

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

President's Message

THIS PAST MONTH, the League has been actively engaged in campaign finance reform in Glendale. In our advocacy role, the League supported a proposed ordinance to change the Vote by Mail application process.

Under the law at that time, a candidate for Glendale office could send out a Vote by Mail request to a voter. The voter would return the completed application to the campaign office. The candidate would then have the opportunity to capture the information about the voter. The Vote by Mail Application would then be forwarded to the City Clerk's office within 72 hours.

Under the proposed ordinance, Vote by Mail Applications would be returned directly to the City Clerk's office. A candidate could still send the initial Application, and help a voter fill it out, but it would be returned directly to the Clerk's office, not to the candidate. After considering the issue, the Glendale/Burbank League Board agreed that this would be the better practice.

We believed that the fewer steps a Vote by Mail Application travels between the Voter and the City Clerk, the better. In addition, the current law favored well financed candidates who could afford to send the Vote by Mail applications. After a strong debate, the proposed ordinance was enacted by the City Council.

The League also supports campaign contribution limits, which will soon be considered in Glendale. We believe that contribution limits would help level the playing field, and allow more citizens to run for office. We will continue our advocacy efforts in favor of campaign finance reform and improved elections processes in our community.

March 2008 Calendar

Thursday
March 13

Dinner with the League
Topic:
Local Program Planning
6:30 pm
121 N San Fernando Blvd
Burbank
(818) 848-4726

Saturday
March 29
**Los Angeles County League
Convention**
See flyer on page 2

Thursday March 13

Dinner

with the League

Topic: Local Program Planning

6:30 pm

Granville Burbank

121 North San Fernando Boulevard

Burbank, California 91502

(818) 848-gran (4726)



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

FIRST CALL 

46th 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

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.

Reservations information for the convention and luncheon choices will be announced shortly.

The Year of Education Redefined—California’s Budget Crisis

From LWVCA website
with update from Babrara Inatsugu,
Program Director for Education (PK-12)

LAST YEAR Governor Schwarzenegger declared 2008 “The Year of Education.” As recently as December 2007, we were still hearing that school finance and reform were a high priority. What a difference a month makes!

In January 2008, the governor declared a fiscal emergency, in accordance with Proposition 58 of 2004. He also proposed midyear education budget cuts of \$400 million for the current fiscal year, as well as further reductions in the 2008-09 budget of \$4.4 billion, which would require a suspension of Proposition

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budget

98, the minimum public education funding guarantee for our schools. Even for those who expect the unexpected in Sacramento, this is unprecedented. It sets the stage for potentially one of the most difficult (some say disastrous) years for education in California’s history.

The legislature has now taken its special session actions, found \$500 million in midyear savings without disrupting school districts with midyear cuts. The \$4.4 billion is still on the table to be cut from education. There are

several different proposals emerging for how to deal with the cuts – those offering the counter proposals do not want those kinds of cuts and they advocate looking for increased revenues.

The current situation makes the League’s role in education reform even more important. The “year” of education should not be a victim of the budget crisis. We all know that achieving real reform in California’s public education system is not a one-year process. What may be a difficult year for current education programs can be an ideal year for long-term planning. It will take broad public and political understanding of the basic issues involved and a sense of urgency, as well as agreement on reforms that are both educationally sound and politically viable, to move forward.

MORE on California Voters FIRST Initiative

Endorsements: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, former State Controller Steve Westly, LWV, the AARP, California Common Cause and the LA Chamber of Commerce

Important Points about the California Voters FIRST Initiative:

UNDER CURRENT LAW, California legislators draw their own political districts. Allowing politicians to draw their own districts is a serious conflict of interest that harms voters.

Not surprisingly, 99% of incumbent politicians were re-elected in the districts they had drawn for themselves in the last election. In the election before that, 100% of incumbents were reelected.

Politicians draw districts that serve their interests, not those of our communities. For example, cities such as Long Beach, San Jose and Fresno are divided into multiple oddly shaped districts to protect incumbent legislators. Voters in communities like Korea town in Los Angeles and La Jolla in San Diego have no political voice because they have been split into as many as four different districts purely to protect incumbent legislators.

