



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

We are in the midst of election season with candidates' forums. LWV Torrance co-sponsored the TUSD candidates forum with the Torrance Council of PTAs on October 10 at the Nakano Theatre. Approximately 70 audience members listened intently to the four candidates, Irmi Lake, Don Lee, Rick Marshall and Terry Ragins, and many asked questions. A potential bond issue and the rebuilding of Hull School were the hottest topics.

On October 16th, the three Lomita Candidates, Ken Blackwell, Don Suminaga and Mark Waronek, visited two senior centers, Lomita Manor and Kiwanis Gardens, for mini-forums moderated by the LWVT. On October 18th, they took part in the city-wide Lomita City Council Candidates Forum at City Hall, moderated by LWV Palos Verdes Peninsula member, Mary Ellen Barnes, who is also our Management Training Advisor. We had good audiences for all these forums and the two major forums were taped for rebroadcast on the respective city's cable stations.

Something new this year is our participation in the national Membership Recruitment Initiative and the new direction that we are encouraged to solicit membership at candidates forums. I have made announcements at each of the four events, and we also passed out our new membership brochures, created by Sue Herbers, at the forums. It is our goal to net four new members this year.

Hopefully, the membership is responding to the calls to action, the most recent being on supporting an over-riding

vote on the President's veto of the Children's Healthcare.

Looking forward, after the election and the second Immigration Study Consensus meeting, we will be pleasurably anticipating our Holiday Party at the home of Linda Brown. This is a great get-together to share food and friendship and review the programming at the County and the National levels. They are seeking our input on new studies, updates and retention of position statements. Please come.

Barbara Barker

Budget Committee Appointment

Celeste Bailey was appointed to the Budget Committee for 2007-2008 at the October board meeting. She is joining Janice Steffen and Marcia Cribbs. Marcia will chair the Committee and Treasurer Sandra Strong will serve as ex-officio member.

Did You Forget?

Some of our members seem to have forgotten to send in their dues for the year. If you are one, please hurry as the rosters are on their way to the printer and we want your name to be included

League of Women Voters of Torrance News

A Message from Voter Services Director Pat Kromka

I would like to encourage you to be sure to check your ballot periodically on www.smartvoter.org and encourage your family and friends to do it, too. Candidates may continue to update information through Election Eve.

Sincere thanks,

Pat



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

About Your City

Looking for information about your city, including about coming elections? The following websites are the official websites for each city and contain a wealth of information on each city's government, history, policies, officials, how to get on the ballot, and much more.

Carson <http://ci.carson.ca.us>

Gardena <http://www.ci.gardena.ca.us>

Lomita <http://www.lomita.com/cityhall>

Torrance <http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us>

Board of Directors 2007-08

President: Barbara Barker
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Committees

Budget: Marcia Cribbs
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Welcome Home, Jeanette Pierson

We were sorry to hear that long-time member, Jeanette Pierson, had taken a fall and needed some rehabilitation time away from home. The good news is she is better now and back at home. If anyone is resilient, it is the indefatigable Jeanette.

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

Election Season's Forums

Voter Services Director **Pat Kromka** coordinated four candidates forums in a space of two weeks and all of them were well attended and informative.

The first was for the Torrance Unified School District Board of Education. Four candidates – Irmi Lake, Don Lee, Rick Marshall, and Terry Ragins – were asked a dozen questions by an audience of approximately



70 interested Torrance voters at the Nakano Theatre on Wednesday,

October 10. **Kay White** was the moderator for this panel and **Mary Lou Busch** was the timer. The other

TUSD Forum is broadcast in Torrance daily at 9 pm on Time Warner Channel 28 through election eve.

volunteers included **Barbara Barker, Linda Brown, Terry Furey, Sue Herbers** and PTA members. The questions covered many issues but returned repeatedly to the reconstruction of Hull Middle School and the return of the students, and to potential

bonds, selling of surplus property or other means to finance the District's needs.

