

President's Message

OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, I've been collecting papers from League members to put together a comprehensive set of Glendale/Burbank League files. I think it's important to have our history all in one place. In the past few weeks, I've been consolidating files from various places, and reading all the files to see what the League's been up to over the years.

Among the many pieces of paper are several files filled with newspaper clippings. Yellowed and dusty, they contain write-ups of then upcoming League events and wrap ups of candidates forums. But one in particular caught my eye. The headline—"Open Housing Not Easy—Pasadenan Warns Glendale League." What gave rise to the article was that at their Annual Meeting, the Glendale League decided that open housing in Glendale would be a major issue for study in the coming year. The article quoted a Pasadena citizen warning the League about turmoil to come as a result. The date of the article was May 1, 1969.

What impressed me most about the article is that even now, nearly 40 years later, the League is still vibrant, and still tackling tough social issues. The League is not one to shy away from controversy. Beginning this month, we are embarking on our study of immigration, one of the most difficult and controversial topics of our time. You'll read more about our plans in this issue of the Voter. I hope you will join the study committee. It will be difficult, but immensely rewarding, just as I'm sure it was for those studying open housing so many years ago.

And, if you have any old League files lurking about, please call or email me. I'll be happy to come pick them up and add them to our League's history.

Monica Marquez

**July
2007**

Calendar

Saturday
July 21

**LWV/LAC Annual Summer
League Day
Popovers in Pasadena**

Saturday
August 25

**Voter Service
Planning Retreat**

Saturday
September 29

**LWV/LAC Training for
Candidates Forums**

Salute to California's Green Cities

Solving Global Warming One City at a Time

U.S. mayors met in New York during mid-May. More than 500 of them signed the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. The agreement to support greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals of seven percent (7%) below 1990 levels by 2020 is in line with the emissions reduction goals of the Kyoto Protocol. The United States has not signed the Kyoto Protocol, so this action by mayors is noteworthy. For a listing of California cool cities, go to http://www.coolcities.us/taxonomy_menu/2/15?from=70

California Budget Challenge Game

Next Ten has just released an updated version of their California Budget Challenge game. This version includes options as to whether to levy a carbon tax, restructure Prop. 13, provide universal health care, or cut income taxes. Test yourself or your League at <http://www.next-ten.org/budget/challenge.php>.

SAVE THE DATE: Voter Service Retreat on August 25 A Call to Arms for Voter Service

Monica Marquez

We need you in Voter Service! If ever the League needed your help, it will be this year in Voter Service. We have three elections coming up next year: The Presidential Primary on February 5, 2008, the Primary Election on June 3, 2008 and the Presidential Election on November 4, 2008.

Starting in the fall, we will be conducting voter registration, and we need volunteers to run the voter registration tables. Voter registration is fun, with the opportunity to meet interesting and friendly people while performing a valuable public service.

It is very likely that all of the ballots will have propositions. For some of those, we will present pro and con forums. This is a great opportunity to get well versed in the issues. As a pro/con speaker, you would present both sides of an issue either to a live audience, or on local television. For the elections last November, we presented pro/con forums to hundreds of people in both large groups and small.

And then there's the crown jewel of voter service—the candidates forum. We present the candidates live, and ask them about the most important issues of the day. It takes an entire committee to present a candidates

forum. We need people to prepare for the forum, including inviting candidates, keeping track of responses regarding attendance, and meeting with the City to coordinate TV coverage. And, we need people to staff the forum, including timekeepers, greeters, and question sorters.

Most of these tasks, while very important, do not require major time commitments. Voter registration can be done in just a couple of hours on a single afternoon. Helping with the candidates forum takes just a few hours during the evening. Preparing for a pro/con forum is also not time consuming, and is always enlightening.

As you can imagine, putting together all these activities takes a lot of planning. To make things run smoothly, we will hold a **Voter Service Planning Retreat on Saturday, August 25, 2007** at a place to be announced. Come join us as we serve the communities of Glendale and Burbank. If you can help, send me an email at marquezlwv@earthlink.net, or call me at (818) 760-3667.

Notes and Thoughts from the Rally in the Valley Convention National Membership Recruitment Initiative

Joan Hardie

MY RESPECT for the League of Women Voters has grown immensely since attending the State League Convention in Bakersfield this year. Although my late registration caused some confusion, once I arrived at the convention I became immersed in a great learning and participatory experience. I attended all the plenary sessions and voted when given the chance, listened to the guest speakers, and participated in several workshops. One evening I had a nice dinner with Monica Marquez, our local League president, and Chris and Tom Carson. Monica and I even found the energy to go salsa dancing after dinner which was a lot of fun. I love to salsa dance. Imagine my surprise to find an eleven piece salsa band playing in the lobby of our hotel. I was so glad Monica wanted to go with me.

