. Many people with disabilities were able to vote unassisted. Her office even received a note of appreciation from Stevie Wonder for the new service.

The best news is that voters have three choices, and no excuses. They can mail their vote, vote early on the touchscreens or vote in person at the polls on election day.

Her challenge will come when Secretary of State Debra Bowen announces the State wants to test all the voting systems in California.



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



About the League

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens 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 citizen education activities, is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational organization.

The League of Women Voters of 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.

Sandra Strong and Barbara Barker appointed as Delegates to the LWVC Convention in Bakersfield

The "Rally in the Valley" will be held May 18-20 in Bakersfield. This is the biennial convention for LWVC.

Treasurer Sandra Strong will be serving as delegate for the first time and out-going co-president Barbara Barker will be the other delegate.

Lola Ungar is also attending as the LWV/LAC delegate.



California's 365-City Campaign for Universal Health Insurance

The OneCareNow 365 campaign arrives Beach on Friday April 27, calling attention to the plight of our health care system and the promise of universal health care. Come to a rally at the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Diamond St. - near the Civic Center and Public Library - 4:00 to 6:00pm.

Be part of this important campaign. Let the media and our community know that this change. Help us build a crowd and make an important statement. And share this with your own friends, please.

See you on the 27th!

SB 840, currently in the California legislature, has these features:

- Full care, for all, for life, for all ages
- Choose your own doctor or provide your own
- Emphasis on patient care, not profits
- Controlled prescription drug prices

"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Special Thanks to Members

The activity of the year could not have happened without the help of many members: Mary Lou Busch is participating in the LWVUS Immigration Study with LWV Beach Cities; Adriene Henry served as chair with members Anne Smisek, Dee Hardison, Eunice Hargrove and Barbara Barker of the Nominating Committee; Hazel Taniguchi served a chair with members Linda Barnett and Sandra Strong on the Budget Committee; Edith van Bellehem provided an audit of our financial documents.

Sandra Strong has kept our books in good order and paid our bills. Kay White has kept the Board in order and recorded our actions. Sue Herbers and Linda Brown conducted the legislative interviews. Eunice Hargrove has brought in new members, hosted a membership tea with Venora Lee, and also hosted the Holiday Party. Pat Kromka has spent countless hours on Smart Voter, coordinating candidates forums and the Torrance Middle School Leadership Conference. Sydne Morrison has had her finger on the dial to keep members informed of special activities. Lola Ungar has worked with Gladys Meade on the Action Committee. Linda Brown has liaised with the Tri-League Organization, handled the mail and phones, and gathered information on conducting elections for homeowner associations. Barbara Barker has attended the Educational Council of Torrance meetings, served on the LWVC Health Care Committee and the Lomita and Torrance OneCareNow Planning Committees and edited the VOTER.

Thanks to all of you. You made it happen!

League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

Convention Comments— Lola Ungar, President

The 45th Annual Convention of the LWV/LAC was very exciting as there were 60 delegates with a total of almost 90 people in attendance. We were honored to have both **Supervisor Don Knabe, 4th District** and **Susan Seamans, Mayor of Rolling Hills Estates**, welcome us to the South Coast Botanic Garden on the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

The morning was balmy as **Dr. Geraldine Knatz, Executive Director of the Port of Los Angeles**, gave a vibrant speech on the current situation and plans for the future of the Port, including green standards (her highest priority), centennial celebration plans, port security, and a precedent setting 5-year plan to cut diesel emissions in half in conjunction with the Port of Long Beach. She said that they are also considering the national and international implications of their policies at the Port. Dr. Knatz answered questions from the audience and was presented with a gift basket by **Lois Ledger**, Long Beach.

Nominating Committee **Chair Lois Ledger** moved election of the slate of nominees for county board for 2007-2009 which was approved unanimously.

2nd Vice President **Margo Reeg (Whittier)** 2-year term

Secretary **Kay White (Torrance)** 2-year term

Director **Katherine Dunlap (Los Angeles)** 2-year term

Director **Nancy Mahr (Palos Verdes Peninsula)** 2-year term

Director **Jack Sullivan (Claremont Area)** 2-year term

Director **Mattie Grant (Los Angeles)** 1-year term

We also unanimously removed the phrase "of citizens" from our bylaws as all Local Leagues should be doing at their annual meetings this year as "The purposes of LWV/LAC are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues."