This reform will make the redistricting process more open and transparent so it cannot be controlled by one party or another. The Act will create a 14 person Independent Citizens Commission comprised of five Democrats, five Republicans and four individuals not registered as a member of either major party to draw district boundaries for the Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization. It will ensure true independents can participate – a voice that is completely shut out of the current process.

The Independent Citizens Commission will draw districts based on strict, non-partisan rules designed to ensure fair representation. The Act puts into place a non-partisan process that requires respecting existing city boundaries, county boundaries and communities. The reform takes redistricting out of the partisan battles of the legislature and guarantees redistricting will be debated in the open with public meetings, and all minutes will be posted publicly on the Internet. Every aspect of this process will be open to scrutiny by the public and the press.

In the current process politicians are choosing their voters instead of voters having a real choice. This reform will put the voters back in charge.

MY VOTE Mock Elections

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE Debra Bowen has announced preliminary results for the **MyVote California student mock election program**. More than 250,000 students at 450 high schools throughout the state voted in January for presidential candidates and on three ballot measures. The votes are still being tallied, but preliminary results can be found at the **Secretary of State's Web site**.

To encourage students to be active voters once they are old enough to cast a ballot, Secretary of State Debra Bowen and Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell invited high school students, teachers and principals to join MyVote California, their state-wide youth civic engagement project. MyVote California worked with the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. Several local Leagues assisted in mock election activities with participating schools.

UPDATE California Health Care

LOCAL LEAGUES and individual members worked with determination to prevent passage of ABX1 1 in the Senate Health Committee on January 28. The bill was defeated with seven committee members voting "no," three abstaining, and only one voting in favor.

Several days earlier, Health Committee Chair Senator Sheila Kuehl conducted a comprehensive hearing where both the opposition and supporters were given the opportunity to express their positions. LWVC Senior Director for Program **Trudy Schafer** presented the League's opposition and stressed the inadequate cost controls and the burdensome flaws of the individual mandate provisions. A report by the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office about the impact of the proposal on the state budget raised questions about the adequacy of its funding and may have had a major influence on the committee members' deliberations.

Harbor Tour

By Gwen Cochran

ON FEBRUARY 7, 2008, fifty members of the local Leagues that constitute the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County toured **the Port of Los Angeles, the busiest port in the United States**.

Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach are contiguous and the breakwater, constructed from rock from Catalina Island, extends approximately 9 miles to the Orange County line. **Between them, the ports receive one-half of imports to our country, 40% of which stay in the West and the remaining 60% are sent to the other states, by rail or truck.** Using rail eliminates 200 to 300 truck trips and reduces air pollution.

Vessels approaching the inner harbor are asked to reduce their speed to 12 knots and switch to cleaner fuels than that used on the high seas. Another effort to minimize pollution being pioneered by the port is requiring ships to use shore side electrical energy when docked. This will require retrofitting and will need time to implement. In the interim, Alternative Maritime Power Connector barges deliver power hook-ups.

The city-owned Marine Surveyor tests the water in the port and welcomes the appearance of kelp, an indication of high water quality, although the presence of kelp requires more frequent maintenance on the part of boat owners.

The Port of Los Angeles is busy day and night, operating a Marine Exchange (the port equivalent of the air traffic controllers) receiving imports, consumer goods of all kinds; dispatching exports like, borax, scrap steel, cotton, waste

paper, chemicals and petro-chemicals; servicing cruise ships; accommodating yachts and fishing boats; maintaining a fireboat; hosting a sailing ship for diver training; operating a crane on a barge that repairs dock pilings, and providing tugs with city-employee pilots to guide ships to berths.

Since 9/11, admission to terminals is strictly regulated. A first line of security is the 10,000 plus stevedore union members who work there and who are alert to possible problems. Some operate the rolling cranes, that lift and move containers from ships to docks and back again, and have a bird's eye view of port operations. A mobile x-ray scanner moves by the containers and checks the contents against the manifests that have been forwarded from their port of lading.

