



League of Women Voters of Torrance

Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

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

# LWVT Voter

March 2008

## 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 *LWVT Voter*. Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Submissions are emailed 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

When LWVT decided to participate in the membership initiative, we really did not project such successful events. The Chocolate Sunday was fun, well-attended, and we have four new members as a result.

During our celebration of Sunshine Week (March 16-22), we accepted proclamations from both the Lomita City Council (March 17) and the Torrance City Council (March 18). The week culminated with our "Get the Facts" Panel and "Get into the Act" Fair on Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, from 7-9 at Torrance City Hall.

Lola Ungar, LWVT Director and LWV/Los Angeles County President, moderated the panel, which included Xandra Kayden, Sr. Fellow, UCLA School of Public Affairs. She spoke on the Freedom of Information Act. Torrance City Clerk Sue Herbers, also a LWVT Board Member, talked about what local cities make available and how to access it. Dana Vinke, Reference Librarian for the Torrance Public Library, shared information about accessing material through the library and the internet and the library's role in protecting the privacy of its patrons. Political journalist for the *Daily Breeze*, Gene Maddaus, discussed how the newspapers gather information and the criteria they use in deciding what and how to publish that information. Torrance Cable TV filmed the panel for replay during the following weeks.

Following the panel discussion, there was a fair in the lobby where representatives of every political party were present to discuss their philosophies. In addition, the American Civil Liberties Union, Common Cause, the Sierra Club, Friends of Madrona Marsh, City of Torrance Volunteers and LWVT had tables.

We are hoping that we will gain several new members from the presentation by the Panel and Fair. This was a great opportunity for people who have been thinking about getting more involved in their community to come to one place for information and contacts. Hopefully our members told their friends about it. The flyer was e-mailed to all members who are on line. For more about this unique event, see inside.

The LWV/LAC Convention is scheduled for March 29<sup>th</sup> and the LWVC Leadership Council will be in Sacramento on May 17-18<sup>th</sup>. Our own Annual Meeting will be May 31 and the LWVUS Convention in Portland is scheduled June 13 through 17. All members are invited to all of these meetings.

April 16<sup>th</sup> is the date of our local candidate forum at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center.

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

*Barbara Barker*

## League of Women Voters of Torrance News

### Immigration Study

LWVUS has undertaken a study of immigration in order to establish a position from which to advocate. Torrance and Beach Cities leagues participated in the study by forming a joint committee to study the issues related to a set of discussion questions formulated by LWVUS. Study materials were provided on the LWVUS website. The questions were published in the October and November *LWVToters*. Following their study of the issues, the joint committee then held two open meetings where the questions were discussed and consensus sought. The results for question 1 were published in the February *LWVToter*. Following are the results reached [in brackets] at the local meetings for questions 2 and 3. Results for questions 4-6 will be published in future issues.

Question 2: Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows:

- a. Deport all unauthorized immigrants [Disagree]
- b. Some deported, some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on length of residence [Lower priority]
- c. Some deported, some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on needs of employers [Higher priority]
- d. All allowed to earn legal adjustment of status doing things such as paying taxes, learning English, studying civics etc. [No consensus]
- e. If deported assess fines before possible re-entry [Disagree]
- f. Assess fines before allowed to earn legal adjustment to status [No consensus]

Question 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are:

- a. Immediate family members joining family member already admitted for legal permanent residence in the U.S. [High priority]
- b. Entering the U.S. to meet labor needs [High priority]
- c. Entering the U.S. as students (Lower priority)
- d. Entering the U.S. because of persecution in home country [High priority]

Note: The group also noted that special consideration should be given to persons seeking asylum because their assistance to the U.S. led to their situation.

*Mary Lou Busch, Torrance member of the joint committee, reported the results of the meetings.*

### Board of Directors 2007-08

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**Tri-League Liaison:** Linda Brown

*Welcome New Members*

*Stephanie Krank*

*Cliff Numark*

*Georgia S. Perkins*

*and*

*Andrea Wagner*

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

### Social Policy Report

By Barbara Barker

The State budget cuts will have a definite negative effect on our local school districts. TUSD has already indicated that teachers will be laid off in the resultant restructuring. It is very likely that we will see a bond in the November election to pay for facility costs.

In health care, we are preparing for a fresh round of support for single payer healthcare in California – and, hopefully, the United States. Following is an excerpt from a letter from Senator Sheila Kuehl's office that brings hope. LWVC members attended the summit referred to in the letter and it was very successful. We'll soon be hearing more about our opportunities to show our support.

