



League of Women Voters Torrance Area
Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

LWVTA *Voter*

<http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>
new number: Tel. 310-223-6897

January 2011

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters Torrance Area, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

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President's Message

We hope that this New Year brings you new hope and prosperity. The LWV Torrance Area will be setting off in 2011 to welcome new challenges. We will take part in the LWV/LA County Jail Study Unit Meeting 1 and Consensus on January 15 and Unit Meeting 2 will take place on April 10. Please join us! We will also take part in the LWVUS Education Study and another LWVUS Study on Privatization later in the year.

The LWV/LA County Convention will take place in March and another highlight of the year will be the LWV California Convention in Ventura in May. We will inform you about the last two events when we have more details.

Fortunately, we will not have to cope with the months of preparation leading to a proposition-laden November election as we did last year. But, we will be planning on conducting Candidates Forums for cities within our jurisdiction. We know you are going to say, "Yes" when Pat Kromka calls on you to assist in these endeavors.

League members are well known for their knowledge and if they don't have an answer, they will look it up. That's because they attained their special knowledge through study of certain issues in the League. Join us as we journey onward and study new issues during this New Year!

Sincerely, **Lola Ungar**

The **LWVTA Voter** is published monthly except July and December. All LWVTA members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in the **LWVTA Voter**. Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Email submissions to lwv.torrancearea@um.att.com before the 25th of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.
 Editor: Geneva Martin

To Do's:

- **Consider joining the LWV Torrance Area Board: Contact any Board member for information**
- **Invite a friend to a League Meeting!**
- **Get young people involved. Click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRDL0Ejr424> to see the DVD-Women in Public Service, October 21, 2010**
- **Give a gift membership for Valentine's Day - the LWV was founded on February 14, 1920. Memberships are half priced now - \$35 for a half-year membership.**

Natural Resources Report on Desalination Facility Tour By Margaret Carter, LWVTA

Kay White, from LWVTA, made the arrangements for this "go-see" tour of the desalination demonstration site on Harbor Drive in Redondo Beach. The group (including LWV members from the L.A., Palos Verdes, Pasadena and Torrance Leagues), were met on Dec 11 at 10 AM by Phil Lauri, a principal engineer with West Basin Municipal Water District.

Phil directed us to the new **Water Education Center**, which offers displays regarding the region's water supply challenges, conservation and recycling efforts. Good information was readily available in the large displays. For example, one panel showed the percentage change in the ground water and imported water serving Southern

California:	1990	2005	2020
Ground Water	21%	21%	21%
Imported Water	79%	65%	(goal) 33%

In recent years, the region's imported water supply has diminished, in large part because of low rainfall and restrictions on pumping from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. It is hoped, by doubling conservation and recycling efforts and adding 10% of desalinated water into the mix, that the goal of 33% imported water may be reached.

When we stepped outside we could view all the equipment used in desalination using "reverse Osmosis" (RO) technologies. RO is a process where water is forced through a membrane which rejects 98.98% of particles, leaving desalinated water with only 80 Total Desalted Solids/liter (TDS/liter). This compares to tap water which may have 400 TDS/liter.

Phil ended our education by offering us a taste test of "desal" water and tap water. Most of us preferred the desal water, probably because it didn't contain chlorine.

Although desalination is controversial among some environmental groups and some people who say it is too expensive, the cost is becoming closer to the cost of imported water.

* Some of the information was taken from an article in the Daily Breeze posted on 11/11/2010 by Kristin S. Agostoni, reference http://www.dailybreeze.com/ci_16588138.

DOLLAR\$ will be available for homeowners in the South Bay to upgrade their homes for energy and water efficiency. Attend an Energy Upgrade California & Water Reliability 2020 Wednesday, January 12, 2011 - 6-8 pm - - City of Lomita City Hall. Register at www.sbesc.com or call 310-371-7222.

Thanks to Elizabeth Matthews for her donation to the Betsey Matthews Education Fund.

Board of Directors 2010-11

*President: Lola Ungar**
*1st Vice President, Voter Service: Pat Kromka**
*2nd Vice President, Voter Editor: Geneva Martin**
*Secretary: Kay White**
*Treasurer: Sue Martin**

Directors

Natural Resources: Margaret Carter
Fundraising/Program: Athena Paquette Cormier
Communications: Sydne Morrison
Education/Social Policy: Gerry Rische

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Government: Dee Hardison
Health Care: Barbara Barker
Land Use: Lola Ungar
Libraries: Judith Gerber
Redistricting: Lola Ungar

Committees

Budget: Dick Smisek
County Jail Study: Lola Ungar & Emma Simmons
Executive: Noted by asterisks
Nominating: Barbara Barker

Facebook: Emma Simmons
Webmaster: Barbara Barker
Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown & Sue Martin

Condolences to the families of long time members Ann Smisek and Ray Krank, who passed away recently.