In the past, ships were loaded from barges. Now, the scrap metals, cotton and waste paper are poured from chutes into holds, lumber and other paper products are secured under cover and the decks are stacked several layers high with containers standardized on a 20 ft. by 40 ft. module.

Terminal Island, the federal prison, holds about 1,200 detainees, most found guilty of drug-related offenses. There are also staff accommodations and most live on site.

The tightly secured cruise ship terminal is the busiest on the West coast.

The old ferry boat terminal has been converted to the Los Angeles Maritime Museum and is open to the public. Also, berthed at the port is the Los Angeles City Yacht, Angelina II.

The League of Women Voters Through the Decades!

Compiled by Kay J. Maxwell

This is the third in a series on the history of the League of Women Voters.

The 1950s:

Organization:

Delegates to the 1954 convention voted to group League program into **Current Agenda** (“CAs”) government issues chosen for sustained attention and concerted action, and **Continuing Responsibilities** (HCRs^H) positions on governmental issues to which the League had given sustained attention and on which it could continue to act. In 1951, “The National Voter” magazine was first published and in 1957 the League of Women Voters Education was established. (For more detail, see the section titled League of Women Voters Education Fund and Overseas Education Fund.)

Issues:

The witch hunt period of the early fifties inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program focusing on the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Next came an evaluation of the federal loyalty/security programs and ultimately a League position that strongly emphasized the protection of individual rights. In 1955 League President Percy Maxim Lee testified before Congress against Senator Joseph McCarthy’s abuse of congressional investigative powers. *“I believe tolerance and respect for the opinions of others is being jeopardized by men and women whose instincts are worthily patriotic, but whose minds are apparently unwilling to accept the necessity for dissent within a democracy.”*

Dating back to a 1920s study of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the League’s concern about the depletion and conservation of natural resources was rekindled in the mid-1950s with a study of water resources.

The 1960s:

Organization:

The 1966 convention redefined program as “those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.” This change made it possible to have program without the “CA” and “CR” categories, and at the convention in 1968 the program was adopted without categorizing issues. Membership reached a high point in 1969, with almost 157,000 members.

Issues:

In response to the growing civil rights crisis of the 1960s the League directed its energies to equality of opportunity and built a solid foundation of support for equal access to education, employment and housing. The League also added apportionment to its national program and supported presidential suffrage for the residents of Washington, DC. In 1969, the League was one of the first organizations calling for the United States to normalize relations with China. The League also hosted an exchange with women from the USSR and the OEF Institutes for Latin American women were inaugurated.

The 1970s:

Organization:

In 1970 the national bylaws requirement for adopting a not-recommended item was changed from three-fifths to a simple majority. “CAs” and “CRs” were dropped from the bylaws, and the national program appeared as one list of issues discussed, amended and adopted at national conventions every two years.

In 1972, Inter-League Organizations (ILOs), created in many parts of the country to deal with regional issues, were added to the formal structure of the League. The 1974 convention also amended the bylaws to allow men to join the League as full voting members.

Issues:

In the early 1970s, the League addressed the issue of income assistance and also began its efforts to achieve a national Equal Rights Amendment, an effort which ultimately failed. The League also adopted a position on direct popular election of the President, on Congress, on the UN and on Campaign Finance. And, in 1976, the League sponsored the first televised presidential debates since 1960, resulting in receiving an Emmy award.

The League’s deep interest in the environment was dramatically evident in the 1970s and it has since built a sequence of broad national positions on water, as well as air, waste management, land use and energy.

DECADES continued on page 6

LWVC-Sustain - List Serv

LWVC-Sustain has a group of well-informed members who bring ideas and information to other League members throughout the state. The group discusses the economic, social, and environmental consequences of sustainable communities.

Please consider joining this List Serv. To subscribe, send a blank message to: lwvc-sustain-subscribe@yahoo.com.

