

February 2004 Calendar

February 2-24
Absentee Ballot Applications
may be obtained from the
County Registrar

Tuesday
February 17
7:30-9:00 pm
LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE

February 18-27
TOUCHSCREEN EARLY VOTING

Sunday
February 22
**LWVUS SPONSORED DEBATE WITH
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR
PRESIDENT**
broadcast live on NBC
Moderated by Paul Moyers

Wednesday
February 25
7:30 pm
**LWVUS Selection of the
President Update**
Home of Chris Carson
See flyer on page 2

Tuesday
March 2
Primary Election

Saturday
March 20
HEALTH CARE FORUM
See flyer on page 6

Saturday
March 27
**LWV LOS ANGELES COUNTY
ANNUAL CONVENTION**
See pages 7 & 8

President's Message

Chris Carson President LWVG/B

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS FOLKS! ANOTHER PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN YEAR IS UPON US.

The papers and air waves are already filled with campaign hyperbole. Claims and counterclaims are flying fast and furious. Money is pouring into election war chests like the Mississippi at flood crest. To hear the candidates and their supporters tell it, civilization hangs in the balance. But to the millions of Americans who would rather watch reality TV, play golf or shop it's more like Who Cares? The figures don't lie. Every election year fewer and fewer voters bother.

Eighty four years ago, the League of Women Voters was founded by women who had fought long and hard for the right to vote. They believed that it isn't enough to wander into a polling booth and vote and choose at random. They knew that the best safeguard of democracy is an educated electorate. Their mission was to found an organization devoted to educating the American public to make thoughtful choices based upon reason, not emotion. They would not be amused at the large number of voters—women voters—who vote by whim, if they vote at all.

As we head into the frenzy of this election season, why not make an effort to educate the community around you—family, friends, neighbors, coworkers? The League has plenty to offer everybody. This month we will be sponsoring a debate for all Democratic candidates for President—February 22 on NBC. Tell people to tune in and see what real substantive debate looks like. Suggest that they check out our website for solid information on ballot propositions.

“
... the best safeguard
of democracy is an
educated electorate.”

Tell them about SmartVoter, the League website devoted to election information about candidates and issues personalized for their precinct. Invite them to our candidates forum this fall. Let them know they can ask questions about issues that concern them and find out if candidates are really addressing them.

And give yourself a treat while you're at it. This month attend our wine and cheese evening devoted to updating the League position on selecting the President. Does the Electoral College make any sense

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued on page 10

It's time . . .

to form a consensus on

the position LWVUS  takes on

Selecting the President

Join us on

Wednesday

February 25

7:30 pm

at the home of Chris Carson

over wine and cheese and lots of

stimulating discussion about the three-ring-circus-way we select a president



Call (818) 247-2407 for directions

Election of the President—More on the Update

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS has long been among the staunchest supporters for the direct election of the President. The League has testified and lobbied for legislation to amend the Constitution to replace the Electoral College with direct election. The measure, which passed the House and nearly passed the Senate in 1971, has been revived in each Congress. In 1997, the LWVUS again called for abolition of the Electoral College and for direct election of the President and Vice-President in testimony before the House Subcommittee on the Constitution. The League has also supported national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections to ensure equity for voters from all states and to facilitate the electoral process.

The proposed updated position continues to support direct election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College. However, in the past 30 years, much has changed in the presidential selection process and we need to define and measure our values against other factors that appear to have dramatically altered the process. Today, the process of selecting the president is dominated by questions of campaign strategy and campaign finance, the role of the parties in the primaries and caucuses leading up to the convention, the role of the media and the effect of developing technologies. If the League's concerns include encouraging the best candidates and promoting the highest participation by informed voters, we need to understand the impact of the process on those values.

