

Voter^{LWV}

LEAGUE OF WOMAN VOTERS
GLENDALE/BURBANK
March 2012

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



CALENDAR

March 2012

LWV LA County COUNTY CONVENTION

Saturday, March 31
9:30 am - 2:00 pm

TOPIC: **Sacramento Update**

SPEAKER: **Trudy Schafer**
*LWV California Senior
Director for Program*

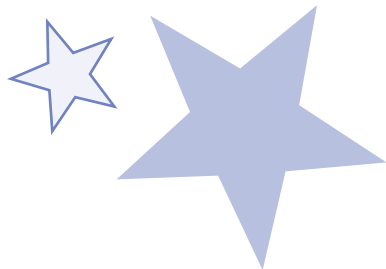
Pickwick Gardens
1001 Riverside Drive
Burbank, California

See flyer on page 5 for
details

April 2012

LWV LA County BALLOT MEASURE TRAINING

Saturday, April 28
9:30 am - 12:00 pm
Hollenbeck Palms



Announcing: New Voter format starting April

With next month's issue, we will begin our new electronic Voter format. If you currently receive the Voter by email, you'll find this new format much more convenient. No more downloading pdf files—everything you've come to expect from the Voter will be right there on a single page. Plus, we will not be constrained by the limits of the paper format.

If you receive the Voter by mail, do not be concerned. We will continue to mail the Voter to you—it will just look a bit different.

We owe a debt of deep gratitude to member **Carole Dougherty**, one of our League's stalwart members, who has graciously laid out the Voter for printed publication for years. Carole's behind the scenes work has been both patient and heroic, in addition to being beautiful to look at. It takes time and talent to make all our disparate content readable over 8 pages, and Carole has provided us with both in abundance.

Carole and I will be working together in our new electronic format to bring you the best Voter ever! We ask for your patience as we work through the inevitable bugs in the new format.

Monica Marquez---Editor

President's Message

By Joan Hardie

As ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council), a super PAC that funds the anti-voter registration legislature that we see passing in many of our states, meets with resistance, it is still worrisome to see this trend so pervasive. It is disheartening to hear elected officials declare that voting is a privilege and the legislature needs to act accordingly.

That is why we are seeing bogus laws being passed, such as those in Wisconsin where the law states a student ID may be used to registrar to vote, however in the fine print the only type of student ID that is acceptable is the type that almost no student has. The League does not agree with these convoluted, restrictive measures. The League continues to believe that voting, instead of being a privilege, is a fundamental right.

At our February program planning meeting at the House of Joy restaurant in Glendale, in addition to discussing LWVUS program planning, we discussed the request by the national League to place emphasis on voter registration

and voter education. Of course these voter activities such as candidate forums and pro/con presentations continue to be our bread and butter purpose, however to keep the focus we are taking it step further and setting specific goals. National is calling this effort Power the Vote.

To fulfill National's request, we decided to incorporate some additional voting outreach activities into our local programming, such as focus on under-represented communities and develop a more consistent relationship with the media/internet. We welcome input from our members regarding ideas and/or contacts. In California, we are lucky that voter ID legislation has been absent but there is always room for improvement in both educating voters and increasing voter turnout.

Look at our website for opportunities to get involved this election season, we will do our best to keep you posted. Thanks.

**The League
continues to
believe
that voting,
instead of
being a
privilege,
is a
fundamental
right.**



LWV/LACounty

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® 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 Area • Whittier

50th Annual Convention

Saturday, March 31, 2012

9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Sacramento Update:

What Is the Legislature Up To?

Trudy Schafer

LWV California Senior Director for Program



**1001 Riverside Drive, Burbank
Tel. 818-845-5300**

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.
Parking is free.**



Please send form and check payable to **LWV/LACounty by March 16, 2012**
Mail to **LWV/LACTreasurer, 3970 Sepulveda Blvd., Unit 201, Torrance, CA 90505**

Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

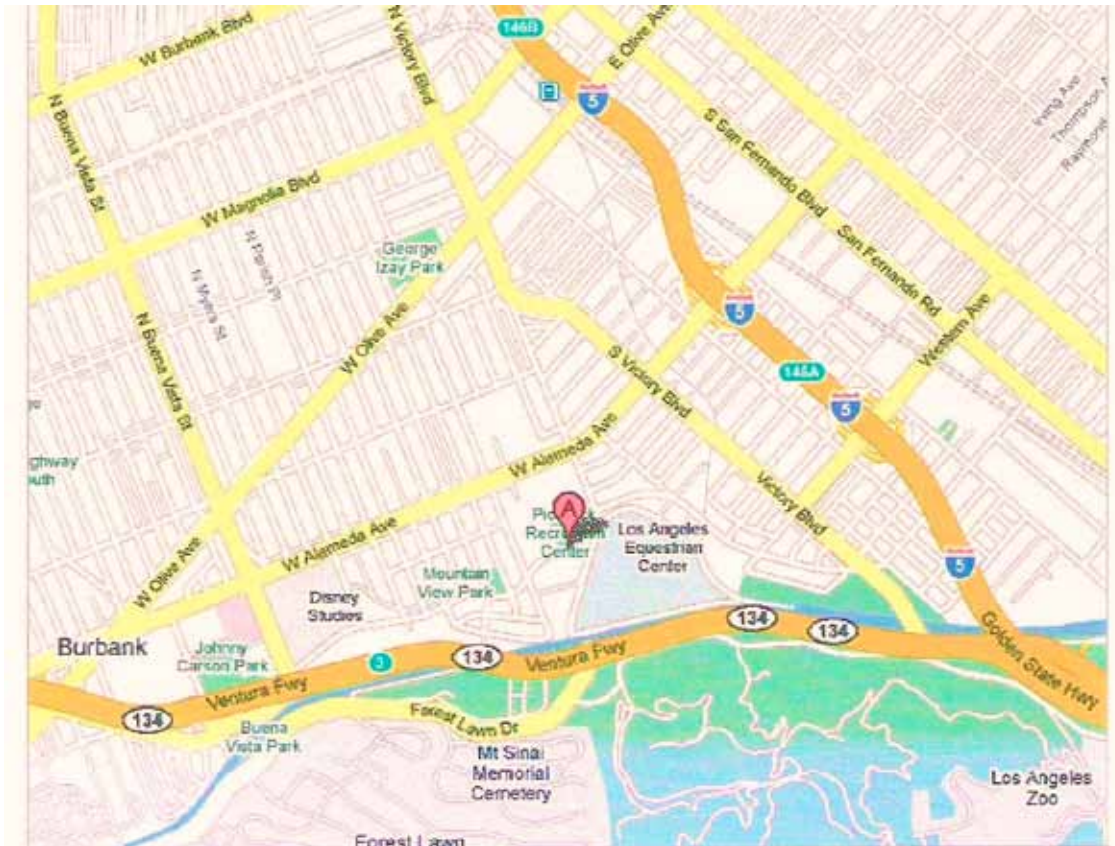
Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

Deadline is March 16, 2012

Total No. of Reservations _____ @ \$30.00 = Total \$ _____

If Postmarked After March 16, 2012

Total No. of Reservations _____ @ \$35.00 = Total \$ _____



DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO PICKWICK GARDENS 1001 W. RIVERSIDE DR., BURBANK

I-5 - From the SOUTH After passing the merger of the 134 into I-5 (in Glendale) move immediately to the right lane and exit via the Western Ave. off ramp going west. At the bottom of the ramp, turn right on Western and go to Riverside Dr. and turn right. From there it is ½ mile to the front of Pickwick but do not park in front. Go on 1/10 mile around a curve on Riverside Dr. and turn into Pickwick's long driveway past the Ice Rink into their large parking lot at the back near the Garden entry and sales office.

I-5 - From the NORTH... Exit Western Ave in Glendale, using the west off ramp, and turn right onto Western. Proceed to Riverside Dr. and turn right. See directions above.

134 - From the EAST... When passing through Glendale move right into the lane with the I-5 Bakersfield sign. Immediately after the merger into I-5, take the Western Ave. (west ramp) and turn right at the bottom onto Western Ave. Go to Riverside Dr. and turn right. See directions above under I-5.

101 & 134 - From the West Take the Hollywood freeway (101) east onto the Ventura (134 – East) and exit at Buena Vista off ramp in Burbank. Turn right at the bottom at the signal and then turn on to Riverside Dr. Pickwick is about 1.5 miles on your left, just past Mariposa Ave. Take Pickwick's first drive on the left, past the ice rink entry and park at the back near the garden entry, passing the entrance to ice skating and park at the back near the garden walkway.

PARKING IS FREE

County League Day

Shared thoughts from the speaker Bob Stern

By: Joan Hardie, President, LWV Glendale/Burbank

The signs of a successful county League day are a packed room, happy faces, lots of chatter and a great speaker, and all those were on hand at the Jan. 28th LA County Winter League Day. Our Speaker, **Bob Stern**, of the former Center for Government Studies talked to us about “California’s Initiative and Referendum Process, Abolish, Reform or Retain as Is?” The topic is timely given the California state League will embark on statewide study regarding the topic this fall.

To begin the discussion, Mr. Stern reminded us that our constitution is the largest in the country, largely because of the initiative and referendum process. And although the sheer size of the constitution may seem too paralyzing to run a government, he is a believer that the people of California will never give up the process because of their distrust of the legislature. So rather than abolish or retain as is, his solution is to reform the initiative and referendum process.

Here are some of his ideas:

PROBLEM: Improve quality of initiative—Currently, once an initiative qualifies, no changes to the language of the initiative can be made.

SOLUTION: Provide a public comment period for legislators and public to analyze each initiative. Allow proponents to negotiate changes with the legislature. If changes to the initiative are agreeable to the proponents and the ballot is acted upon by the legislature and the governor signs it, it can be removed from the ballot.

PROBLEM: Signature gatherers, do we really need them?—Why do we ask for signatures to get something on the ballot? What does it mean? It means that the proponents (usually special interest groups) have at least one million dollars.

