

The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

President's Message

I'M PLEASED TO REPORT THAT ATTENDANCE AT OUR LEAGUE EVENTS IS INCREASING RAPIDLY.

Over the past year, attendance at our League dinners has averaged 8 to 10 people. But on March 13, at our dinner at Granville Restaurant in Burbank, we had nearly 20 people! This was fantastic!

We had planned a discussion on League priorities, but with the large crowd, a small group-type discussion was not possible. Instead, I created a form (Leaguers love forms) which listed the potential priorities, and had the attendees rank them. I also left ample space for comments.

The most important priority was Voter Service. More people ranked that first than any other topic. Next was advocacy, followed by Town Hall-type presentations, and then increasing membership.

I am committed to focusing our League's energy in the direction that the members think is the most important.

We have an important forum coming up that will be of great interest to the voters in Glendale, and a prime example of our commitment to Voter Service. The Glendale City Council is considering whether to impose campaign contribution limits. This is a complicated topic, with many ramifications. To educate ourselves and the community, we will present a forum examining campaign contribution limits. As of press time, the date is not firm, but it will take place in late April. I will send notice to all members as soon as we have a firm date and location. We will also invite all Glendale elected officials to attend. The forum will feature people knowledgeable on how campaign contribution limits work in the cities in which they are already in place.

Among the other Voter Service activities we have coming up is a Pro/Con forum on the ballot measures for the June 3 election. It will be taped in the Burbank City Council Chambers, courtesy of the City of Burbank, and will be run widely on their channel. We also have voter registration coming up in May at St. Joseph's Hospital in Burbank.

There are ample opportunities for you to be involved in our activities. Please send me an email at marquezlwv@earthlink.net or call me at (818) 760-3667 if you would like to be a part of our exciting endeavors

Monica Marquez

2008
Calendar
April

Tuesday
April 22
Earth Day

Earth Day was founded by Sen. Gaylord Nelson, who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1995 by President Bill Clinton. The first Earth Day was April 22, 1970.

See page 5 of this month's Voter for an update regarding water resources in California, "Less Water in the Near Future," by John D. Sullivan, Natural Resources Director, LWV/LAC.

May

Thursday
May 1
Cokie Roberts
Book Signing Event
Pasadena

Roberts discusses and signs *Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation* on Thursday, May 1 at 7 p.m.

This event will be held at All Saints Church, 132 N. Euclid Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101.

Call Vroman's for more information at (626) 449-5320 or email email@vromansbookstore.com.

Cost of ticket: \$26.95 + tax (Customers receive a copy of the book with ticket.)



Joan Hardie, Francis Talbott-White and Gwen Cochran at an event entitled "Smack Down the Vote."

LWV Teams with the County to Register Voters at Wrestling Event at Universal City *By Joan Hardie*

On the weekend of February 23 and 24, 2008 the League of Women Voters teamed with the LA County Registrar-Recorder to register voters at Universal City Walk. The event was organized by the WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment). WWE is a large media company that produces professional wrestling events. The WWE also is committed to giving back to the community and this event was to promote voter participation. They called this event "Smack Down the Vote." We had a table near their large display. They also had a stage that had plenty of activity throughout the day. They used the stage to encourage voters to register and to vote in the upcoming elections. Several times they mentioned the League along with the LA County Registrar-Recorder.

Unfortunately, since the event was outside and the weather was horrible, we were rained out on the 24th. We did register over 30 voters and drafted a lot of potential poll workers on the one day we were able to participate. The event was fun and loud and with lots of interesting people. I really enjoy the process of talking with the public and getting them excited about voting. I learned a lot from my fellow co-workers **Gwen Cochran** and **Francis Talbott-White**. They know the process and they know what to say to people who have nothing positive to say about the voting process.

New LWVUS Congressional Voters Tool

THE LEAGUE has announced a new tool for researching congressional votes for the first session of the 110th Congress (2007), listing House and Senate votes on key good government issues. This tool, searchable by member of Congress as well as by issue area, includes key votes on LWVUS legislative priorities. This is a new tool to assist you in your advocacy. Check it out by visiting www.lwv.org and clicking "Take Action"!

Here are some helpful tips for using the votes list:

1. Thank your members of Congress who voted in support of LWVUS positions, and encourage those who didn't to reconsider their positions on key good government issues.
2. When lobbying in the future, research how your member(s) of Congress voted on key LWVUS issues. Please contact Christina Vamvas at cvamvas@lwv.org with any questions related to the list.

**Please note: The purpose of this resource is not to "grade" or "score" members of Congress, but, instead, to provide an accurate listing of key federal votes. We hope you'll utilize it starting today!*

Testimony on February 2008 Election Problems

ON FRIDAY, March 7, at the Ronald Reagan State Building in Los Angeles, League of Women Voters California (LWVC) Communications Manager **Elizabeth Leslie** testified on behalf of the LWVC at an informational hearing on problems faced by California voters during the February 2008 presidential primary election. The joint hearing was conducted by the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting, the Senate Committee on Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments, and the Senate Select Committee on Integrity of Elections.

