



League of Women Voters of Torrance

Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

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

Tel. 310-618-8711

# LWVT Voter

April 2009

## 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.

## Inside this Issue:

Name Change?	1
Local Action News	2,4
Health Care Update	3-4
LWVLAC News	5
LWVCalifornia News	6
LWVUS News	7
Calendar	8
Contacts	8

The *LWVT Voter* is published monthly except July and December. All LWVT members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in the *LWVT 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

As I near the end of my term, I have been reviewing our progress over the last two years. We were a League in trouble in 2007 with decreasing membership, weakened activity levels and a very weak treasury. At our Annual Meeting we had to discuss disbanding and no one wanted that to be our course.

I agreed to take on the Presidency with assistance from the other Board members. With the help of Mary Ellen Barnes, our League advisor, we had a development meeting to discuss our alternatives and we hopefully embarked on the year. I think our openness about our problems affected our members, who have always supported the League in dues and appreciation, but who had drifted away from active participation. All of us worked hard to re-energize the League and it has been successful. Not only are the board members more active in monitoring and reporting on their areas of interest, we have seen many more of our members participate in our activities. In addition, we have gained 15 new members because of our visibility.

That's two out of three. Our membership dues income is divided so that the majority is paid out to County, State and National levels of League, leaving around \$10 per member for our own treasury. We have received some donations, many in-kind donations

from Board Members who paid expenses out of their own pockets, and we made \$500 on our Capitol Steps theater fundraiser and almost \$500 on housing association elections.

We cannot afford to pay the entire expense of sending delegates to conferences. So this next year will be a year of increased fund-raising, trying new methods of bringing in extra funds so that the LWVT can become financially healthy. Hopefully, our members will continue their interest in League development and help us in our efforts as we do not think it is wise to raise the dues.

What a difference a couple of years and an exciting election make. We can once again look at ourselves as a thriving League.

*Barbara Barker*

## What's in a Name?

At the Annual Meeting on May 30th, members will decide whether to keep our League name of LWVTorrance or change it to League of Women Voters of South Bay. We started in Torrance and have done most of our local work there. However, we also represent the communities of Carson, Gardena, Harbor City and Lomita. We have done candidates forums in Gardena, Lomita and Torrance and we have members who live in Lomita and Harbor City. In response to a suggestion at our program planning meeting, a committee was formed to study and make a recommendation for

*[Continued on page 2, Name]*

## League of Women Voters of Torrance News

### Name [Continued from page 1]

consideration by all the members. The Committee is recommending the change noting:

*The reasoning for this change is that because we represent five local cities in the South Bay region, it would be much more inclusive to take on a general name that defines the area. We believe that potential members who live within our communities do not feel they will be well-represented because of the League's current name. The proposed name is more conducive to our mission to build our membership and our leadership.*

This recommendation will be put to the membership at the Annual Meeting, discussed and voted on. If the majority of the membership present agrees to this change, the Board would petition the LWV Board to approve the name change and then LWVUS would be notified.

### Good at records?

Both our Treasurer and our Secretary have held their positions for some time and would like to be able to use other skills for the League. If you are good at bookkeeping and creating a monthly Treasurer's Report (using Quicken) or if you could record the action of our meetings in monthly minutes, please contact Sandra Strong or Kay White to get the details of the positions. The Board would welcome you, and Sandra and Kay would enjoy new challenges.

### Save the Dates!

**May 15-17: LWV California Convention, Long Beach Airport Marriot**  
**May 30: LWV Torrance Annual Meeting, 8:30-11:30 am, Marie Callender's, Torrance & Hawthorne**

## Board of Directors 2008-09

President: Barbara Barker\*  
 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\*  
 Financial Development: Vacant  
 Juvenile Justice: Vacant  
 Government/Elections: Sue Herbers  
 Membership: Venora Lee  
 Natural Resources: Andrea Wagner  
 Observers: Vacant  
 Program: Vacant  
 Public Relations: Lola Ungar  
 Social Policy: Barbara Barker  
 Voter Editor: LaVonne Wuertz\*  
 Voter Service: Pat Kromka

### Off-Board Portfolios

Coastal Issues: Briana Krank  
 Education: Mark Steffen  
 Energy: Rick Wagner  
 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  
 Local Action: Gladys Meade  
 MGIK (Membership Initiative): Barbara Barker and Venora Lee  
 Nominating: Celeste Bailey

**Tri-League Liaison:** Linda Brown

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

### **Health Care**

*By Barbara Barker*

There has been a development in the health care area that will most likely come up at the May LWVC Convention. The LWVC Board asked the LWVUS for permission to support HR676, John Conyers' National Single Payer Health Care Bill, as we have in the past.