As Leaguers, we want:

- **The best possible candidates**
- **Voters to be as informed as possible**
- **Optimum participation by voters**

Politics—unlike government—is capable of enormous and rapid shifts in its values and processes. Largely for that reason, making changes in the rules under which elections are run has been characterized more by unintended consequences than a widespread sense of improvement. Even as the Task Force on the Update of the League's Position on Selection of the President did its work, concern for the increasing numbers of primaries

scheduled in the first few weeks of the primary season was changing. Some states dropped their plans to hold primaries, mostly claiming economic problems, but others argue it was because there was a contest in only one party and the other side did not want to give them the publicity. Some candidates chose not to enter the earliest contests, recognizing that regional preferences could be muted by their entrance in later races. Under the circumstances, it seemed unwise to draft a position that could be out of date in one election cycle. In the end, we based our recommendations on the consensus expressed in the *Voter* survey members returned about their values and interests; our understanding of where changes are happening or likely to occur; and how the League could be enabled to act. We identified areas that had heretofore not been part of our presidential electoral position: the parties, the media and the Internet, and all levels of government.

We did not propose alternative voting systems, including the proportional allocation of electors to the Electoral College. While this was considered as a measure of last resort in the original position, the notion of encouraging Leagues to lobby their respective states would lead us into a direct conflict with the value of uniform procedures, and it was removed from the position in 1982. Additionally, there is a real possibility that reforming the Electoral College will increase the chances that a Presidential election will be thrown into the House of Representatives under procedures that are contrary to the League's support for "one person, one vote." We also did not address campaign finance reform because it is covered in our campaign finance position. And in the end, we chose not to address specifically the questions of front-loaded primaries, recommendations about the media or the Internet, etc., because we believe the proposed new position will open the way to advocacy at the national, state and local levels on these issues and many more that are to develop as time goes on. The proposed new position should enable LWV boards to determine whether the primaries in any given year are too many, too skewed, or even too few. There may be legislation

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT continued on page 4

introduced about the use of the Internet in time, but most legislatures—including Congress—are wary of acting precipitously in this very fast-changing medium.

HOW THE POSITION MIGHT BE APPLIED:

The following are some examples of how the proposed new position may be applied. However, please keep in mind that the LWVUS Board determines how national positions may be applied and you should check with LWVUS's National Grassroots Lobbying Coordinator before taking action using the proposed new position, if it is approved through the concurrence process.

The Primaries: Parties could be encouraged to limit the number of primaries (an important factor in the increasing costs of elections), or to move them to a later date altogether, thus shortening the time between the selection of a candidate with sufficient delegates to win the nomination and the convention and general election. LWVUS could take the lead by addressing the national parties, and State Leagues could address their parties and legislatures on the subject.

The Media: Polling tells us that one major reason people do not vote is a lack of information on the candidates and ballot measures. All levels of League could encourage the media to provide more public affairs programming, free air time, and/or require that to be a condition of licensing of local broadcast stations. They could encourage more debates and more programming in general on political and civic affairs. Print media could be lobbied to include more voter information, from candidate positions to how to obtain an absentee ballot. All levels of League could work with their local media, print and non-print, to help them understand their role in building a participatory democracy.

The Internet: The most important issues relating to the use of the Internet and other electronic communications involve access, privacy, and accuracy of information. There is an additional question about the speed with which information (particularly misinformation) can spread. While it may be premature to advocate government regulation, these issues need to be evaluated and League at all levels should be aware and observant of these

questions as campaigns develop. Additionally, Leagues at all levels could work with Internet information sources, such as local governments, educational institutions and civically orientated community web sites, to provide more voter information geared to their local community.

Presidential Check-Off: All levels of League could work on raising the public's awareness of the purpose of the Presidential Check-Off on their taxes and encourage them to participate in the public financing system through educational programs and Letters to the Editor, etc.

Education: In the end, the best defense in any electoral system is an educated voter, but in the same 30-year period of change in the presidential election process, school systems throughout the nation have been dropping their civics requirements. State and local Leagues could advocate the development of civic courses in schools on how the electoral process and American government itself works in a system of separated powers.

Most of all, the League could provide education on how dramatically the Presidential selection process changed and how it might be impacted in the future by the Internet and an evolving media.

PROPOSED LWVUS POSITION ON THE SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

The League of Women Voters believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system—from the candidate selection process to the general election—to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.

Watch for the January/February LWVUS VOTER for your concurrence form to complete. Carol Smith



Happy Birthday!