Leslie testified about the inquiries received by the LWVC office from frustrated voters who had problems in four key areas: registration problems (lifelong voters dropped from the rolls and party affiliations switched); no materials received from county elections offices and/or the Secretary of State; Decline to State (DTS) voters' inquiries about primary party rules and DTS vote-by-mail issues; and the lack of proper use of provisional ballots and the treatment of DTS voters by poll workers on Election Day.

Leslie announced the League's support of recommendations outlined by California Common Cause for the Secretary of State and county registrars of voters to conduct an audit of these problems. She also testified that the LWVC is committed to continuing to provide nonpartisan resources to voters and potential voters of California.

Who in Los Angeles County Would Be Affected by the Governor's Proposed Budget?

February 28, 2008
California Budget Project

THE GOVERNOR has proposed substantial reductions to virtually all state-supported services to close the state's budget gap. The Legislature will consider these proposed reductions and other options during upcoming budget hearings. Who in Los Angeles County would be affected by the Governor's proposals?

- 1,544,710 students served by Los Angeles County's public schools. Cuts to five of the largest funding allocations for public schools in the county would equal \$671 per student.
- 54,190 low-income children dropped from the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Program.
- 418,840 low-income seniors and persons with disabilities who would lose the state cost-of-living adjustment for Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment cash assistance grants.
- 163,700 low-income seniors and persons with disabilities who would receive fewer hours of services through the In-Home Supportive Services Program.
- 5,170 fewer children enrolled in child care and preschool due to funding cuts to child development programs.
- 60,800 low-income children dropped from Medi-Cal coverage because of increased paperwork requirements.
- 2,261,650 low-income Medi-Cal recipients who may have reduced access to health care services because of payment cuts to health care providers.
- 249,220 children enrolled in the Healthy Families Program, which provides low-cost health coverage for children in low-income working families. The Governor proposes to increase family premium contributions and co-payments and reduce dental services.
- Visitors to five state parks in Los Angeles County, which the Governor proposes to close.

Children Now 2008 Report Card

An annual *Report Card* on the status of California's children has been produced by "Children Now," a national organization for people who care about children and want to ensure that they are the top public policy priority. See www.childrennow.org.

CHILDREN NOW

2007 California County Data Book
Los Angeles County

Los Angeles is home to 2,727,886 children, ages 0-17, which is 28% of California's child population. Compared to other counties in the state, Los Angeles County ranks as follows:

- 36 out of 58 in the percentage of children with health insurance.
- 31 out of 58 in the percentage of children, ages 3 and 4, enrolled in preschool.
- 39 out of 58 in the percentage of elementary school students meeting state targets in English Language Arts.
- 33 out of 58 in the percentage of elementary school students meeting state targets in Math.
- 11 out of 58 in the percentage of high school students eligible to attend one of California's public universities.
- 40 out of 58 in the percentage of children in low-income households.

CALIFORNIA
**Report
Card**²⁰⁰⁸
The State of the State's Children

HEALTH

Health Insurance	C
Oral Health	C-
Asthma	C-
Mental Health	C
Infant Health	B-
Adolescent Health	B-

EDUCATION

Early Care and Education	C-
K-12	C-
After School	B+

CROSS SYSTEM ISSUES

Obesity	D+
Child Safety	D+
Integrated Services	D+

Less Water in the Near Future?

John D. Sullivan, Natural Resources Director, LWV/LAC

CURRENT PROJECTIONS indicate that the population of California will continue to grow in the coming years. At the same time, California's economy appears to be faltering and the State's budget is in very bad shape. There is much talk in Washington at present about the need for the federal government to provide a stimulus for the flagging U. S. economy. The likely approach will be a "tax rebate" to all taxpaying citizens which will happen in the spring if the President and Congress can agree on the details. The hope is that those who receive the tax rebate will go out and buy new items such as cars and refrigerators and thereby stimulate growth in the economy. An increasing population should also have an effect on the economy in that more people lead to more demand for goods and services.

These two factors, population growth and economic growth, can place increasing pressures on the state's natural resources. In fact, a number of events in recent months indicate that the state may be reaching limits with respect to at least one natural resource, water (although there are indications of other limits such as clogged freeways and the unhealthy air we breathe). Some months ago, a federal judge ruled that less water must be pumped out of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to protect the Delta smelt (which is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act). A number of political entities with some water management responsibilities have reacted to this in an effort to reduce demand for water.

The City of Long Beach mandated that watering gardens outside of homes must be limited to night hours only. The Mayor of Los Angeles took a different approach by exhorting citizens of the city to reduce their consumption of water voluntarily. A water district near Hemet announced that a major

commercial project had to be postponed because the district was uncertain whether water supplies were sufficient to meet the needs of this new development. The Southern California Metropolitan Water District (MWD) has announced that it is considering a shortage allocation plan that would reduce water deliveries to some member cities and agencies (adoption of the new plan will be considered in February). Finally, as a further sign of limits, the L.A. Times ran an article providing strategies for homeowners to use to reduce the flow of storm water

from their property during rain storms. By keeping storm water upstream, so to speak, homeowners could use that water to irrigate their gardens and replenish local groundwater systems and reduce pollution flowing to the beach areas (storm water picks up all manner of waste from roadways and transports it to beach areas where it can make beaches unusable). Every drop of storm water used for garden irrigation reduces demand for imported water.