On the last day I was touched by the goodbye speech of Jackie Jacobberger. She is such a nice and gracious lady. And later on that day, I was invigorated by the speech of our new state League president, Janis Hirohama. She is our first Asian American president, “women of color” is how she put it, and she also works full time. I could not help thinking she will be one busy lady.

I roomed with Monica and attended most events with her as well. One event I went to on my own was a workshop entitled, “The National Membership Recruitment Initiative.”

Most long term League members are aware that **membership numbers have been decreasing. Nonetheless, our budget has been increasing.** Most of the increase in our budget is due to grants that the League has earned through its accomplishments in the area of Voter Service, such as SmartVoter. Although the League continues to have a great reputation and is recognized for its good work, attracting new members has become a new challenge.

The National Membership Recruitment Initiative is a **project** set up by the LWVUS staff and Spitfire Strategies **to attract a new eager bunch of choice volunteers.** To do this they organized and started small with very specific goals. Only five leagues were chosen from across the United States, including the LWV, Oakland. Helen Hutchinson from the LWV of Oakland was on hand to share her personal experience, which was very positive. She said that she was skeptical at first, but after throwing all caution to the wind, she became a believer.

The first step of the 12 month project was to find a target audience. **The target audience selected was retired women aged 50–65, educated, and who have been engaged in civic issues in the past.** Although everyone agreed that this describes the typical League member and questioned why we should target the same demographic, the project experts convinced League members that this is a great place to start. Baby boomers, a large part of our population, are in this age group now and many of them will be reaching retirement and/or their children are grown and they are looking for something to do. The project is starting with the easy ones first, and hopefully, this will help jump start membership. The project had a goal for the pilot cities to increase their membership by 5% within the duration of the 12 month project. The project was proud to announce that every pilot League meet this goal. Helen Hutchinson added that she just barely made this goal, and prayed every month that no one would die.

After identifying the target audience, the presenter Kelly McFarland Stratman, senior manager of state and local League relations, discussed strategies for reaching new members. **We need to share the benefits of League membership, have communication and visible activities, and most important, ask people to join.**

She had suggestions of what those **benefits are—shared concern for the well-being of the community, shared desire to make a personal impact on the public good, and strong opportunities for leadership.** We also discussed some of the more successful activities that local Leagues have used to attract new members. It was fun to hear all the different ideas. The message I came away with is that **a consistent message pays off, asking people to join is working, and forming partnerships with organizations in our communities elevates the League’s visibility and can attract a new pool of potential members.**

Information can also be found on the “Membership Recruitment Initiative” page of the “For Members” section of www.lwv.org.

I want to thank the League for the opportunity to attend this event. I am looking forward to my new role as Voter Service chair for Glendale.

Immigration Study Brief #1

Global Interdependence and Migration

ACCORDING to a National Intelligence Estimate, globalization is stimulating migration with significant implications for the U.S. Expanding international trade, finance, investment and information flows are accentuating economic insecurity and migration pressures.

Migration pressures on the U.S. and within the Americas region are expected to continue to rise in the next decade. Despite strong economic prospects in Mexico, the disparities in living standards, increased demand for labor in the U.S. and immigration reunification laws will sustain Mexico as the single largest source of authorized and unauthorized immigration to the U.S.

Remittances

The flow of remittances (the transfer of money by foreign workers to their families and communities in their home countries) from the U.S. has reached record amounts and represents a major source of income for millions of individuals and communities. According to an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) study, Latin American households receive \$60 billion annually from remittances worldwide, more than these countries receive in aid from the U.S. and from institutions such as the World Bank.

Remitted funds have a positive impact on the development and welfare of countries receiving the funds. The money foreign-born workers send home is mainly used to cover basic necessities. For example, about 8 percent of remitted funds in Oaxaca, Mexico, is spent on business start-ups or investments, while 92 percent goes to meet daily needs. Remittances improve access to education and health care for families in immigrants' home countries and help banks finance imports from the U.S., offsetting country trade deficits (where imports exceed exports).

U.S. Policies

U.S. agricultural policies, e.g., farm subsidies, have resulted in unexpected consequences, including an increase in unauthorized immigration. Subsidies have allowed U.S. farmers to sell corn at prices below cost. Corn is the centerpiece of the Mexican diet, and, according to a 2003 Oxfam briefing paper, the Mexican corn sector was being displaced by subsidized low-cost corn imports from the U.S. Thus, millions of Mexicans, unable to make a living in Mexico, emigrated to escape rural poverty.

Current heightened interest in alternative fuel for automobiles means things are changing; corn-based ethanol production in the U.S. has increased, driving up corn prices as well as exports. Consequently, feedstock and tortilla prices have risen, hurting the pocketbook of many Mexicans. On the other hand, rising corn prices benefit Mexican corn growers.

