



League of Women Voters of Torrance Area
 Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

LWVTA Voter

<http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>
 Tel. 310-618-8711

April 2010

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Torrance Area, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

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The *LWVTA Voter* is published monthly except July and December. All LWVTA members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in the *LWVTA Voter*. Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Email submissions to wuertzvoter@earthlink.net before the first weekend of each month. The editor is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information reported.

Editor: LaVonne Wuertz

President's Message

RECOGNITION-As Co-President of The Torrance Area League, I proudly accepted a beautiful proclamation on Tuesday, March 9, from Mayor Frank Scotto in celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the LWVUS. The proclamation concludes, "**NOW THEREFORE, I, FRANK SCOTTO, as Mayor of the City of Torrance, California**, do hereby commend and congratulate the **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** as it celebrates 90 years of outstanding and dedicated service to the citizens of our community and beyond. Furthermore, I express sincere appreciation to the League of Women Voters of Torrance Area for all they do to make our community a strong, safe, fair and vibrant place to live."

Just think about it: We are celebrating 90 years of playing an active role in educating the citizens of the United States about our Nation's democratic system and the candidates who run for elected office. Before 1920, women could not vote! How stifled would you feel today if you could not vote? Sadly, it is still the norm in some third world countries.

SUNSHINE WEEK- During the week of March 14-20, LWVUS and journalists everywhere celebrated the birthday of President James Madison and called it "Sunshine Week," a national initiative to promote the importance of open government and

freedom of information. We encourage everyone to attend a local government meeting or visit the websites of our Torrance Area cities (Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita, and Torrance) to learn more about what our local governments are doing. As members of the League of Women Voters, we are continuously answering Madison's call to action: We are working to keep our community fair, vibrant and strong—starting with having an open and transparent government.

TORRANCE CANDIDATES NIGHT-On Monday, April 19, at 6:30 PM, our skilled Voter Service Director Pat Kromka leads another Torrance City Council Candidates Night at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, 3301 Torrance Blvd., Torrance. We will co-host the event with the Torrance AAUW and the Torrance Council of PTAs. How can you help? Call Pat.

Pat works with www.smartvoter.org and persistently encourages all local government candidates to post their qualifications and background information on the LWVCA website. Be sure to check their information.

ANNUAL MEETING- *Save the Date!* On Saturday, May 22, we will hold our annual breakfast meeting at Marie Callender's Restaurant at Torrance and Hawthorne Blvds. Our keynote speaker will be City of Torrance Assistant City Manager Brian Sunshine.

Lola Ungar
 CO-PRESIDENT

League of Women Voters of Torrance Area News

June Election Information

Torrance is the only city served by LWVTA in which citizens will vote June 8 for city officials. Positions and contestants on the ballot include:

Mayor (uncontested): Frank Scotto
Councilmember (3 seats to be filled): Tom Brewer, Cliff Numark, Dick Browning, and Bill Sutherland
City Clerk (uncontested): Sue Herbers
City Treasurer: Dana Cortez, Steve Groom

Also on the ballot will be Measure A which, if passed, would change the date of future Torrance general municipal elections
From: the same date as the statewide direct primary election in each even-numbered year
To: the last Tuesday in April of each even-numbered year.

LWVTA, in company with the AAUW and PTA will host a candidates forum Monday, March 19 at 7 pm in the Katy Geissert Library meeting room in the Civic Center. Other candidates forums are currently scheduled as follows:

Wed., Apr. 28, 7 pm
Hollywood Riviera Homeowners Association
 Richardson Middle School
 23751 Nancy Lee Lane

Mon., May 3, 7 pm <u>Southwood HOA</u> Anza School 21400 Ellinwood Dr.	Thurs., May 27, 7 pm <u>North Torrance HOA</u> North HS Library 3620 W. 182 nd St.
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Mon., May 6, 7 pm
Torrance Performing Arts Consortium
 Nakano Theatre
 Civic Center

Mon., May 17, 7 pm
West Torrance HOA
 Bert Lynn Middle School
 5038 Halison St.