Sat., July 21

Popovers in Pasadena, Immigration Issue

Homelessness Update: Mary Ellen Barnes, Social Policy Director

RAND Presents New Research on Ending Homelessness:

"Don't pour more money into shelters, but go straight to permanent housing: *that* is the fix for chronic homelessness." That was the New York deputy mayor's advice to Los Angeles. RAND urged a massive push toward what they called "permanent supportive housing" – meaning subsidized, permanent housing coupled with support services (health, employment, counseling and the like). The thinking seems to be that it's tough to find a job when you're sleeping in a shelter and all day carrying around a backpack/suitcase/bedroll that screams, "Homeless." This "Housing First" model is the solution of choice produced by the rethinking process.

A difficulty that separates Los Angeles from many other cities is the division of government responsibilities here, between the County and the 88 cities within the county. It is the City of Los Angeles, for example, that is responsible for housing in its jurisdiction, while it is the County that is responsible for health care and other services. If the City spends more to promote Housing First, it is the County that will save on the cost of services. Saddled with most of the expense and none of the savings, would seem to discourage the city of Los Angeles from making an all-out effort to end homelessness.

Hope Gardens Family Center: On over 70-acres of land next to the National Forest, Hope Gardens Family Center (a Union Rescue Mission project) is a supportive housing facility where 225 abandoned women and children will get away from the streets of Skid Row. This project faces an uphill battle.

According to the Union Rescue Mission's website "Not everyone agrees with Hope Gardens as a solution to women and children on Skid Row. A small number of residents, three to four miles away from Hope Gardens, have overwhelmed

County Supervisor Antonovich's office with e-mails and calls of opposition to the plan and the presence of homeless children in "their" neighborhood." To lend your support for this project - consider becoming a "Friend of Hope." A "Friend of Hope" will contact the office of Supervisor Michael Antonovich and very politely and positively express their support for Hope Gardens Family Center.

To take action right now, go to: www.helphopegardens.org. There is a form letter of support at that website that can be customized and emailed from the website or printed and mailed.

SOCIAL POLICY GLOSSARY -- BEYOND NIMBY

NIMBY – Not in My Back Yard

BANANA – Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anybody

NOPE – Not On Planet Earth

League of Women Voters of California News

\$1,000 Grants Available: "Safer, More Compassionate World" Global Forum Project

LWVC is pleased to announce that the League of Women Voters Education Fund and the organization Our Voices Together are cosponsoring "Safer, More Compassionate World Forums." Grants of up to \$1,000 are available for local and State Leagues wishing to organize a forum between September 1 and December 15th, 2007. Leagues interested in participating should contact [David Ward](#) before May 30, 2007 to obtain guidelines for participation.*

Immigration Study Success Story (NEW)

The LWV of Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville (CA) recently partnered with its public libraries to provide useful immigration resources to their communities. The League worked to ensure that every book listed on [Immigration 101: the LWVUS Immigration Resource List](#) was included in the library collections. This is a great way to help educate your members and communities about immigration issues! Ask the directors of your public libraries to purchase the materials on the immigration resource list and promote them to patrons. [Find more Immigration Study resources here.](#)

Grants Available: Constitution Day 2007


Constitution Day is celebrated every year on September 17th, the same day the U.S. Constitution was signed in 1787. This year, the League of Women Voters' [Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: Promoting an Independent Judiciary Project](#) program is combining efforts with [The Constitution Project](#) to celebrate this important day. Grants of \$1,000 are available for Leagues wishing to join in this celebration. Resources will be available, including speakers, pocket Constitution books, and a toolkit to use with your audiences. If your League is interested in participating in this celebration, contact David Ward at dward@lwv.org.*

* Please contact an LWVT Board Member to coordinate the effort.

Elements of Redistricting Reform

The basic elements of redistricting reform are

- an independent redistricting commission that reflects the diversity of our state,
- an open process for public input and scrutiny, and
- sound criteria for the drawing of plans.

 Sign up to be on the League's redistricting activists e-list at redistricting@lwvc.org.