The following week, Lomita's candidates – Ken Blackwood, Don Suminaga and Mark Waronek – attended three forums. The first two were in Lomita senior citizens' centers.

The first, at Lomita Manor, was attended by approximately 25 residents and friends.



The second was at Kiwanis Gardens where because so many residents speak Korean, the services of an interpreter, Lata Kim, were used.



There were more than 35 residents and friends in the audience. **Barbara Barker** moderated the panels, and **Pat Kromka, LaVonne** and **Ken Wuertz** timed them.

Thursday, October 18th saw the Lomita candidates at City Hall. The Council Chambers overflowed with interested residents and the



questions were across a very wide spectrum of density issues, street conditions and economic concerns. **Mary Ellen Barnes**, our Management Training Advisor, who is a member of the LWV Palos Verdes, moderated the forum. **Mary Lou Busch** and **Gerri Rische** were the timers. **Linda Brown, Barbara Barker, Lola Ungar** and **Dee Hardison** also assisted with the questions, candidates' literature, greeting and assisting the public.

Not only did Pat Kromka organize and

The Lomita Forum is broadcast in Lomita on Time Warner Channel 26 Tuesdays at 11 am and 7 pm.

attend all these forums but she also successfully encouraged all the candidates to enter their information into the www.SmartVoter.org site and arranged for the local access cable staff

to film and replay both the major forums.

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

On October 9, a small group met to discuss and come to consensus on Questions 1 and 2 of the Immigration Study. A report of the results will be available after the second meeting. –ed.

LAST CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON IMMIGRATION CONSENSUS

MEETING NOVEMBER 13, 2007

7-9 pm

Help find LWV Consensus on Questions 3 – 6 at David K. Haywood Community Center, Green and Artesia

Question 3:

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

- a. Deport unauthorized immigrants.
- b. Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on length of residence in U.S.
- c. Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on needs of U.S. employers
- d. All allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on doing things such as paying taxes, learning English, studying civics, etc.
- e. If deported assess fines before possible re-entry
- f. Assess fines before allowed to earn legal adjustment of status

Question 4:

- a. In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:
 - Social Security Card or Other national Identification Card with secure identifiers for **All** persons residing in the U.S.
- b. Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including:
 - i. Physical barriers (such as fences) and surveillance at borders
 - ii. Increased personnel at land, air, sea entry points
 - iii. More effective tracking of persons with non-immigrant visas until they leave the country
 - iv. Verification documents, such as green cards, work permits with secure identifiers
 - v. Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of visa status
 - vi. Improved technology for sharing information among Federal agencies
 - vii. A program to allow immigrant workers to go in and out of the U.S. to meet seasonal and sporadic needs
 - viii. Significant fines proportionate to revenue for employers who fail to take adequate steps to verify work authorization of employees

Question 5: Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with financial costs by states and local governments with large populations

Question 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to actively help economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large immigrating populations

Mary Lou Busch, LWVT

League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

Forums Seminar a Success

Nearly 60 League members attended the Candidates Forums 'R Us seminar September 29 at Taix Restaurant in Los Angeles, which was sponsored by the Los Angeles County League. Presenters, including Torrance League member Kay White, discussed the ins



and outs of preparing for and conducting the forums, stressing such topics as ensuring that all candidates for a position are invited and their responses received,

that the candidates and audience are aware that the League neither supports nor opposes candidates, and that if forums are co-sponsored with other groups, that those groups also neither support or oppose candidates. Presenters stressed scripting the forum and keeping to time schedules (particularly so if televising is involved), ensuring that participants can see or hear the timers, and being aware of any special needs of the participants. They also discussed the need for the moderator to be in control—in timing and sequencing of speakers, and in difficult situations. Methods of handling questions from the audience, both oral and written, were also discussed.

Guest speaker for the event was Dean Logan, Chief Deputy Registrar/County Clerk for Los Angeles County, who is a nationally recognized leader on election issues. He discussed upcoming elections and indicated that he expected the county voting system, Ink-A-Vote Plus, which was decertified by Secretary of State Bowen, to be recertified by the February election and that it will be used in the November election. He did not know yet what conditions might be imposed on it, but currently, Bowen's committee is looking at expanding the post-election audit. Logan's goal is to make required changes transparent to the voter.