#### Single Payer: It's Time to Have Hope

By Sara Rogers, Consultant, Health (*Deputy to Senator Sheila Kuehl*)

"Politically feasible" is just another way of saying that folks are scared to stand up to insurance companies. I don't accept that. It's time to take a stand for what we really want. It's time to have hope. - *Senator Sheila Kuehl*

SB 840 is alive and well in the Assembly Appropriations committee, much further along in the legislative process than it was in 2006, just before its historical passage out of both houses of the legislature and onto the Governor's desk. Legislative deadlines for passage out of fiscal committees aren't until August 15th and, between now and then, grassroots organizing and education efforts are really taking off. Every day, Senator Kuehl and her staff receive requests for presentations regarding SB 840, the truly universal healthcare bill.

On Sunday, January 27th and Monday, January 28th, the American Medical Students' Association held their hugely successful third annual rally and lobby day in Sacramento, ...

Single payer advocates are also busy preparing for a historical strategy summit taking place in Los Angeles later this month that will bring together representatives from the broad coalition of organizations dedicated to bringing single payer to California. The summit demonstrates the unprecedented development of the organized and operational single payer movement necessary to bring universal health care to California. It's the kind of grassroots movement that has been largely absent in the history of health reform, and it's just one example of the changing landscape of health care politics.

On that note, my "leisure" reading lately is a book called *One Nation Uninsured: Why the US Has No National Health Insurance*. It chronicles the 20th century's long line of failed attempts at achieving national health insurance.... In fact, a century of such "health care reform" has brought our health care system to the point where it is deeply fragmented, unimaginably costly and the least effective system in the entire developed world at delivering either health or care. I can't help but wonder where we might have been in terms of universal health care had proponents not forfeited their goal quite so fast....

The litmus test for "politically feasible" has historically been largely defined by where doctors, insurers, business and labor stood on the issue. Throughout the last century, there was no grassroots group as singularly focused on the passage of single payer health care as the physicians and insurers were opposed to it. That's changed considerably, especially in California, as the 500 or so organizations that support SB 840 continue their

evolution into an effective coalition that works tirelessly (and largely under the radar of many in Sacramento) to educate and organize Californians on universal health care.

More importantly, groups that traditionally oppose single payer, like physicians, are no longer unified against it. The American College of Physicians made history last year in their endorsement of single payer and the California Medical Association includes a large and growing minority of members that strongly support single payer. The American Medical Students Association has quickly risen to become one of the most passionate and inspired groups advocating for passage of SB 840. Another powerful provider group, the California Nurses Association has gone "all in" for single payer and is working in much the same way for single payer as the American Medical Association once worked to oppose it. Their dedication unites with that of organizations like Health Care for All – California, school employees, the League of Women Voters, retired teachers, and others who are deeply embedded in communities across the state.

The lesson that advocates of single payer should take from history is to observe how the AMA was able to defeat national health insurance through steady community education and organizing. This is why single payer has the best shot, politically, as well as on a policy basis, for winning passage. Only single-payer boasts the kind of unified and dedicated grassroots movement for something that makes large reform possible.

In the midst of an unprecedented and inspiring presidential primary, the theme for 2008 is unmistakable - it's time to have hope.

*Congratulations*

*LeRoy Jackson!*

*Celebrating 25 Years As Torrance  
City Manager*

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

### More About Sunshine Week

Panelists, participants and some of the more than fifty attendees at Sunshine Week's Get the Facts Panel and Get into the Act Fair.



### Letter to the Editor of the *Daily Breeze* Published March 16

This is Sunshine Week, a national initiative that calls attention to the threats to “sunshine” or transparency in government information and decisions. We have the right to know what our government is doing and having access to public records and government meetings is critically important. Whether it is to track potential environmental hazards or to attend a meeting where decisions about land use are being made, “sunshine laws” afford us access and create government transparency.

However, these laws are only as good as we, the people, demand that they be. Finding information about how the government is serving the public has always been somewhat difficult. But post-9-11, these challenges are even greater. In the name of homeland security, “sunshine laws” and the opportunities for citizens to gain access to information have been constricted.

As our elected representatives in Washington work to bring about greater transparency through ethics, lobbying and other reforms, so too must our leaders in the South Bay. We commend the cities of Lomita and Torrance for their adoption of ethics policies that commit to openness in the conduct of their business.

