

January 2006 Calendar

Thursday
January 19

LWVLAC

Land Use Study Consensus

Tuesday
January 24

Special Burbank City Council Election

Ballots mailed January 3

Due January 24, 7pm

Saturday
February 4

Voting Rights Act Renewal Conference

USC

Davidson Hall

Saturday
February 11

Energy Decisions for the 21st Century

See flyer on page 4

Thursday
February 16

Local Election Systems Study Presentation

For program information and location directions, call the League at (818) 247-2407. Or visit our website www.gb.ca.lwvnet.org

President's Message

Welcome to 2006! The League will turn 86 this year, and it's my privilege to be a part of such an enduring force in America's social and political history. The League was founded on a commitment to voter education and advocacy.

BY PARTICIPATING in League we are not only serving the public, we are exercising one of our most fundamental rights, the right to peaceably assemble. The First Amendment to the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." The Supreme Court has upheld this right repeatedly as states and local governments have tried to curtail it. In 1937 the Court declared, "The holding of meetings for peaceable political action cannot be proscribed." *DeJonge v. Oregon*, 299 U.S. 353 (1937).

EVERY TIME we put on a public forum, do a study, or even meet for a board meeting, we are engaging in a protected activity, and doing our part to keep this a lively, thriving democracy.

A CORNERSTONE of League has been our public forums. In addition to candidates' forums, the Glendale/Burbank League has sponsored public forums on the USA Patriot Act, on the Burbank Airport, and the Americana at Brand project in Glendale. All covered issues of intense controversy, and offered the public a chance to hear and question experts in their fields.

IN KEEPING WITH THIS TRADITION, the Glendale/Burbank League will participate in a National League project called "Openness in Government: Looking for the Sunshine," a project to broaden public awareness about the issues involved in, and the threats related to, accountability and transparency in government. This project is so important that the National League has offered grants to local Leagues to put on a program during "Sunshine Week," (March 12 to March 18, 2006.) The Glendale/Burbank League has been fortunate to receive a grant to put on a program during that time.

THE FORMAT WILL BE A PANEL DISCUSSION on openness in government in Glendale/Burbank. We plan to invite officials from Glendale and Burbank, as well as members of the local press to talk about the importance of openness in government. The tentative date is March 16, 2006. Stay tuned for more information. If you would like to help with this important event, please email me at marquezlww@earthlink.net

Monica Marquez



January Meeting

League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank

As our populations continue to soar, city leaders, city staff, citizens and developers must come together to plan and build livable and vibrant communities that accurately reflect our local needs and values.

Moving to Smart Growth

Land Use in Los Angeles County Consensus meeting

When:

Thursday, January 19,
7-9pm

Where:

Home of
Monica Marquez
6300 Whitsett Ave. #1
North Hollywood

DIRECTIONS

West 134 to
North 170
Exit Victory Blvd, West
Left on Whitsett

Candidates Forum

On December 8, 2005, the Glendale/Burbank League sponsored a Candidates Forum featuring the candidates for the Burbank City Council Special Election. Five candidates are running for the Burbank City Council seat vacated by Stacey Murphy. They are: Michael Dontanville, David Gordon, Vahe Hovanessian, Amy Lawrence and Bill Wiggins.

The forum took place in the Burbank City Council Chambers, and was broadcast live on Burbank TV 6. The program is being repeated on Burbank TV6 and Glendale Channel 16 at various times so that Burbank residents will have a chance to evaluate the candidates prior to the election. The schedule is posted on our website at <http://www.gb.ca.lvwnet.org/calendar.html>.

The questions centered on issues vital to Burbank, including traffic congestion, affordable housing, and noise and congestion from the Burbank Airport. The questions were submitted in advance by the public through our website and over the League phone. Questions were also submitted by the audience in attendance.

Anna Rundle moderated the forum, introducing the candidates and asking the questions.

Connie Wilson, the Voters Service Chair for Burbank, helped coordinate the event and saw to the myriad details needed to make the candidates' forum successful.

Burbank's elections are conducted by mail. Ballots will be mailed out to Burbank residents on January 3, and must be returned to the city clerk's office by 7pm on January 24. If you live in Burbank, don't forget to vote!



Holiday Party

The Glendale/Burbank League held its annual holiday party on December 13. The party took place at the **Equestrian Center in Burbank**. The Equestrian Center has a number of banquet rooms, and ours took place in a cozy room with a lighted fireplace.

The menu included appetizers with crackers and cheese. Dinner included turkey with mashed potatoes and vegetables. There was also a dessert tray with cookies and chocolate cakes. The food was very tasty.

We had live music provided by **Eileen Bonaduce**, Monica Marquez's sister, who played holiday music on a keyboard. After dinner we held a Christmas carol sing-along, led by accomplished soprano **Ronaldi Lombardi**, a friend of Eileen's. She circulated around the room, encouraging everyone to sing.

Gelson's donated a beautiful gift basket to the event, which included wine, tasty tidbits and a Christmas music CD. **Kiki Gindler**, a close friend of Monica's, also donated a gift basket of exotic fruits, including pomegranates and persimmons, pine tree boughs and roses. The baskets were given away as door prizes.