SOLUTION: Try something new. Charge \$50,000 filing fee and allow fewer signatures, or get rid of signature gatherers altogether, and use the Internet as way of collecting supporters. In order to sign the ballot on the Internet, a supporter would have to answer/agree with three questions/statements prior to their electronic signature counting as a legitimate supporter.

PROBLEM: Improve Voter Information—Although the ballot pamphlet is loaded with good information, because the deadline is in August and we don’t vote until November, the financial contribution information is not always accurate. Also, many people don’t read it, in 1990 when there were 28 ballot measures; the pamphlet was 220 pages long.

SOLUTION: Produce one-minute videos that people can view on the Internet or government channels. And use one page handouts listing supporters and opponents of the ballot measure, this might provide the type of information the voter is more interested in.

County League Day continued on page 7

Pew Report Highlights Need to Modernize Voter Registration

ANTIQUATED REGISTRATION SYSTEM RESULTS IN ONE IN FOUR ELIGIBLE AMERICANS ABSENT FROM VOTER ROLLS

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 14, 2012 – Today, the Pew Center on the States issued a report that makes it painfully clear that our antiquated system of voter registration sorely needs to be modernized. Our nation's current, paper-based system of voter registration is costly, inefficient and, according to the Pew report, has resulted in one in four eligible Americans absent from our voter rolls.

We are hopeful that the results of this report will lead to a technological solution to modernize our voter registration system. Our current system provides safeguards to ensure that Americans, who have taken every step required of them, are able to continue to participate in our democracy. Those safeguards, particularly the provisions of the **National Voter Registration Act**, can sometimes lead to invalid registrations remaining on the rolls when jurisdictions do not properly follow required list maintenance procedures. After the hyperbolic calls of voter fraud subside, the facts always show that, while sometimes cumbersome and costly for election officials, our current registration system does not lead to improper votes being cast. A perfect example of hype of voter fraud that proved to be without merit were the recent claims that in South Carolina votes were cast on behalf of 900 dead people. This claim by the attorney general was quickly refuted by the state's election's director.

The only true solution to the problems highlighted in the Pew report is to create an automatic and permanent voter registration system. Through a collection of existing databases, states should automatically register voters when they turn 18 or become naturalized citizens. That registration should be permanent, and move with the voter. To ensure that no voters fall through the cracks, there should be a system of Election Day correction so Americans can fix errors and still cast a real ballot.

“Our current system makes citizens take the first step to register to vote, but typically cuts off registration just when public interest in an election is peaking,” said **Bob Kengle**, co-director of the Lawyers' Committee's Voting Rights Project. “We have a mobile society, and among the countless address changes that citizens must make when they move, updating voter registration is often left until it is too late. Last-minute waves of voter registration applications repeatedly overwhelm election officials and lead to administrative delays and errors in processing the forms. The technology exists for an accurate and secure registration system that encourages all Americans to participate in our democracy. All we need is a commitment from our leaders to make it happen.”

Click here to read Pew's issue brief, [“Inaccurate, Costly and Inefficient: Evidence that America's Voter Registration System Needs an Upgrade.”](#)

Through a collection of existing databases, states should automatically register voters when they turn 18 or become naturalized citizens. That registration should be permanent, and move with the voter.

County League Day continued from page 5

PROBLEM: Campaign financing—More money spent on initiatives than lobbying legislatures. Also, the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United means no limits on independent expenditures.

SOLUTION: More disclosure on the sponsorship of ads. Propose contribution limits, maybe \$100,000.00.

These are just some of the ideas from Mr. Stern's thoroughly enjoyable talk. His discussion was a great primer for upcoming study. At the end he reminded us that we have a process, and he believes it would work better if it were more like the legislative process. He also emphasized his belief that Californians would

never repeal the initiative process and given that, we should work towards improving it. Although the Center of Government Studies no longer is functioning, they still have a website with very useful information: <http://www.cgs.org/>



Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. You can do it all online at our [Website](#). Or you can use this form to mail in your application. 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)

- \$70.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$110.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER nine times per year)
- \$35.00 for a one-year student membership.
- I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

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 PO Box 21010, Glendale, CA 91221

LWV Glendale/Burbank is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization. All gifts and membership dues are tax deductible.

Voter

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

President: Joan Hardie
Editor: Monica Marquez
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.

PLEASE
remember the
League of Women Voters
in your will or trust.



Laurel Pavone
Notary Public • Live Scan Tech

Hours
M - F 8:30am-6pm
Sat 10am-4pm

249 N. Brand Blvd.
Glendale, CA 91203
818-244-4448

www.postalboxship.com
info@postalboxship.com

THANKYOU to **Laurel Pavone** co-owner of **POSTAL BOX & SHIP** for making complimentary copies of the Voter for members with no access to the web. Please consider PBS when you need shipping, copying or notary services.

LEAGUE OF WOMAN VOTERS GLENDALE/BURBANK

P.O. Box 21173
Glendale CA 91221-5273
818 925-4598

League websites:
LWV Glendale/Burbank
www.lwvglendaleburbank.org

LWV California
www.ca.LWV.org

LWV United States
www.LWV.org

Printed courtesy of POSTAL BOX & SHIP