IN 1900, CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, founder of the League of Women Voters, succeeded Susan B. Anthony as the National American Woman Suffrage Association president. Anthony saw in Catt the passion and strength needed to keep the women's suffrage movement on track. As president, Catt created a highly organized movement by enhancing the organization and educating people about the movement. Catt sought to reach out to all women, regardless of party, to help win equal voting rights.

One of the many women inspired by Catt's enthusiasm and passion for women's suffrage was Alice Paul. Paul felt that the fight for women's rights was one that required passion. She advocated tactics that were more radical and attention grabbing. The position that Catt and NAWSA held in the fight for women's suffrage allowed Paul to branch off and create the National Women's Party. Although the two groups were separate, they were unified by their common goal.

For Catt, suffragist's strategy was to galvanize support from within the states for the introduction of an amendment to Congress. This state-by-state support would then guarantee the amendment's passage and ratification. The involvement had to be at all levels to be effective; she stated, "we must do both and do them together." Her plan was to introduce women's suffrage legislation at the beginning of the state legislative sessions, thereby taking the opposition by surprise and not allowing them to establish the resources to create an opposing campaign.

The United States' involvement in World War I did not diminish the women's suffrage movement; in

fact it helped put a positive spin on it. With all the help and support women gave to the war effort, people looked admirably at them and responded positively to their cause. The women's national war efforts proved their patriotism, and supporters felt that they had earned the right to vote.

The effort by the NAWSA and Catt influenced and inspired many women to join the cause, which was further advanced with a million-dollar donation by these supporters. Catt used the money to establish the Leslie Woman Suffrage Commission and combined various suffrage publications to create the *Women's Journal*. Ultimately, this publication became the official journal of the League of Women Voters. This commission and various publications made it possible for the NAWSA to intensify its suffrage campaign and expand its outreach and education of voters.

Catt proposed the idea for a League of Women Voters to enable others to "finish the fight" that was begun with the passage of the 19th Amendment. There was a call from Catt to clean up the uneducated and illiterate voter and establish an "intelligent and clean" American electorate. She believed that to become effective voters, women needed to understand the rudiments of voting: how and where to register, how to vote, and what to expect at the voting booths. These newly enfranchised women also needed to understand the issues. Certain issues such as education, social services and women's rights, represented the bonding of the sentiments of women.

Catt dedicated the League of Women Voters to those women who were the forerunners. The League would continue their mission. She focused on encouraging women to give back to their community and children by helping them learn and understand their political freedoms. Catt hoped to create an organization that would continue the enfranchisement of women in our country and in any country where women still struggled. She hoped for a group that would continue to remove the legal discriminations against women, so that other women wouldn't have to surmount these roadblocks. She wanted to make this democracy great and safe for the generations to come.

BIRTHDAY continued on page 11



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS PASADENA AREA

PRESENTS

A Community Forum On Health Care Delivery

WITH

State Senator SHEILA KUEHL

Author of SB921 providing single-payer health care coverage—
passed by the Senate last year and heading to the Assembly

State Assemblymember JUDY CHU

Member of the Assembly Health Committee

AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE AND HEALTH CARE REPRESENTATIVES

Moderator: **KITTY FELDE**

Commentator/Host of "Talk of the City" on KPCC 89.3 FM

Saturday, March 20, 2004

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Atherton Baptist Home, Merriam Chapel

214 South Atlantic Blvd.

(1.2 miles south of Huntington Drive)

ALHAMBRA

Ample parking

Requested donation: \$3

For reservations (priority seating):

Call us at **626-798-0965** between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., or leave a message.

E-mail us at office@lwvpasadenaarea.org

(Visit our website at www.lwvpasadenaarea.org)

The United States leads the world in health care spending at about \$5,000 per person per year on average... [but] ranks 37th in population-based health outcome measurements...

"...20-30 percent of the health care dollar is spent on administration (excluding profit)... [Under SB921] California could reduce administrative costs to 1.8 percent of health care spending..." [restoring] \$14 billion dollars annually to direct health care services."

— **Sen. Sheila Kuehl**

LWV[®]

League of Women Voters
Los Angeles County

42nd ANNUAL CONVENTION

Saturday, March 27, 2004

Location: Tamayo's Restaurant
5300 E. Olympic Blvd. Commerce
(I-5/710 exit Olympic Ave. east, 60 exit Atlantic Blvd. east)

Registration: 9:30am, Convention: 10:00am-2:30pm

Lunch Speaker: Richard McKee,
California First Amendment Coalition

Cost: \$25, includes morning coffee, buffet lunch (including vegetarian options) and materials, for registrations received by March 15th; \$30 for registrations received March 16th-23rd. No reservations will be accepted after March 23rd.