It was a very pleasant evening, filled with gentle music and fine conversation. Special thanks go to **Rosa Frommer**, who coordinated the event.

ENERGY DECISIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



League of Women Voters
information meeting for State Energy Update Study

Presenter:
Mignon Marks
California Energy Commission
LWUC Energy Update Study Committee



Saturday, February 11, 2006
10 AM – 12 Noon

at

Katy Geissert Civic Center Library
3301 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503



Sponsored by the Tri-League (Beach Cities, Palos Verdes, Torrance) and the Long Beach Area League
Public Welcome—No Reservations Necessary.

LA RIVER PLAN – PART II

The Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan

This is the second report on the Los Angeles River Plan.

I live in Atwater Village which lies at the bank of the Los Angeles River and work for the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. So when the City of Los Angeles sponsored the public workshops regarding LA River Revitalization Plan, I felt I had to go.

It was a very good learning experience for me. The public workshop was set up to get the community's input on how it wants to see the L.A. River improved.

THE LOS ANGELES RIVER has been neglected over the years and at many locations along its path, is an eyesore. Yet many activists and the City of Los Angeles recognized the Los Angeles River as offering a huge potential for natural, community and economic resources which if harnessed would present opportunities to revitalize its adjacent communities. Towards this end many elected officials and civic groups have been involved in exploring ways to return the splendor of the Los Angeles River. Therefore in 2002 Councilperson Ed Reyes spearheaded the Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River. This committee will act as a clearing house for L.A. River projects, to help coordinate River-related projects within the city and most importantly to encourage community involvement in the River improvements.

THE COMMITTEE'S MOST exciting initiative is the preparation of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan. With funding from the city of Los Angeles Department of Public Works-Bureau of Engineering, the Revitalization Master Plan will identify proposals that would make the Los Angeles River a "front door" to the city.

Tetra Tech, Inc., an environmental consulting firm, was selected as the consulting firm for the Master Revitalization Plan and will work closely with the Office of the Mayor, the Ad Hoc River Committee and the Bureau of Engineering. It was the effort of all these groups that the initial public workshops were held. The workshop identified the overall goal of the Revitalization Plan which was to create a 20-year blueprint for development and management of the LA River. To achieve this goal, the Ad Hoc Committee has identified objectives to serve as guidelines for the revitalization process. Its most important objective is to establish environmentally sensitive urban design guidelines and

land use guidelines for the River zone that will create economic development opportunities to enhance and improve the River adjacent communities by providing open space, housing, retail spaces such as restaurants and cafes, educational facilities and places for other public institutions. Several cities including San Antonio, Texas, Kansas City, Missouri and Boston, Massachusetts have done this to improve their rivers and establish beautiful River Walks.



One of the issues that is important with the L.A. River and is included as an objective of the Revitalization Plan is the preservation and enhancement of the flood control features of the River. Part of Atwater Village history is a big flood that affected this community many,

many years ago when the River overflowed.

Another objective of the Revitalization Plan is to provide access to the River so that the joggers and the walkers along the River Banks will continue to enjoy the overall enhanced quality of the River.

DURING THE WORKSHOPS, participants were given River dollars to "spend" on the objective Revitalization money should be devoted. My River dollars went to the improvement of the environment, enhance water quality, improve water resources and improve the ecological functioning of the River. There are regulations being prepared to improve the Total Maximum Daily Load of bacteria in the L.A. River. Bacteria finds its way in the River through bacteria-rich waste that is emptied to the River through storm drains, homeless encampment along the River and other storm run-off from facilities along the River bank, an example of which are the equestrian centers. Keeping the River clean to me is paramount in its revitalization. All the other improvements would not mean anything unless the River is clean and the ecological balance of the creatures living in its waters is protected.

To me the most important objective of the plan is to foster growth in community awareness of the Los Angeles River and pride in the Los Angeles River. After all the Los Angeles River runs 51 miles through urban Los Angeles, both through several cities including Glendale and Burbank and the county of Los Angeles.

Di Rodriguez, LWVGB Board.

Civil Liberties

Your voice was heard! In a recent turn of events, passage of the conference report to reauthorize the USA PATRIOT Act was blocked in the Senate to allow more time to reconsider the law's impact on civil liberties. Instead, the House and Senate agreed to a one-month extension of the expiring portions of the Patriot Act to allow for more time to consider how civil liberties are balanced with homeland security. This is a victory for the League and other concerned organizations that have worked tirelessly to bring attention to concerns about civil liberties since the enactment of the Patriot Act.

Proponents of the conference report on H.R. 3199, the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act, failed to get the necessary 60 votes to end debate and allow for a floor vote on the report. Many senators were concerned about the increase in government secrecy in the name of homeland security and anti-terrorism without the checks and balances needed to protect civil liberties.

Both California Senators voted Nay, thanks to your efforts.