Board of Directors 2009-10

President of Record: Lola Ungar*
 Co-President: Linda Brown
 1st Vice President: Pat Kromka*
 2nd Vice President:
 Secretary: Kay White*
 Treasurer: Sandra Strong*

Directors

Advocacy: Lola Ungar
 Communications: Sydne Morrison
 Education/Social Policy: Gerry Rische
 Government/Elections:
 Membership: Linda Brown
 Natural Resources: Andrea Wagner
 Public Relations: Lola Ungar
 Speakers Bureau/Pros & Cons: Emma Simmons
 Voter Editor: LaVonne Wuertz*
 Voter Service/Smart Voter: Pat Kromka

Off-Board Portfolios

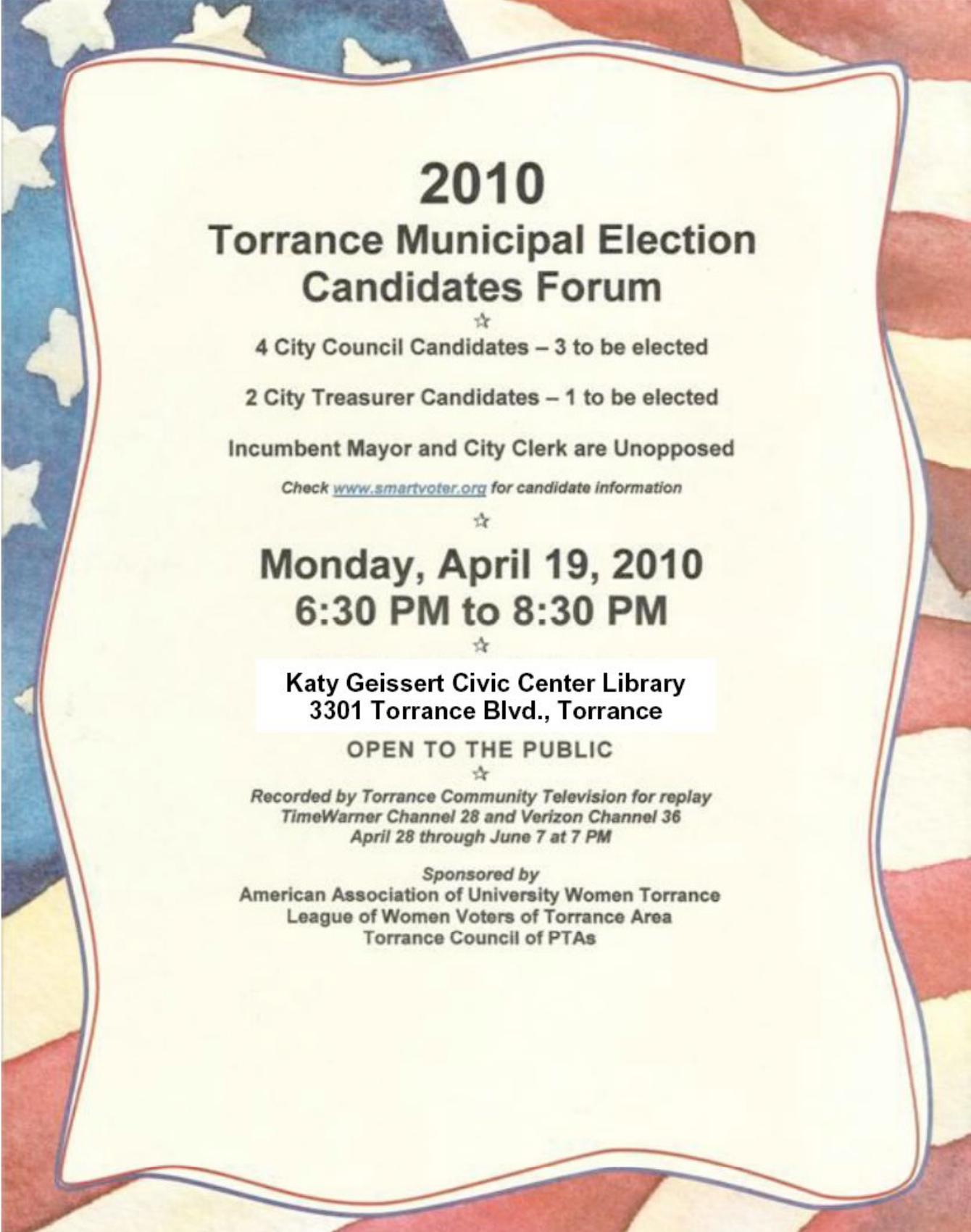
Children & Family Issues: Sandra Strong
 Coastal Issues: Andrea Wagner
 Education/Social Policy: Tom Rische
 Energy: Andrea Wagner
 Financial Development: Sandra Strong
 Health Care: Barbara Barker
 Land Use: Lola Ungar
 Mental Health: Carol Adams Smith
 Open Government: Dee Hardison
 Public Libraries: Judi Gerber
 Water and Agriculture: Judi Gerber
 Webmaster: Barbara Barker