In response, LWVUS President Mary Wilson sent this message dated March 26, 2009.

Ms. Linda Craig  
Advocacy Director  
League of Women Voters of California

Dear Linda:

Thank you for your email concerning the request of the League of Women Voters of California Health Care Committee to take action in support of H.R. 676.

Passage of comprehensive health care reform is a major priority for the League of Women Voters in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress and we look forward to working with you to pass meaningful health care reform. At this time, the LWVUS has not endorsed any specific health care legislation and we are not authorizing any state or local League to do so.

While the LWVUS did not endorse H.R. 676 in previous Congresses, individual Leagues were given the go ahead to contact their Members of Congress in support of H.R. 676 if they felt that they had member understanding and agreement. Health care reform was a priority for the LWVUS in the last Congress, but the main emphasis was on reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). H.R. 676 was one of the few bills addressing comprehensive health care reform in the 110th Congress.

This year, however, we anticipate that there will be a number of competing health care reform bills in the 111th Congress and are not endorsing any health care legislation at this time, except of course for SCHIP, which has now passed Congress and been signed by the President. The key committees in the House and Senate will be considering a number of approaches to achieve comprehensive health care reform.

The League is working closely with our allies on Capitol Hill and coalition partners to set and implement legislative strategies that will ensure that we achieve the key goals of the LWVUS health care position. We need to carefully consider our options and what makes the most sense over the near and long term. This is the first opportunity to pass meaningful health care reform in a very long time and we want to be sure we are considering all options and following the best course. HR 676 is one of many of those options.

On March 19, a LWVUS memo was sent to the Senate in support of health care reform legislation that guarantees quality, affordable health care to all U.S. residents. The LWVUS Lobby Corps will be lobbying Senate staff during the next few weeks in support of comprehensive health care reform.

We expect that there will be a lot of work to do to keep Congress focused on passing comprehensive health care reform and we look forward to working with you to achieve that goal. The League of Women Voters of California has accomplished a great deal in promoting comprehensive health care reform in the state of California. It is good to know that the LWVCA is ready to take action and we would urge you to contact your Senators and Representatives asking them to consider the issues outlined in the March 19 memo as they begin to draft health care legislation. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,  
Mary G. Wilson, President  
League of Women Voters of the United States

In response, many League members in California have objected and it is likely that a Resolution asking the LWVUS to actively support single payer health care will be introduced at the LWVC Convention in Long Beach. If accepted, the Resolution will be discussed and voted on by the delegates.

*[Continued on page 4, Health Care]*

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

### **Health Care** *[Continued from page 3]*

In the meantime, another group of LWV members from all around the Nation has been expressing its concern in emails and it appears that members may take similar action in several states.

#### **LWVC Convention Comes to Long Beach**

Lois Ledger of the Long Beach Area League is in charge of volunteers for the Convention at the Long Beach Airport Marriott May 14-17. She has provided this information:

Volunteers get registration covered and can attend one workshop of their choice for each day worked. They cover their own meals or eat at the restaurant or bring their own. They should call Lois at 562-432-5822 or email her at [lledger@verizon.net](mailto:lledger@verizon.net). She will assign a duty to their taste. They will discuss what is left and when they are attending. Assignments vary, from checking credentials at the entrance to assisting with meals, serving in the market wares area in charge of LWV logo tops, working at registration, as workshop monitors, tellers and much more. Each volunteer will be assigned a number by Lois and there will be a cap provided.

**As an LWV member, you are a part of an organization where smart, active leaders create lasting change in their communities.**

#### **Delegate Opportunity!**

LWVT is entitled to two delegates to the LWVC convention in Long Beach. If you would like to represent us, please check the LWVC website for more information and contact Pat Kromka for the appointment. LWVT can offset a portion of the registration cost.