County Jail Study Unit Meeting

The Los Angeles County Jail System is the largest county jail system in the United States, housing approximately 19,000 adult inmates. It is chronically overcrowded. Come to the unit meeting to learn about addressing overcrowding and other conditions, as well as reducing recidivism.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TORRANCE AREA

*Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance
P.O. Box 964 · Torrance, CA 90508 · (310) 223-6897*

*All Interested League Members & Guests
You are invited*



COUNTY JAIL STUDY UNIT MEETING 1 & CONSENSUS*

Presented by our Local League Jail Study Committee
Mary Lou Busch, Emma Simmons & Lola Ungar

**HOME OF
MARY LOU BUSCH
416 CALLE MIRAMAR
REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277
TEL 310-378-2378**

**SATURDAY
JANUARY 15, 2011
9:30 AM TO 12 NOON**

*Carpooling recommended.
Street parking only.*

**Note: County Jail Study Unit Meeting 2 & Consensus will be held on Sun. April 10.*



Can California's Budget Be Balanced?

League of Women Voters/Los Angeles County

Saturday, January 29, 2011

9:30 AM to 2:00 PM

Rio Hondo Event Center

10627 Old River School Road, Downey, 90254, (562) 806-5020
Close to the 710, 105, and 5 freeways, between Firestone and Florence
and near Paramount Blvd. in Downey



Guest Speaker
Jean Ross
Executive Director
California Budget Project

Take part in the ***Budget Game***
with County Board members
Sally Seven and Jack Sullivan

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

League Name _____

Attendee Name(s)

Deadline is **January 15, 2010**

Reservations # _____ @\$25.00 Total enclosed \$ _____

<i>If postmarked January 16th or later—</i>
Reservations # _____ @\$30.00 Total enclosed \$ _____

Chicken Luncheon # _____ Vegetarian Luncheon # _____ W/O NUTS or other allergens # _____
(name food)

Federal Health Care Reform: What Does It Mean?

Everyone is unhappy about health care, particularly health care costs, but not everyone realizes that a national health care reform bill is law, or what is in it. Research shows that many Americans don't even know that a reform bill has passed. Start by informing yourself about what is—and is not—in the bill, and then make it a point to talk to your friends and neighbors.

Some of what is included in the landmark Affordable Care Act:

- a guarantee that insurance companies can no longer discriminate based on pre-existing conditions
- an end to lifetime caps
- a requirement that insurance companies can no longer drop people when they get sick.

In addition, the bill:

- gives tax credits to small businesses for providing coverage for employees
- requires insurers to cover preventive care at no cost.

There is misinformation being circulated about the bill's effects on Medicare. Don't let the naysayers scare seniors!

- Medicare is actually being improved and strengthened.
- The Affordable Care Act attacks waste and fraud.
- The bill **adds** benefits for those on Medicare:
 - helps seniors stay in their homes
 - bans discrimination based on pre-existing conditions
 - provides preventive care with no co-pays.

Yes, there are taxes—but **only** for those with incomes over \$200,000-\$250,000. These taxes will provide for the largest investment in the health care workforce ever made. There is a huge need for primary health care providers, and the Affordable Care Act will help fill the gap by investing in education and training, and providing incentives for these desperately needed caregivers.

Finally, for those who advocate repealing the act: this is an even more costly choice than enacting it! Repealing the act would cost an estimated \$455 billion.

What about California?

California is on the forefront of federal health care reform. This fall, the governor signed two bills creating the California Health Benefit Exchange. There are a number of challenges on the road to an operational exchange by 2014; the League will be active both in advocacy and community education. If you are interested in working on this issue, contact Helen Hutchison, hhutchison@lwvc.org.

Sign up for action alerts on the LWVC Web site. Go to lwvc.org and click on "Sign up for E-News" at the upper left. On the sign-up page, choose "Action Alerts."

Do you want to know more? Here are sites where you can find good information:

<http://www.healthcare.gov/law/introduction/index.html>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/healthreform/healthcare-overview>

<http://www.chcf.org/health-policy-office>

Source: LWVC Leaders UPDATE November 2010

<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/pdf/2010-12-health-care.pdf>

Education Report

By Tom Rische

Things Quiet on the Torrance Front

Locally, not much new is happening until "Governor Brown unveils his new budget on January 10. It is difficult to answer the questions, because our actions will be based upon his budget. We are very concerned about any additional reductions, since we have made so many reductions over the past three years," according to Superintendent George Mannon.

At the December meeting, the board elected Don Lee as the President. Under usual procedures, the office rotates among the members.

Comments from Torrance Superintendent George Mannon in response to questions:

1. *Any local changes upcoming as the result of "firming" of the budget?* We are now in a "wait and see" mode as to what steps the new governor and Assembly will take to close the estimated deficit of \$25.4 billion. Our concern is that additional reductions will be placed on K-12 education, which will then result in more reductions for TUSD.
2. *Do you have any thoughts on recent Breeze editorials calling for "reform" and "better teachers"?* I think for a high achieving district like TUSD that the key to continuous improvement is working with teachers through staff development. I do not think that value added evaluations are the answer to student achievement.
3. *What do you think are the most important factors in student learning in Torrance?* The most important factor in student success is having a highly qualified teacher. Class size, learning materials, value added evaluations, etc are all dependent variables, which are subjugated to the training and ability of teachers.