RSVP, including checks payable to LWV/LAC, to:
Gwen Cochran, 427 East Walnut Ave. Burbank, 91501

Name(s) _____

League _____ **Delegate** ____ **Visitor** ____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

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This original of this 1939 Rufino Tamayo oil painting entitled *Women of Tehuantepec* hangs in the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. Photo from The Artchive

League Business, Good Food, & Ambience

THE 2004 CONVENTION OF THE LEAGUE of Women Voters of Los Angeles County will be held on Saturday, March 27 at Tamayo Restaurant, 5300 East Olympic Blvd. in the city of Commerce.

THE MEETING, which commences with registration at 9:30 a.m. will deal with election of officers, adoption of program and budget as well as possible bylaw changes. The featured speaker, following the luncheon, will be **Richard McKee**, former president of the California First Amendment Coalition. The meeting will adjourn by 2:30 p.m.

Delegates from the 13 local Leagues in Los Angeles County will consider adoption of a new position on Los Angeles County government, following the completion of a recent study of the chief executive administrator's position as well as expansion of the Board of Supervisors. The convention will also vote on readoption of existing program and positions.

Tamayo Restaurant showcases a magnificent collection of large-scale paintings and tapestries by Mexican modernist master Rufino Tamayo, who offered the use of his name when the restaurant

took over the historic Spanish Colonial hacienda 17 years ago. In addition, the restaurant now displays work by Vladimir Corn, Tamayo's apprentice and student from 1979 until the master's death in 1991.

The banquet buffet will feature chicken fajitas, a variety of salads and vegetables as well as cheese enchiladas, rice and tortillas, with sauces on the side. The charge for the day is \$25 with reservations paid to Treasurer Gwen Cochran no later than March 15th and \$30 for reservations paid between the 15th and the March 23rd deadline.

The restaurant is said to be in the geographical center of Los Angeles County. The closest freeways are the I-5, or the 710, taking the Olympic Blvd. exits east or the Pomona Freeway—60—going off at Atlantic Blvd., heading east. The restaurant has ample free parking with valet tipping.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RECOMMENDS

MARCH 2, 2004 PRIMARY ELECTION

YES ON PROPOSITION 55

STATEWIDE SCHOOL BONDS

Support Proposition 55 Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2004.

This \$12.3 billion bond measure is the second phase of a school construction and repair plan to meet expanding state needs. The first part passed overwhelmingly as Proposition 47 in 2002. This measure includes \$10 billion for K-12 school facilities, with about half for new construction and a quarter each for modernization and critically overcrowded schools. There is also \$2.3 billion for higher education (community colleges and the CSU and UC systems) that has been hard hit by the state budget crisis.

The state treasurer confirms that in these hard economic times, it is important to continue our long-term investment in education facilities. Prop. 55 will provide state matching funds for locally approved school bonds. It will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs and stimulate the local economy, while holding to strict accountability standards. California's total school population is projected to increase by one million in the next decade; higher education expects 700,000 additional students. Prop. 55 will provide our kids the safe, clean learning environment essential to improving student achievement.

For more information: www.yeson55.com

YES ON PROPOSITION 56

BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Support Proposition 56 for real budget reform that holds our legislators accountable.

This measure is designed to end the legislative gridlock which has prevented the state from dealing responsibly with the challenges of passing a budget. It holds legislators accountable by requiring them to pass the budget on time or face real consequences. They would have to stay in session and work only on the budget, and would forfeit both their salary and expenses until the job was done. Voters could learn how legislators voted on the budget from an easy-to-use Web site, and the Voter Information Guide (ballot pamphlet) would contain a summary of how the state's money is spent.