#### **Students in Government**

The City of Torrance Students in Government meeting will be on Tuesday, May 5. Tune in to the Torrance City Council meeting at 7:00 pm to see the best and brightest of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Torrance in action. Over 800 students submitted essays this year for the honor of taking the place of 22 elected officials and staff for the first part of the meeting.

To view City Council live: CitiCABLE Channel 3 or [www.tornet.com/CableTV/1055.htm](http://www.tornet.com/CableTV/1055.htm); replayed on CitiCABLE the following week or online at <http://www.tornet.com/2372.htm#>.

#### **Torrance Budget Workshops**

Torrance has scheduled budget workshops for the Council meetings of May 12 and June 2. This date is later than usual as the City Council would like to take the results of the May 19 ballot measures into consideration for the 2009-2011 budget.

City Council meetings begin at 7 pm in the City Council Chambers at 3031 Torrance Blvd. but you do not have to wait that late. Concerns and issues can be brought to the City's attention through communication with the City Council, City Manager and/or the specific department. Call 310-328-5310 to be directed to the appropriate departments.

## League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

### PROS AND CONS BALLOT BRIEFING and ACTION WORKSHOP

All members are urged to attend the  
LWV/LAC Ballot Briefing

**April 11, 2009**  
**9:30 TO Noon**  
**Hollenbeck Palms**  
(formerly known as Hollenbeck Home)  
**573 S. Boyle Avenue**  
**Los Angeles**

For details and directions, check the LWV/LAC website.

### LWV/LACounty Convention



Beginning the second year of her term as LWV/LACounty President, Nancy Mahr of the Palos Verdes and San Pedro League, presided over the Convention on Saturday, March 28, 2009, at Pickwick Gardens in

Burbank.

Over 40 delegates from the local leagues voted on the budget and re-elected Board Members. Two of our local members serve on the County Board: Kay White is the Secretary and Lola Ungar is the Action Chair. Our Management Training Associate (MTA), Mary Ellen Barnes is the newsletter editor.

Frances Talbot White gave a lively and sometimes humorous presentation on the SmartVoter website, rightfully singing the praises of Pat Kromka who does a superhuman job of getting candidates to post their information.

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE to Raise a Foster Child

### Foster Care Forum

**Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**7:00 - 8:45 pm**  
**Redondo Beach Main Library**  
303 N Pacific Coast Highway  
*(Park in lower level garage - take elevator to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)*

**Speakers:**

**Leslie Starr Heimov -**  
Exec. Dir. Children's Law Center of L.A.

**Young adults aged out of foster care system -**  
California Youth Connection



### Find out how you can make a difference

Agencies and organizations will provide information on volunteer activities from special one-time events to mentoring, advocacy and fostering opportunities.

For more information, please call the Library (310) 318-0675 or email [harriet@beachvoter.org](mailto:harriet@beachvoter.org)



Light refreshments provided



### 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.

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.

## League of Women Voters of California News

### California State Propositions on the May 19 Ballot



Click on ballot measure for more detail.

**Proposition 1A. State Budget. Changes California Budget Process. Limits State Spending. Increases "Rainy Day" Budget Stabilization Fund -- State of California** (*Legislative Constitutional Amendment - Majority Approval Required*)

Changes the budget process. Could limit future deficits and spending by increasing the size of the state "rainy day" fund and requiring above-average revenues to be deposited into it, for use during economic downturns and other purposes.

**Proposition 1B. Education Funding. Payment Plan -- State of California** (*Legislative Constitutional Amendment - Majority Approval Required*)

Requires supplemental payments to local school districts and community colleges to address recent budget cuts.

**Proposition 1C. Lottery Modernization Act -- State of California** (*Legislative Constitutional Amendment and Statute - Majority Approval Required*)

Allows the state lottery to be modernized to improve its performance with increased payouts, improved marketing, and effective management. Requires the state to maintain ownership of the lottery and authorizes additional accountability measures. Protects funding levels for schools currently provided by lottery revenues. Increased lottery revenues will be used to address current budget deficit and reduce the need for additional tax increases and cuts to state programs.