Employment Issues

Pressure to emigrate will continue if many new working-age people entering the job market in developing countries fail to find work. According to a National Intelligence Estimate, Mexico's new job creation rate is 700,000, while the number of new workers entering the Mexican market is nearly one million annually. Mexico also has a brain drain—nearly a third of all Mexicans with advanced degrees leave Mexico for the U.S.

Global competition to attract foreign graduate students to universities is growing. In 1989, American universities awarded twice the number of PhDs granted by Asian countries. According to a July 2006 Migration Policy Institute study, by 2001, the gap had closed putting the U.S. in more competition for the highly skilled workers needed to fill U.S. jobs.

Immigration policy affecting high-skilled workers becomes increasingly important as the competition for high-skilled labor increases around the world. Ease of employment-linked permanent residency is a factor that can facilitate or deter immigration to the U.S.

Solutions

Robert Pastor, Director of the Center for North American Studies at American University, concludes that narrowing the income gap between Mexico, the U.S. and Canada is the only way to stop the flow of migrants. He supports the proposed North American Investment Fund, funded by Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, which would be used to build highways, roads and broadband internet lines in southern Mexico to connect it to North America. The effort would not stop illegal immigration, but is projected to double Mexico's growth rate and reduce the income gap with the U.S. by 20 percent in a decade.

Tamar Jacoby (*Foreign Affairs*, Nov./Dec. 2006) points out that immigrant influx is the product of changing U.S. demographics, global development and increasingly easy international communications. Pressures to emigrate from developing countries will remain intense, fueled by poverty, lack of jobs, population growth and political instability. At the same time, globalization increases access to information about lifestyles and opportunities in industrialized countries. The global integration of the labor market for both highly skilled and unskilled workers is also a continuing trend. Immigration laws and policies need to take into account these realities, along with the effect of other laws and policies such as farm subsidies and NAFTA.

This brief is based on the LWVUS Immigration Study Committee background paper, "Effects of Global Interdependence on Migration" by Dorrit Marks. The paper (including full citations of sources) is available at www.lvv.org.

Immigration Study Brief #2

Immigration: Impact on U.S. Economy

HISTORICALLY, IMMIGRANTS have come to this country for a variety of reasons, but economic opportunity has always been a major draw. And, the U.S. economy has not disappointed.

It has accommodated an expanding labor supply that today includes 1.5 million immigrants per year whose spending on housing and consumer goods helps stimulate the economy and increase the demand for still more labor.

Workforce Shortfall

At a time when a “baby boomer” decrease is anticipated in the workforce, economists expect demand to create millions of new jobs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 56 million new jobs will be created in this country between 2002 and 2012. During this same period, more than 75 million Americans will retire, and declining native-born fertility rates will be approaching replacement level. Various interests consider new immigrants a necessary labor source to meet this shortfall.

Costs and Benefits

Immigrants have had a profound impact on company creation, economic innovation and market value in the U.S. A *PRNewswire* article (November 15, 2006) reported that over the past 15 years, immigrants founded one of every four U.S. public companies that received venture capital. Forty-seven percent of current venture-backed companies in the U.S. have immigrant founders. Nearly half of the immigrant entrepreneurs surveyed came to the U.S. as students and started their own businesses within 12 years of entering the country. According to a Migration Policy Institute publication, *Immigration and America’s Future: A New Chapter*, the number of Hispanic-owned businesses has grown at three times the national average, while the number of Asian-owned businesses has grown at twice the national average.

Furthermore, the negative effect of authorized and unauthorized immigrants on public-sector budgets is small. Immigrant workers pay into social insurance programs, lessening strains on social assistance for the elderly. Many unauthorized workers use false ID numbers and pay Social Security taxes but are ineligible to receive benefits. Less than three percent of immigrants receive food stamps. Unauthorized workers support local school districts through property taxes, indirectly as renters or directly as homeowners.

Taxes paid to the federal government and increased macro-economic productivity result in a net benefit to the country as a whole from immigrants. However, studies indicate that costs and benefits are not evenly allocated locally. Communities face demands for costly services from immigrants, particularly in education and health care, which are not offset by tax income. But this type of financial burden is applicable to all low-income, uninsured populations—

unauthorized, authorized and native-born. As Tamar Jacoby notes (*Foreign Affairs*, Nov./Dec. 2006), the additional state tax burden per native household is, on average, no more than a couple of hundred dollars a year.

Perceived Problems

Opponents of immigration often suggest that if employers paid American workers more, they could reduce the need for foreign labor. However, many industries cannot pay more, because they would be undercut by imports from abroad. Even in sectors such as construction and hospitality, where the work must be done in the U.S., companies must decide whether it is better to lure Americans to jobs that require lower skills than those that they possess by paying more for less-skilled work. Meanwhile, because they complement rather than compete with most native-born workers (this, in turn, attracts additional capital), immigrant workers are a factor in raising rather than lowering most American wages.