Committees

Budget: Dorothy Stewart
 Executive: Noted by asterisks
 Nominating: Celeste Bailey

Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown

League of Women Voters of Torrance Area News (cont'd)



**2010
Torrance Municipal Election
Candidates Forum**



4 City Council Candidates – 3 to be elected

2 City Treasurer Candidates – 1 to be elected

Incumbent Mayor and City Clerk are Unopposed

Check www.smartvoter.org for candidate information



**Monday, April 19, 2010
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**



**Katy Geissert Civic Center Library
3301 Torrance Blvd., Torrance**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



*Recorded by Torrance Community Television for replay
TimeWarner Channel 28 and Verizon Channel 36
April 28 through June 7 at 7 PM*

*Sponsored by
American Association of University Women Torrance
League of Women Voters of Torrance Area
Torrance Council of PTAs*

League of Women Voters of Torrance Area News (cont'd)

Education Report

By Tom and Gerry Rische, 3/4/2010

[Editor's note: The "story" referred to in the following report is Douglas Morino's *Daily Breeze* article, "Teachers, students, parents take part in 'Day of Action,'" dated March 4, 2010, describing the rallies that occurred that day in front of many South Bay campuses "urging state officials to take a stand against the funding crisis hitting California public education." Because of its length, it has not been reprinted here.]

The attached story will be in tomorrow's *Breeze*—about local events on the day of protest. Drastic cuts, as described by the story and by [Torrance School Board Superintendent] Mannon, will cause layoffs for the second year in a row—and mean drastic increases in class size. It will drastically discourage young people from trying to go into the profession.

There were several stories in the *Breeze* this week about educational cuts in Los Angeles and locally. There have also been editorials echoing many of the same unsophisticated criticisms that have been going on for the last decades—that if only lazy teachers and bureaucrats would allow it, schools could reform and children could learn. These do not deal with the realities of classrooms—particularly those in poorer areas or those in special education—and of students who are distracted by energy, hormones, technological gadgets, sports, and celebrities from learning about Algebra and Government.

Our personal opinion is that the Obama administration is on the wrong track in pushing statewide funding and charter schools. (Just today, California's request for funds was turned down.) Diane Ravitch, who helped develop the Bush standards, has reversed course and thinks they were a mistake.

As Owen Griffith noted in retiring after 28 years on the Torrance Board: "When I got on the board, I thought there would be easy answers. Now I know that there are none." Diversity crosses all socioeconomic levels, races, and genders.

The more budgets are cut, the less individual needs can be met—and the fewer students will be ready for college. And those who are able to go may take longer to finish and then may have trouble finding jobs, particularly in education.

It might be fruitful for the League to pinpoint those legislators who refuse to raise taxes and demand budget cuts—and to

make them answer how they would solve both school and municipal problems, including infrastructure.

Open Government Report

By Dee Hardison

California Fair Elections Campaign

The League of Women Voters of California is joining with three other organizations to co-chair the campaign to support the passage on June 8, 2010 of the California Fair Elections Act. This ballot measure would establish a voluntary pilot public financing program for the Secretary of State Races in 2014 and 2018. If passed, the California Fair Elections act would establish strict reporting requirements and prohibitions on campaign spending for participating candidates.