**Proposition 1D. Protects Children's Services Funding. Helps Balance State Budget -- State of California** (*Statute - Majority Approval Required*)

Temporarily provides greater flexibility in funding to preserve health and human services for young

children while helping balance the state budget in a difficult economy.

**Proposition 1E. Mental Health Services Funding. Temporary Reallocation. Helps Balance State Budget -- State of California** (*Statute - Majority Approval Required*)

Helps balance state budget by amending the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63 of 2004) to transfer funds, for two years, to pay for mental health services provided through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program for children and young adults. Fiscal Impact: State General Fund savings of about \$230 million annually for two years (2009+10 and 2010+11). Corresponding reduction in funding available for Mental Health Services Act programs.

**Proposition 1F. Elected Officials' Salaries. Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years -- State of California** (*Legislative Constitutional Amendment - Majority Approval Required*)

Encourages balanced state budgets by preventing elected Members of the Legislature and statewide constitutional officers, including the Governor, from receiving pay raises in years when the state is running a deficit. Directs the Director of Finance to determine whether a given year is a deficit year. Prevents the Citizens Compensation Commission from increasing elected officials' salaries in years when the state Special Fund for Economic Uncertainties is in the negative by an amount equal to or greater than one percent of the General Fund. Fiscal Impact: Minor state savings related to elected state officials' salaries in some cases when the state is expected to end the year with a budget deficit.

[Editor's note: **The above summaries are from Smartvoter.org. LWVC opposes 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E, is neutral on 1B and has no position on 1F. Go to [www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org) to read the LWVC recommendations.**]

LWV is the organization where your hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to tangible civic improvement.

## *League of Women Voters of the United States News*

### **2010 Census a Vital Civic Count of All Americans**

#### **League of Women Voters Is 2010 Census National Partner**

*[Excerpts from LWVUS April 1 press release]*

The League of Women Voters today announced its role as a national partner in the 2010 U.S. Census. The decennial count takes place one year from today....

"We join with the U.S. Census Bureau and other organizations in emphasizing the importance of every single resident being counted in the community in which they live," [national President of LWVUS, Mary G. Wilson stated.] "Many Americans may not be aware of how important Census data is to almost every aspect of their lives. This data is used as the basis for most federal funding to states and communities as well as for determining the number of representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives and to state legislatures. Since Leagues around the country are well-known and trusted sources of civic information, they can play an important role in educating the public that the 2010 Census is important, easy, and fair....

"Our goal is to work with others to eliminate the 'undercount' that occurs, particularly within low income and minority populations....

"It is our hope that thousands of League members nationwide will do our part to make the Census a success, by helping Americans reach a comfort level with the process and a willingness to participate in this important civic process."

### **Senators Urged to Support Strong Health Care Legislation**

As Congress starts work on health care reform legislation, the League voiced the following specific concerns to the Senate: (1) legislation must

guarantee quality, affordable health care to all U.S. residents, including the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary, acute and long-term care, mental health care, and prescription drug coverage as well as allow for pre-existing conditions; (2) it must establish a system-wide program to coordinate information, establish best practices and provide consumers the information they need to protect themselves and their families; and (3) it must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care.

### **LWVUS Arms Control Position**

Are you interested in being part of a taskforce to review the LWVUS position on arms control? If so, be sure to view tasks, structure, and requirements on the LWVUS website. Deadline to apply is May 2, 2009.

*[Information on this page is from the LWVUS website.]*

#### **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.

## 2009 Calendar

Apr 2, 7-9 pm	Board meeting (Call for location)
Apr 11, 9 am –noon	County ballot briefing, Hollenbeck Home
Apr 21, 7-8:45 pm	Beach Cities, It Takes a Village, Redondo Beach main library
May 2, 9 am-noon	County delegate briefing, presidents' meeting, Glendale Fire Station #2
May 15-17	State convention, Long Beach Airport Marriott
May 19	Special state election
May 30, 8:30-11 am	LWVT annual meeting, Marie Callender's, Torrance & Hawthorne Blvd
June 27, 10-1:30 pm	Old/new board meeting, home of Lola Ungar



**League of Women Voters of Torrance**

*Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance*

*Post Office Box 964*

*Torrance, CA 90508*

Address Service Requested

Time Dated