Logan stated that his biggest concern is poll worker and voter fatigue. The county will have experienced nine elections in 2007. He also expressed concern that there will be a low turnout for the June state primary but expects a high turnout for the presidential primary in February and the general election in November.

Health Reform in California— Where's It Going?

The conversation around health reform has ratcheted up. The California Governor is looking for a star in his crown by hoping that his plan will be the one. He threatened to veto SB840(Kuehl) and has vetoed AB8(Nunez). The League of Women Voters of California remains 100 percent committed to work for the passage of SB840 and actively worked to defeat AB8(Nunez). If one tries to pay attention, the rhetoric is confusing. But the bottom line is that health coverage is very unaffordable for many. Not only are the premiums high, leading to employees turning to a high deductible plan that forces delay of care, but out-of-pocket expenses are out of control. The problem of the underinsured has grown substantially.

The Governor's Individual Mandate leaves people in the lurch. Employers can opt to provide less coverage than they are now providing. Currently large employers spend 12-14% of payroll for health insurance. The Governor is mandating a 4% coverage. There are no controls on out-of-pocket expenses written into the bill.

His plan mandates everyone have coverage but doesn't address the affordability of it. The tax credit attempts to address coverage for those between 250-350% of poverty, but it only covers the premium and not out-of-pocket costs.

We must work to pass a single payer health plan in California. It's not "Government run health care". It's not "socialized medicine" but it guarantees that every person will not be subjected to the whims of the insurance industry. The horror stories grow when those with limited coverage cannot access the care they need. It's terribly unjust but profit is the bottom line. And profit is paramount. So why do we support this? Is it the marketplace brainwashing us? The arguments from the other side say that competition depends on the marketplace. People are stuck in the plans designated by employers instead of having free choice. Under single payer, providers will be forced to compete with each other.

(Cont'd on page 6, Health Reform)

League of Women Voters of California News

More Water, Less Cost?

In September the Governor called a special legislative session to deal with water infrastructure. Read an overview of the issues by LWVC legislative consultant for water, Jack Sullivan.

September 2007

California has faced a water problem almost since its inception: people seem to want to live, do business, and farm in places that are short of water. To cope with this situation, the state has developed a water infrastructure that moves water from the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and the Colorado River to places where people live, work, and farm such as the Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley, and southern California. In an extremely important way, citizens of this state are intimately connected by these extensive water transport systems.

Now the state finds itself with a water system that is in crisis. The crisis stems from a number of sources: an extended drought with no end in sight, increasing population, an aging water infrastructure, and ongoing fights over who should get the water that is available.

Southern California has witnessed a constant focus on water issues with, most recently, the City of Long Beach declaring a water emergency and imposing measures to alter the way people in that city use water. This decision comes partly as the result of the current drought and partly as the result of a legal decision by a federal judge that could result in lower deliveries of Delta water to the southern part of the state. The judge's decision was based on the perilous state of the Delta smelt which are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

To deal with this crisis, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has just proposed a \$9 billion bond issue. If passed, the bond money would be used for the construction of at least three new dams in different parts of the state, as well as address the need for a "conveyance facility" to move water across the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The purpose of these new dams would be to increase the supply of water to water-poor parts of the state.

A network of environmental organizations

around the state (including the LWVC) known as "Green California," has made a counter proposal to State Senator Don Perata for an "appropriate water supply response package." Green California's proposal would get the state additional supplies of water at half the cost of the Governor's proposal and require that the bond money be spent on improving water supply reliability (water recycling and water use efficiency), groundwater protection, water quality improvements including a focus on disadvantaged communities, Delta restoration and enhancement, and river and watershed restoration. Green California argues that its suggestions would cost about \$4.525 billion, roughly half of what the Governor is proposing and without the construction of new dams.