These are just some of the indicators of a growing

crunch on the state's water resources. Each raises important policy issues and each has implications for the people of Southern California. The twin engines of population growth and economic growth are placing increasing stresses on water resources. **It is important to note that about 50% of the water consumed in southern California is imported from the Colorado River and from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Exports from the Delta have been reduced because of a threat to the Delta smelt. Diversions from the Colorado River could be limited because the Colorado River watershed is experiencing a serious drought (as is the rest of the Southwest, including southern California).**

The Southern California Metropolitan Water District has announced that it is considering a shortage allocation plan that would reduce water deliveries to some member cities and agencies.

LESS WATER continued on page 7



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
WHERE WE STAND

JUNE 3, 2008 ELECTION

PROP 98 Deceptive Measure Would Abolish Rent Control and OPPOSE
Harm Environmental Protection.

Californians deserve protection from eminent domain abuse, but Proposition 98 is a radical proposal that goes too far. Its extreme provisions would eliminate rent control and other renter protection laws; that is why wealthy apartment and mobile home park owners have contributed most of the money to qualify Proposition 98 for the ballot. In addition, Proposition 98 contains language that would make it difficult to protect the environment and regulate land use, growth and development. This hidden agenda would threaten water quality, hurt the environment, and thwart regulations that protect our neighborhoods.

PROP 99 Homeowners Protection Act. SUPPORT

This measure is a real eminent domain reform measure that will protect homeowners, without the hidden agendas and adverse consequences of Proposition 98. Proposition 99 will prohibit the government from using eminent domain to take a home to transfer to another private party. It is supported by a broad coalition of homeowners, business, labor, cities, counties and environmentalists.

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON JUNE 3, 2008!

The cases mentioned raise important public policy issues and bear further examination. To begin with, the efforts by Long Beach and Los Angeles to get citizens to reduce water consumption point to an important question: how do public entities such as cities get citizens to change their behavior? Long Beach took what might be called a “command and control” approach. The city mandated certain times when gardens could be watered. L.A. took a different approach, relying on voluntary actions by citizens in response to the Mayor’s call. The results in each case are quite different. Long Beach saw about a 6% reduction in water consumption, while water consumption in L.A. stayed almost flat (actually rising less than 1%). This strongly suggests that cities hoping to achieve reductions in water use cannot rely on the good will of citizens. It is not that the citizens of L.A. are in some sense “bad.” It is likely that a “let George do it” attitude prevailed. That is, many conscientious citizens probably thought that their own water consumption was already low (after all, they put in a low flow toilet last year) and that others would reduce enough to make a difference. It seems clear that “command and control” will need to be used more to get southern Californians to reduce water consumption.

The MWD announcement has generated some

controversy because the proposed plan involves providing water to L.A. and communities experiencing growth while at the same time reducing supplies to older, more fully built-out communities. These latter communities may also be home to minority groups and this brings up questions of equity. Clearly, the proposed MWD plan bears watching and also raises important questions about who should bear the brunt of water shortages.

There is a third policy tool (in addition to command and control and voluntary compliance) that water managers could use, and that is the price of water. That is, water could be priced using an increasing block structure in which small amounts are priced relatively low, while increasing amounts are priced at increasingly high rates. The goal here is to get consumers to respond to price and reduce consumption.

The upshot of all this is that all citizens will have to increase their awareness of their own water consumption. Whether mandated to do so by a city or water district, or because there is simply less water in the pipeline, or to become part of the solution by altering gardens to keep some storm water from flowing away, all citizens will have to re-examine their relationship with water and make adjustments to their behavior.



Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All Citizens of voting age are welcome. Associate Membership is open to all others.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters as part of your voice for citizens and force for change. I enclose: (please check one or more of the following)

- \$60.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$100.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$30.00 for a one-year student membership

Name/Names _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

I would like to receive my VOTER by email.

My email address is _____

Make check payable to League of Women Voters. Mail to Vera Naylor, 7714 Via Capri, Burbank CA 91504

I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

Gifts made payable to “LWV Education Fund” are tax deductible.

The Voter

THE VOTER IS PUBLISHED nine times a year by the League of Women Voter of Glendale/Burbank, California.

President: Monica Marquez

Editor: Linda Lammers

Production: Carole Dougherty

Circulation: Anna Rundle

The **League of Women Voters**, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education advocacy.

The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and come to a consensus on. 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.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Glendale Mayor

Ara Najarian

LEAGUE MEMBER IN THE NEWS

Glendale/Burbank League Member

Laurie Collins,

lawyer for the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority, worked with other conservation leaders to achieve the outright donation of 175 acres in the Verdugo Hills by developers to be preserved for the public.

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LWV California
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