The League of Women Voters is hosting a “Get the Facts” panel and a “Get into the Act” Fair at Torrance City Hall West Annex from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday. The public is welcome to hear about the Freedom of Information Act, accessing information and the

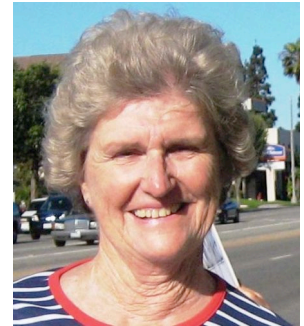
newspaper's role in gathering and dissemination of political facts. Representatives of all the political parties and many community groups will be available at the fair to discuss their organizations' goals.

As members of the League of Women Voters, we are always working to keep our community strong, healthy and vibrant, and that all starts with having an open government.

Barbara Barker, President  
League of Women Voters of  
Torrance

### Dee Hardison—Woman of the Year

Congratulations to Torrance League member Dee Hardison on having been selected as the 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District Woman of the Year. Her accomplishments have been many—special education teacher, parks and recreation commissioner, planning commissioner, council member, and mayor of Torrance. In the words of



Assemblyman Ted Lieu, “Dee was known as an elected official who was committed to the community, persevered and got things done.”

Dee also served on regional governing bodies and was—and is—actively involved in community affairs. In recognition of her lifetime service to the community she also recently received the prestigious Jared Sidney Torrance award.

Dee was honored during session on the Assembly floor and again at a reception hosted by the Legislative Women's Caucus for all the Women of the Year recipients.

# League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

## Looking Forward to County Convention By Lola Ungar, President

You are cordially invited to hear the latest information about the County of Los Angeles from Chief Executive Officer William T. Fujioka who will be our guest speaker on Saturday, March 29th at our 46th Annual Convention. During the meeting, we will give special consideration to whether the LWV/LAC will propose a new study and also decide how and when to take action on certain issues that we have studied.

### Studying the Issues

It is most important that all Local League members should be encouraged to take the opportunity to attend the annual convention because it can be a learning tool about a LWV basic precept: the Why and How we choose to study certain issues. When you are asked why the LWV is so respected when we speak, you will be able to reply, "Because we have studied the issue." And, your newest members will be sure to understand more about the League of Women Voters once they have taken part in the convention process.

In addition, we will be electing a brand new President along with new directors. We will also be recognizing those who have served along with those that are leaving the LWV/LAC Board. During the proceeding, time will be set aside for League members to give direction to the Board.



# LWV/LAC

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

An Inter-League Organization — Beach Cities • Claremont Area • East San Gabriel Valley • Glendale-Burbank • Long Beach Area  
Los Angeles • Palos Verdes Peninsula • Pasadena Area • Santa Monica • Torrance • Whittier

## 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

### THE ROLE OF A STRONGER CEO

Los Angeles County Chief Executive Officer

### William T Fujioka



Mr. Fujioka will give us an update briefing since taking office in mid-2007 on his role as Los Angeles County's CEO with new authority and direction over most of the county departments, the changes that are currently taking place (i.e., personnel and expenditures), and the future changes that he foresees in the County's budget and operations.

**Saturday, March 29, 2008**

**9:30 AM – 2:00 PM**

**Almanson Court  
700 Almanson Street  
Alhambra, CA 91801  
626-570-4600**

Convention Kits for delegates will be mailed to Local League Presidents by the end of February. Additional copies will be available at the meeting.

All members are encouraged to attend.



Send form and check payable to LWV/LAC  
Mail to LWV/LAC Treasurer, 427 E. Walnut Ave., Burbank 91501

League \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please highlight delegates names with a (D).*

**Deadline is March 21, 2008**

Reservations # \_\_\_\_\_ @\$25.00 = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**If Postmarked After March 21st**  
Reservations # \_\_\_\_\_ @\$30.00 = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken Entrees # \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian Entrees # \_\_\_\_\_ Entrees W/O NUTS # \_\_\_\_\_

### LWV Mission

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization open to all citizens, women and men, of voting age. The League's purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected government issues.

## League of Women Voters of California News

### The LWVC Positions on June 2008 Ballot Measures



The June 3, 2008 ballot features two propositions on the subject of eminent domain. The first, Proposition 98, The California Property Owners and Farmland Protection Act, is similar to Proposition 90, which the LWVC opposed on the November 2006 ballot. However, it goes much farther in limiting the ability of public agencies to acquire land to provide water resources, to regulate land use, to protect natural resources, and even to continue rent control laws. The League OPPOSES Proposition 98, and has signed the ballot argument against the measure. Any League member wishing to work on the campaign should contact Meghan Callahan via email ([mcallahan@bickerassociates.com](mailto:mcallahan@bickerassociates.com)) or by calling 916-443-0872.