Another water bond could appear on the ballot as early as February 2008. The League is a signatory to the Green California letter and will likely take a position on any water bond on the ballot. The League will disseminate information about water bond developments as that information becomes available.

Health Reform *(cont'd from page 5)*

We have the resources and the wherewithal to do better. However it takes grass roots mobilization to make this happen. It isn't going to happen if we all don't care enough to get actively involved. There is a political will for it, but because we need the two-thirds vote, it demands activism.

In California, the League of Women Voters is requesting their members get behind this by taking it to their local elected bodies and contacting Health Care for All California chapters to work alongside them. The League is an instrumental member of the state steering committee. SB840(Kuehl) The California Health Universal Health Care Act will administer the California Universal Healthcare System.

For more information go to www.healthcareforall.org or www.onecarenow.org.

Sheila Hoff, Health Care Policy Director for League of Women Voters of LA County, and Health Care for All South Bay/Long Beach Director

League of Women Voters of the United States News

League Opposes Arizona's Efforts As Disenfranchising

State to Sue Federal Commission Over Voter ID Requirements

Washington, DC- Arizona Secretary of State Jan Brewer today announced that she will sue the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to force the commission to accept an ID requirement as part of the federal mail voter registration application form.

"The League strongly opposes this move," said Mary G. Wilson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States. "We all understand that an ID requirement will undermine voter participation, especially by older women, minorities, and persons with disabilities," she said.

"We had hoped that using states' rights as a way to disenfranchise American voters was a thing of the past," Wilson said.

"It is disturbing that any public official could be comfortable knowingly disenfranchising voters," stated Wilson.

Bonnie Saunders, president of the League of Women Voters of Arizona, pointed out that, "voter advocacy organizations in Arizona have been fighting this for years. Raising new barriers to voting is a bad idea," Saunders said. The League of Women Voters of Arizona is party to a lawsuit challenging Arizona's new requirement that voters provide proof of citizenship, such as an ID, before they are allowed to register to vote. "Many American citizens do not have any of the required forms of ID including a certified copy of their birth certificate," Saunders said, "and it costs a significant amount to get one. People should not have to pay to register to vote."

"Instead of dampening the enthusiasm of voters, we need to do every thing possible to encourage and assist voters in exercising this right that we as Americans too easily take for granted," Wilson stated.

(LWVUS press release dated Oct. 4, 2007)

Presidential Candidate Voters' Guide

At Council 2007 a number of Leagues signed a petition, initiated by the Maryland, National Capitol Area and the Virginia Leagues, asking LWVUS to produce a Voters' Guide for the 2008 Presidential candidates. The LWVUS Board accepted this proposal, and, with the help of these three Leagues, will undertake this crucial voters' service project. Only candidates that meet the LWVUS criteria will be invited to provide answers to the LWVUS questionnaire.

The candidates will be advised that the material will appear in print, in Voters' Guides of interested state/local Leagues, and on VOTE411.org and state/local League Web sites that choose to incorporate this information. --LWVUS

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

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.

2007-2008 Calendar

Thu. Nov. 1, 7 pm	Board meeting—Call for location
Sat. Nov.3, 10-2 pm	LWVLA League Day. See the LWVT Website for topic, place and reg. form
Tue. Nov.6	Election Day: State and Local propositions, Lomita City Council, TUSD, El Camino College District
Tue. Nov. 13	Immigration Consensus, David K. Hayward Community Center
Thu. Nov. 15, 11-1pm	Middle School Leadership Council, Toyota Mtg. Hall, Torr. Civic Center
Dec.	No VOTER
Thu. Dec. 6	Board meeting (5:30 pm) and holiday potluck and program planning (6-9 pm), Linda Brown's home
Sat. Jan. 5	Membership dues half price
Thu. Jan. 10	Board meeting—Call for location
Sat. Jan.26, 9:30-2 pm	County Winter League Day, Burbank County Library



League of Women Voters of Torrance

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