My thoughts on a Doyle McManus Sunday Piece, "The Upward Mobility Gap"

<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/a-oe-mcmanus-twous-20110102,0,5332722.column>

Once, a good education almost guaranteed a good job and rising status, but not now. But most won't get a good job and move up without good education-- unless they are electronic whizzes with a certain amount of luck and business acumen. (Zuckerberg: Man of the Year!)

Many "good" jobs have been technologized away -- or outsourced by big American companies which found greater profits overseas.

Pundit Robert Maynard Hutchins believed the best evaluation of schools is what happens to their graduates 25 years later. And noisy critics face a dilemma pointed out by another 20th century pundit, Walter Lippmann, who asked in 1960, "What should schools be emphasizing in a world which is rocketing into the future, with many future jobs unpredictable?"

Many ghetto kids in misnamed "failing" schools look around their homes and neighborhoods and conclude that education don't matter. Where have all their role models gone? And many current college grads without jobs wonder how they can pay off their high college loans.

Most schools outside the inner cities are doing very well. They contributed mightily to a Golden Age many of us now enjoy.

Now, many teachers have been laid off. Let's not starve the educational goose that laid the golden eggs.

LWVUS

President Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS wrote recently on her blog: The most recent Congress saw 275 filibusters, the highest number in history, according to the NY Times. The filibuster has allowed for incredible amounts of time wasted in the Senate. This is particularly disappointing given the fact that the Senate's greatest strength is its ability to conduct open debate to overcome conflicting interests. It is likely that the conversation about Senate rules will continue for some time. The League will not slow down in our work to demand progress from those that we elect.

LWVTA News

LWVTA submitted a proposal for the Torrance Centennial Anniversary Event to produce one or more shows on Torrance Cable that would recognize women, some of them League members, who have played and continue to play a role in the growth of the City of Torrance.

LWVTA handed out 'I voted' stickers and 'One Vote' flyers as part of TUSD Middle School Leadership Conference on November 18.

At the program planning meeting, there was general agreement for education and advocacy on the initiative and referendum process and state school finance, as well as to retain all local positions, with no new study.

Budget and Nominating Committee Reports are due at the March 3rd board meeting.

Applications for the City of Torrance commissions are due by Monday, January 24th. Applicants must have completed their certification training to apply. Contact the City Clerk's office at 310-618-2870 to be notified for the next training class. Information is available online at

<http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/1936.htm> .

The Gardena Candidates Forum, scheduled for February 9, has been cancelled. There were no challengers to the three incumbent council members and so Gardena City Council appointed them and cancelled the scheduled March 8 election

Ten candidates have filed for the State Senate Special election on February 15 to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Jenny Orpeza. The 28th Senate District Special Election will be the first under the provisions of Proposition 14, the open primary law passed by voters in June that went into effect January first. Under the new election rules, if no candidate gets more than 50 percent of the vote in the primary (or in this case special election), then the top two finishers will face each other in an April 19 general election.

Mark Saturday, March 26th, for LWV/LAC convention in Long Beach.

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.



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. The League has two separate and distinct roles. The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, which conducts our voters service and civic education activities, is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational organization.

50% off

Join for year 10-11. Dues are now half off of amounts below.

JOIN THE LEAGUE

Be a part of an organization where smart, active leaders create lasting change in their communities.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Cell Phone _____

Email(s): _____

Check here if you want to begin or continue to receive your VOTER (newsletter) by E-MAIL. (*E-mail saves us printing and postage expenses*).

Dues paid to **LWVTA** automatically include membership at the national, state and county levels.

Please check membership category:

INDIVIDUAL DUES \$70

HOUSEHOLD DUES \$105

STUDENT DUES \$ 35

CONTRIBUTION TO LWVTA

\$ _____ (*Dues + contribution are not tax deductible*). Please send form and check payable to **LWVTA**

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO **LWVTA - EdFund - separate check**

\$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF ENCLOSED CHECK(S)

\$ _____

Mail to **LWVTA**, P. O. Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

Calendar

Wednesday, January 12, 6-8 pm - **Energy Upgrade California & Water Reliability 2020** - City of Lomita City Hall, Register at www.sbesc.com or call 310-371-7222.

Saturday, January 15, 9:30 a.m.- noon - **County Jail Study Unit Meeting 1 & Consensus**, Home of Mary Lou Busch (see flyer)

Saturday, January 29, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. - **County Winter League Day - California Budget Process**, Rio Hondo Event Center (see flyer)

Thursday, February 3, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting** (Call for location)

Monday, February 14 - **League's 91st Birthday**

Tuesday, February 15 - **State Senate Special Election**

Sunday, February 20 - **Fundraiser for Health Care for All San Gabriel Valley Chapter - Dangerous Beauty**, 2 p.m. Pasadena Playhouse - tickets \$65 - contact Susan Braig - ssbraig@earthlink.net

Thursday, March 3, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting** (Call for location)
Budget and Nominating Committee Reports are due

Tuesday, March 8 - **Carson Election for City Council, Clerk & Treasurer**

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

Smart Voter:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/>

California: <http://ca.lwv.org/>

California Education Fund:

www.cavotes.org

Los Angeles County:

www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

Torrance Area:

<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.



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Time Dated