[On its website, LWVC states that “wealthy apartment and mobile home park owners have contributed most of the money to qualify Proposition 98 for the ballot.”]

The second, Proposition 99, The Homeowners Protection Act, simply addresses a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision by clarifying that single-family occupied properties may not be condemned for transfer to other private parties. It reinforces the right of local governments and others to regulate land use and to acquire property for valid government purposes. The League SUPPORTS Proposition 99, and signed the ballot argument in favor of the measure. For more information visit our web site at [www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org)

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE on June 3, 2008!

**Register to vote by May 19 to vote on June 3!**

### Register Online for the LWVC Leadership Council 2008

Register online at [www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org) for the LWVC Leadership Council on May 17 - 18, 2008 [in Sacramento.] This exciting event for League presidents, leaders, and members from throughout the state will include featured speaker LWVUS President Mary Wilson and California First Amendment Coalition Executive Director Peter Scheer as well as many networking opportunities and exciting workshops.

[Preceding information is from LWVC sources.]



Use Smartvoter for the Upcoming election to:

Read brief profiles and statements by the candidates

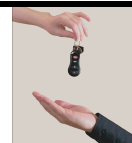
Find your polling place and what is on your ballot

Get information on voter registration

Get data on past elections

Link to other election-related websites

Be informed. Go to Smartvoter at [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org). It will be updated periodically between now and June 3.



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League of Women Voters of California Education Fund

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

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

### **League Expresses Concern With New Ethics Procedures**

[March 12, 2008, LWV Press Release]

**Washington, DC**— The League of Women Voters today expressed concerns about the new ethics procedures passed by a House vote of 229 to 182 last night.

“This does not provide the independent ethics enforcement process that is needed to clean up the House and protect the public interest,” said Mary G. Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters. “The investigative powers of the Office of Congressional Ethics are simply insufficient,” Wilson continued. “Without access to subpoena power, investigators will not be able to compel cooperation from outside entities and individuals, congressional staff and Members,” she said.

“Voters in 2006 clearly reacted to the ‘business as usual’ approach that Congress took to the scandals that plagued the House. Voters continue to have high expectations for ethics reform. They want changes that will be strong and effective,” Wilson said. “This agreement falls short,” she said. “This proposal will prove to be inadequate and will have to be revisited, probably when the next wave of public scandals arrives,” Wilson said.

“The League is disappointed that this proposal is the best the House is willing, or able, to achieve,” Wilson concluded.

### **2008 on Par to Be Historic Election**

[Excerpts from March 12, 2008, LWV Press Release]

“From what we have seen so far, the 2008 presidential election will be in the history books for several compelling reasons,” said national League president Mary G. Wilson. “Americans are energized about this campaign and we are seeing that reflected in the high voter turnout and record amount of funds being raised from millions of voters.”

“This is the first election since 1928 where neither an incumbent president nor vice president is seeking nomination for the highest elected office in the U.S. This diverse field of candidates from all parties has led to an elevated sense of excitement and a newness that is drawing more people into the system,” Wilson said.

“We are less enthusiastic about the trends we see developing on the financing of this election,” Wilson noted. “While it is inspiring to see so many new individuals giving small contributions to these campaigns, we continue to call on all the Presidential candidates to commit to use the public financing system for the general election if they become their party’s nominee. Recent comments by the candidates suggest that they will not stand behind their commitment to use public funds this fall. This is disappointing.”

#### **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.

## 2008 Calendar

Mar. 29, 9:30-2 pm	County Convention, Almansor Ct., Alhambra
Apr. 3, 7 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
Apr. 16, 7-9 pm	Candidate Forum for Torrance City Council, Toyota Meeting Hall, Cultural Arts Center
Apr. 26, 9:30-2:30	County Ballot Briefing for June Primary, East L.A. Library
May 1, 7 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
May 17-18	LWVC Council, Sacramento
May 31, 8:30-11:30 am	Annual Meeting, Marie Callender's, Torrance Rest. Row
June 3	Primary election for congressional, state, county offices, Torrance City Council, propositions



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*Torrance, CA 90508*

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