This constitutional amendment would end partisan gridlock by reducing the vote required to pass the state budget and related bills, including tax measures, from two-thirds to 55 percent. Only two other states routinely require a two-thirds vote to pass a budget. This high threshold has given a handful of California legislators the ability to demand concessions, such as spending on projects in their districts or tax breaks for special interests, to get their support for a budget. Under Prop. 56, the state would build up a "rainy day" reserve fund when revenues are greater than needed to fund existing services, and use the fund to maintain service levels in bad times. Late, irresponsible budgets hurt all the people of California. Proposition 56 will bring real reform of the budget process now.

For more information: www.budgetaccountabilitynow.org

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON MARCH 2

Pros & Cons

ONCE MORE, THE VOTERS of our State have put initiatives on the ballot. Information about the Pros/Cons may be obtained at our League's website http://www.gb.ca.lwvnet.org/Proposition_55.html

This year LWV California has added a new feature. They have placed **In Depth**, the comprehensive objective analysis of ballot measures, on their website. League members who are involved with Speakers Bureau have long known how valuable these "In Depth" analyses are. Now everybody has access to them. If you want comprehensive non partisan coverage of the potential legal and financial impacts of the Propositions, then this is the place to find it. This is part of the Education Fund's mission to inform voters.

<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/edfund/elections/2004mar/id/index.html>

New Webmaster for Glendale/Burbank

MONICA MARQUEZ, WHO JOINED OUR LEAGUE in November, has volunteered to be the Webmaster for our League. A self described techie, she has already taken over duties. We thank her for her generosity in assisting us.

Welcome
New Member
Adrine Galstyon



MAIL BOXES ETC.®

MAKING BUSINESS EASIER® WORLDWIDE.

Andrea Williams

Manager/Notary Public

1125 E. Broadway 249 N. Brand Blvd.
Glendale CA 91205 Glendale CA 91203
near Chevy Chase Dr Corner Brand/Calif
tel: 818.242.4270 tel: 818.244.4448
fax: 818.242.0525 fax: 919.244.4795
Mon-Fri 8:30-6:30 Open Mon-Sat.
Sat. 10-4 Sun. 12-4

President's Message continued from page 1

now? Have primaries become just a circus and endurance contest? Have citizens lost any real control over their choice for President? All this and much more is on the table for discussion. Read the article in the Voter and see for yourself how compelling this will be.

Spend an evening stretching your mind, enlarging your vision and discussing League's future goals in this vitally important area of our political life. Bring a friend and let them see what fun actually thinking about the political process can be. Join us in celebrating our birthday in style.



BIRTHDAY continued from page 5

Today's League of Women Voters continues the proud tradition and remains a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Established in February of 1920, the League of Women Voters is the instrument for political education and involvement of women

originally envisioned by Carrie Chapman Catt.

Celebrate our birthday by watching "Iron Jawed Angels" on HBO on Sunday, February 15th at 9:30 pm EST. This movie details one episode in the fight for women's suffrage. (Check your TV guide for exact time.)



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Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All citizens of voting age are welcome.

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)

- \$50.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$70.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

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.

Gifts made payable to "LWV Education Fund" are tax deductible.



Remember the
League in your wills
and trusts
Please!

The Voter

is published nine times a year by the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank, California.

President: Chris Carson

Editor: Chris Carson

Production: Carole Dougherty

Circulation: Anna Rundle

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

Fund Drive

Here are the results of our Annual Fund Drive:

\$1, 075.00 - General Fund

\$536.00 - Education Fund

\$2,500.00 - Education Fund (Glendale Community Foundation special restricted grant for our Online Guide to Local Government)

Thanks to the generosity of these members:

Virginia Campbell, Georganne Thomsen, Nancy Kent, Felma Crew, Carole Dougherty, James and Celia Laichas, Connie and Alan Wilson, Ruth Shenfeld, Anna Rundle, Inez Truger, Dorothy Nelson, Cathy Sellito, Phyllis Kenny, Dionysia Rodriguez, Margarita Campos, Rosa and Roger Frommer, Gwen Cochran, Dick and Florence Dommies, Peggy Steppe, Vera Naylor, Chris and Tom Carson

They make the work of the League possible.



7714 Via Capri
Burbank CA 91504
(818) 247-2407

League web sites:
LWV Glendale/Burbank
<http://www.gb.ca.lwvnet.org>

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

LWV United States
<http://www.LWV.org>

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