Arctic Wilderness Reserve

Another victory! Thanks in large part to activists like you, the Senate upheld its rules and refused to allow the opening of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the Department of Defense Appropriations (DOD) bill. Instead, the extraneous measure on Arctic Refuge was stripped from the DOD bill on Wednesday, December 21, when proponents of the measure failed to get the necessary 60 votes to end debate. The DOD bill then passed unanimously, 93-0 (7 Senators did not vote), without the measure.

The provision to open ANWR to new oil and gas drilling was added by House and Senate conferees at the last minute to the DOD bill, an action that violated Senate Rule No. 28 because the provision was not in either the House or the Senate versions of the DOD bill. The rule was designed to prevent this sort of power play. The House passed the DOD conference report early in the morning of December 19, despite vehement objections to the procedure.

However, the Senate blocked this maneuver, rejecting the violation of the Senate Rules. Many senators insisted that the DOD bill be stripped of the controversial measure, refusing to end debate and allow for a floor vote until ANWR was removed from the bill.

Both California Senators voted Nay, thanks to your efforts.

State Budget Outlook

LWVC State and Local Finances program director Anne Henderson reports that the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) says that the budget outlook for 2006-07 has improved, but that the state is "still not out of the woods." The LAO expects the Governor to offer a state budget in January that is balanced, even though estimated expenditures (based on projecting current requirements through the next year) would exceed projected revenues by about \$4 billion. The gap would be filled by a carryover from the 2005-2006 year-end reserves, since revenues have risen and spending has fallen short of budgeted funds. Increased revenues have come mainly from the personal income tax, but also from gains in the corporation tax and a slight increase in the sales and use tax.

The LAO says that despite the improved outlook for next year, the imbalance of expenditures over revenue means that there will still be a structural budget deficit. The LAO also notes that funding for Proposition 49, the before and after school program initiative Schwarzenegger sponsored before he became Governor, is likely to be triggered by the increase in state spending. This would require the state to spend about \$428 million on those programs in the next budget year. The LAO recommends that the Legislature consider proposing repeal or delayed implementation of that measure on the June ballot on the grounds that the money could be better spent on protecting basic education programs, and that some existing federal and state after school funds are now going unused.

Voting Rights Act Conference February 4, 2006

The League has a long history of working to protect and promote the right of every citizen to vote. The federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) has institutionalized that principle by outlawing discriminatory practices in elections and protecting the rights of minority voters. Three important provisions of the VRA will expire in 2007 unless Congress votes to renew them.

The LWVC is cosponsoring a Voting Rights Act Conference to be held at the USC Davidson Conference Center in Los Angeles on February 4, 2006. It will focus on educating community, civic, and grassroots leaders on the VRA and providing tools for effective participation in the push for reauthorization.

An announcement form you can send to your members will be available soon. Save the date!


If you are interested in attending this conference, please contact Chris Carson, carsonlww@earthlink.net for details.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEB SITES

- Water Education Foundation: www.watereducation.org. A Web site on water issues with a calendar that lists local, state and national conferences planned for 2006. Provides online registration forms, links to other water organizations, a free listing on the calendar for your event.
- California Coastal Coalition: www.calcoast.org/events/upcoming.htm. A calendar for California coastal water issues, including wetlands, watersheds, and oceans. Also provides access to documents related to water issues. The coalition sponsors water workshops.
- The Planning and Conservation League: www.pcl.org. An environmental advocacy organization, with an e-newsletter.
- The U.S. Green Building Council: www.usgbc.org. Green building information and links to other sites.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER
Leni Richardson

249 N. Brand Blvd,
Glendale, CA 91203
Corner of Brand/Calif.
tel: 818.244.4448
fax: 818.244.4795
M-F 8:30-6, Sat. 10-4
1125 E. Broadway
Glendale, CA 91205
Btwn Chevy Chase/Adams
tel: 818.242.4270
fax: 818.242.0525
M-F 8:30-6:30
Sat. 10-4, Sun. 12-4



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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. 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 (include 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: 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 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.

OUR SYMPATHIES

go out to **Jeanann Hammer** on the death of her mother, League member, **Cecelia Jakel**.

All League members are invited to attend the February 3rd celebration of the life of Celia Jakel, who passed away in December at the age of 97. The open-air service will commence at 10 a.m. in Brand Park at the Japanese Tea Garden, near the tree League gave in commemoration of Celia's 50 year membership in the LWV-Glendale/Burbank.

Celia, who is fondly remembered by long-time members, was president from 1965-67 and over the years chaired a number of local studies. Georganne Thomsen recalls that her first League experience was on the local education study led by Celia.

"She was a devoted League member who enriched all our efforts and effectiveness, even to the last years of her inspiring life."

Celia's daughter Jeanann Hammer has extended a special invitation to league members to be honored guests at the park celebration, which will include music and refreshments. Jeanann is establishing a memorial fund honoring her mother through the Burbank Unified School district.

Those wishing to make donations in memory of Cecilia Jakel should address them to the Burbank Educational Foundation, P.O. Box 1788, Burbank, CA 91507

League of Women Voters
Burbank/Glendale

VOTER

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

League websites:
LWV Glendale/Burbank
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LWV United States
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