Welcome New Members

Sally Hoover
Suzanna Manoukian
Dr. Katherine Pfeiffer

. . . and Returning Member

Lana Haddad

DECADES continued from page 5

Issues:

The League was in the forefront of the struggle to pass the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982 and contributed significantly to enactment of the historic Tax Reform Act of 1986. It also adopted a position on fiscal policy and one on US Relations with Developing Countries. In the arms control field, LWV pressure helped achieve Senate ratification of the groundbreaking Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) in 1988. In that same year the League also completed a study of U.S. agricultural policy. And through the Agenda for Security Projects in 1984, 1986 and 1988, the League underwrote some 150 debates focused on national security issues among congressional candidates. The League also sponsored Presidential Debates in 1980 and 1984, but withdrew as a sponsor of General Election debates in 1988. In 1983 the League adopted a position on public policy on reproductive choice.

The 1990s:

Organization:

At the 1996 convention, bylaws changes were made to simplify the process of forming new Leagues by eliminating the provisional League category, and set the procedure for proposing adoption or amendment of an LWVUS position by concurrence on the floor of convention. The LWVUS Future Planning process was also launched at that convention.

At the 1998 convention, the bylaws were amended to provide for communication vehicles other than "snail" mail!

A nationwide brainstorming effort, the Crossroads Project, on the future of the League was set in motion at the 1992 convention, and the resulting recommendations were presented to convention 1994. A 75th Anniversary Membership Campaign was launched in 1994 and included a new member video, "75 Years of a Great Idea."

Issues:

Members adopted a position on gun control in 1990 and Congress passed reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, capping a ten-year legislative campaign. The League also launched "Take Back the System", a voter campaign to reclaim government and elections and sponsored a Presidential Primary Debate in 1992. In 1993, the League adopted a position on health care and won passage of the National Voter Registration Act, better known as Motor Voter.

In the last years of the decade, the issue for emphasis, Making Democracy Work, included increasing voter turnout, campaign finance reform, civic education, diversity of representation, civic participation and voting representation for the residents of the District of Columbia. During that same period LWV activities included Running and Winning, a program that encouraged young women to consider careers as political leaders, as well as community dialogues on water resources, energy and health care.

Following the end of the Cold War, the League began several international programs: hosting emerging women leaders from Poland and Hungary; Strengthening Women's Rights in the NIS; Voices for Women - Forces for Change: Women's Leadership Workshops for Russia and Belarus; Voices for Women - Forces for Change: Building Peace in the Bosnian Community; a Bosnian Citizen Get-Out-The Vote Campaign; and Woman Power in Politics: Building Grassroots Democracy in Africa.

In 1998 the Democracy Network (DNet) was tested and then launched nationwide in January 2000. This Internet web site was a major effort to provide information regarding elections to citizens across the nation.

Legislative Priorities 2008

Adopted by the LWVC Bord of Directors on January 13, 2008

Priority Issues for Action in the Legislature

- **State and Local Finances/State Budget**
 - Support reform of the state budgeting process
 - Support equitable and adequate generation and distribution of tax revenues
- **Health Care**
 - Support a universal single payer health care system
 - Support expanded health care coverage that promotes progress toward a single payer system

Other Legislative Issues, As Time and Resources Permit

- Support requests from local Leagues and inter-League organizations (ILOs) for advocacy on bills of specific interest to their jurisdictions
- Take action as appropriate on core issues: Redistricting, Elections, Voting Rights, Campaign Finance Reform, and Reproductive Choices
- Consider Program Director recommendations for action on the highest priority bills in their program areas

Statewide Ballot Measures

Review all statewide ballot measures and recommend a position or neutrality on each one to the LWVC Board of Directors



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 nonpartisan 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.

League Member Appears on "Washington Week"

Our very own **Georganne Thomsen** spoke regarding the LWV's position on health care during a special edition of public television's news program "Washington Week." The show was taped at the historic Alex Theatre in Glendale and aired on KCET, Los Angeles on February 19.

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Sat. 10-4, Sun. 12-4



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

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