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

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Post Office Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

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

League of Women Voters of the United States News

League Applauds Bipartisan Vote for DC Voting Rights Act

Fate of DC Representation Now in the Hands of Full House

Washington, DC – The League of Women Voters today praised the committee passage of the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act, which would grant citizens of our nation's capital voting representation in the House of Representatives. Today, the House Judiciary Committee passed the measure by a vote of 21 to 13. On Tuesday, the bill passed in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform by a vote of 24 to 5. The bill will now go to the House floor for a vote before the end of March.

League Urges Budget Funding for State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

The League this week joined a vast coalition of organizations **urging members of Congress** to fully fund the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

FROM: League of Women Voters and Other Groups
To: Members of Congress
Date: March 15, 2007
Re: SCHIP Authorization

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR)—the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition—and the undersigned organizations, we are writing to request that your fiscal year 2008 budget includes sufficient funding to continue the remarkable success of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Building on the success of Medicaid, SCHIP has significantly improved children's access to health care, and has made great strides in covering racial and ethnic minority children. It is the right time to improve and strengthen both SCHIP and Medicaid to further increase access to affordable, comprehensive, equitable, and quality health coverage for all of our nation's children. A minimum of \$60 billion over five years in new federal funds should be included in the fiscal year 2008 budget.

Together, SCHIP and Medicaid have reduced the uninsured rate among all children, playing an especially significant role in minority communities. After the inception of SCHIP, the rate of uninsurance for Latino children dropped by nearly one-third, from a high of 30 percent to 21 percent. For African American and Asian and Pacific Islander children, the uninsured rate dropped by half: from 20 to 12 percent and from 17 to 8 percent, respectively. Medicaid and SCHIP help children obtain vital screening and prevention services that help them stay healthy and grow to be healthy and productive adults.

Despite the successes of SCHIP and Medicaid, nine million children remain uninsured, more than five million of whom are racial and ethnic minorities. A their commitment to minimum of \$60 billion additional

federal funds over five years will allow states to maintain current SCHIP enrollees, make significant progress toward reducing the number of uninsured children, and help take this nation one step closer to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in children's health.

It is also critical to include the Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA) in any SCHIP bill considered by Congress. Under current law, newly arrived immigrants face a five-year bar from receiving federal health benefits under Medicaid or SCHIP. ICHIA would restore Medicaid and SCHIP benefits to lawfully present immigrant children and pregnant women. Many states already spend their own money to provide safety net programs for low-income immigrants. Allowing states to use some federally funded services toward that goal would bring significant fiscal relief to states and would give them the flexibility to better address the needs of their populations.

Coverage for parents and pregnant women must also be maintained in SCHIP reauthorization. States that already covered most low-income children were encouraged by the federal government to obtain waivers to expand coverage to parents and pregnant women to reduce the number of uninsured through family coverage. Parents' coverage leads to increased enrollment for children and better utilization of health care services by children as well as providing health care for parents who would not otherwise have coverage.

As the nation's leading civil rights coalition, we are committed to children's health care and strongly believe that SCHIP reauthorization with additional funds should be among the highest priorities in the FY 2008 budget. We are deeply concerned that if the budget does not include additional funding to fully address the SCHIP shortfalls and account for growth in the program, many current SCHIP beneficiaries will lose their health care—and we believe we need to expand, not reduce, children's coverage.

Strengthening Our Leaders ***June 9-11, 2007*** ***Washington, DC***

After all the League's terrific efforts to engage the nation in Election 2006, the focus now shifts to involving your League and your community in other ways. Council 2007, to be attended by all state presidents, will present ways to strengthen League leadership at the state and local level.



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

State: www.lwvc.org

County: 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 at the Torrance Historical Society Building located at Post and Cravens in downtown Torrance.

2006-2007 Calendar

April 23 7 pm	Immigration Study Meeting Manhattan Beach Library
April 24 6:30 pm	OneCareNow Event Planning Dee Hardison's House
May 5 8:30-11:30 am	LWVT Annual Meeting Marie Callendar's Restaurant Restaurant Row, Torrance
May 18-20	LWVC Convention "Rally in the Valley" Bakersfield
July 21	Popovers in Pasadena



League of Women Voters of Torrance

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