For the past decade, market forces have attracted 1.5-1.8 million skilled and unskilled immigrants to work in the U.S. each year. However, annual legal quotas admitted only about a million immigrants, resulting in a significant imbalance. A realistic immigration system would make the annual legal intake more or less equal to the flow generated by supply and demand. The U.S. currently issues 5,000 visas per year to year-round unskilled workers, while 400,000-500,000 additional such workers are needed to keep the economy growing.

Disaster or Inconvenience

A legitimate way to assess the role and value of immigrants’ contribution to America is to consider what would happen if the influx stopped or if those already here left the country. Proponents of comprehensive reform (“bring in more workers”) believe this would be disastrous. In some regions, they contend, whole sectors of the economy could collapse. Opponents maintain that a cut-off would mean, at most, a temporary inconvenience for a few employers, who would soon wean themselves away from their dependence on foreign workers. Whichever path is chosen, there is one certainty: the consequences will affect everyone.

This brief is based on two LWVUS Immigration Study Committee background papers, “Immigration and the Economy” by Chris Carson and “Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration” by Dorrit Marks. These papers, including full citations of sources, are available at www.lwv.org.

Cloudy Days on the Budget Watch

Budget watchers in Sacramento breathed a sigh of relief when the Governor's May Revise was released, but only because the numbers were merely bad rather than dreadful. Tax receipts in the third quarter had been much lower than expected, but a surge in corporate and personal income taxes in April had narrowed the gap between revenues and expenditures to about \$2.3 billion.

Some of the Governor's solutions met stiff opposition, and others are one-time fixes that will not solve the deficit on an ongoing basis. The Legislative Analyst (LAO) estimates that under his proposals the deficit would grow to more than \$5 billion in 2008–2009.

Among the proposals drawing fire are cutting about 200,000 children from the CalWORKs Program and withholding cost of living adjustments in this program and for other assistance programs for the elderly and disabled. Both some child care costs and school transportation costs would be shifted to be covered under the Proposition 98 education guarantee.

Public transit advocates are fighting that and other proposals that they say would, in total, reduce support for transit operations by \$1.3 billion while emphasizing highway building projects. Both they and the LAO question the legality of some of the proposed shifts.

Among the one-time solutions advocated by the Governor are selling EdFund, a state agency that guarantees student loans and has been making money doing it. The Governor says this might be sold to a private operator for about \$1 billion. He also suggests selling or leasing the state lottery to a private operator, but that would probably require

going to the ballot and is not included in this year's budget. More money would be realized by speeding up the sale of bonds backed by the state's settlement with the tobacco industry, which would help balance the budget this year and worsen deficits for the following two years.



The Governor also proposes to use \$1.6 billion to make an early repayment on the state's deficit-financing bonds. The LAO says this would help the budget in 2009–2010, but says we would be better served by “addressing near-term budget problems.” The LAO also believes some “overly optimistic assumptions” in the budget may leave a reserve fund of only about \$529 million, rather than the \$1.7 billion projected in the May Revise.

The reduction in the Vehicle License Fee four years ago cut state revenue by about \$4 billion a year with no accompanying reduction in programs. Ever since then, budget makers have been trying to cover the loss with various one-time fixes and robbing Peter to pay Paul while hoping the shifting fortunes of the California economy will somehow fill the gap.

That exercise may only get more difficult now that the state, prodded by various court decisions, is being forced to expand its prison system and make an effort to improve services intended to eventually reduce recidivism. Since nobody expects any agreement to raise new revenues, given the two-thirds vote that would be required in the Legislature, the budget horizon will probably continue to be gloomy, and Peter and Paul may end up picking each others' bones.

Immigration Study

THE LOCAL STUDY OF IMMIGRATION

began with our initial committee meeting on June 24th. In contrast with our last two studies, which were addressing issues at the local community level, this study is part of a nationwide study by LWVUS. Thus, we are starting out with consensus questions developed by LWVUS, as well as significant resources on the immigration issues, which are available on the LWVUS website. (See <http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=LWVUSImmigrationStudy>.)

The local study committee will be meeting a number of times over the summer. It is expected that members of the committee will conduct research on the various facets of the immigration issue. This research will be

reviewed and consolidated, and then presented to the members during the consensus process. Initial plans are that due to the number of consensus questions which must be addressed, they will be divided up and presented in two meetings, tentatively scheduled for October 18th and November 15th.

We would still like to have more members join the committee for this very interesting study process. If you would like to participate, please contact the committee chair, Tom Carson, at 818-840-0417 or tpcarson@earthlink.net.

See pages 4 and 5 of the Voter for Immigration Study Briefs that will be use by our local study committee.

Tom Carson



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

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

Name/Names _____

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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.

The Voter

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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.

A WARM WELCOME to OUR NEW MEMBERS

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