Citizens Redistricting Commission

This committee of 14 would be responsible for redrawing the California Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts based on the 2010 census information. The process to select the commission members is in its second phase. Each of the over 30,000 applicants now must submit a supplemental application by April 19, 2010. Follow this process by going to the Application Tracker on the Citizens Redistricting Commission section of the League of Women Voters of California website.

In Memoriam

David Morrison, League member and former LWVTA treasurer, passed away April 2. LWVTA condolences go out to his wife, Sydne Morrison, and their family.

League of Women Voters of Torrance Area News (cont'd)

CALIFORNIA ON THE BRINK

By Lola Ungar

While many of us are wondering whether California is on the brink of a divided disaster - the north against the south - Dr. Dowell Myers, USC School of Policy, Planning, and Development, Population Dynamics Research Group, assured the members of the audience at our annual Tri-League Lasagna dinner on March 18 that it could be a shared success.



LWVTA, Beach Cities and Palos Verdes



Peninsula members gather to hear USC's Dr.

Dowell Myers speak on California's future and to enjoy a delicious lasagna dinner sponsored by Tri-League.



He asked the audience whether they had come from outside California and a majority responded. He said that the old story of a doubtful future that includes accelerating immigration is changing for a more responsible one whereby immigration is in fact declining. Worry that immigrants are not assimilating is being replaced by upwardly-mobile immigrants. Where once, migration from other states was swamping California – now, there is a rise in the homegrown majority of Californians. Formerly, new workers were more educated than retirees but, now, new workers are less educated than retirees. He pointed out that young people spend the most while middle-aged people pay most of the taxes. We used to recruit college-educated people from out of state but, we are no longer importing taxpayers; we must now educate in CA. He stated that high out of state demand for housing fuels housing prices and now our young homegrown will be the new homebuyers. He is concerned about the fact that new workers are less educated than retirees.

Photos courtesy of Hope Witkowsky.

Dr. Myers decried the lack of a skilled work force and elaborated on the shared success in building a legacy of a better California by investing in the triple payoffs of Education: 1. A college educated workforce, 2. A 3:1 tax return on educational investment and, 3. Ability to pay 64% higher home prices.

LWVTA
 Welcomes New Member
 Jane Evans



League of Women Voters of California News

New Website for the LWVC Education Fund

LWVC's website, www.ca.lwv.org has a new look, and the Education Fund information has been spun off to its own site, www.cavote.org. Much of the information is still available on the parent site through links, but the new home brings it all together in one subject-specific website.

Leadership Council 2010: the Next Ninety

Leadership Council and the LWVC State Convention occur in alternate years. This is the year for the Council, which is at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza Saturday and Sunday May 15 and 16. Pre-conference events are on Friday, May 14. All LWVC members may attend but only official delegates may vote. The Council is considered to be a great learning experience whether or not you are an officeholder. For special registration and hotel rates, book by April 13. For more information, go to the LWVC home page and click on Leadership Council 2010 or type in the url: lwvc.wordpress.com/council-2010.

California Healthcare

For a concise year-by-year background history of SB 810, The California Universal Healthcare Act (Sen. Mark Leno), go to the LWVC homepage and click on "Read More" under "California OneCare's 365 Ad Campaign." Read the brief description that follows, then scroll down to "A Background History of SB 810" under "Tools for Advocacy and Education." In addition to the history, you will find a lot of other information on the healthcare issue in California.

Cross-Over Voting

In a press release in late January, the Los Angeles County Registrar Recorder/County Clerk announced that "the Democratic and Republican parties have provided notice to the Secretary of State that they will allow voters registered as "Decline to State" or "Non-Partisan to cross-over and vote on Democratic or Republican party ballots in the June 8, 2010 Statewide Primary election. Decline to State and Non-Partisan voters who do not wish to cross-over can vote a Non-Partisan ballot limited to statewide and local measures and non-partisan contests.

California's modified Closed Primary provides for political parties to allow Non-Partisan or Decline to State voters to cross-over and vote in their scheduled party primary election...."



Remember to check SmartVoter (www.smartvoter.org) for a variety of election information including brief statements by candidates, descriptions of propositions, the location of your polling place and more ...

About the League

We are a nonpartisan political organization for women and men which encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We do not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

League of Women Voters of the United States News

LWVUS President Mary G. Wilson reacting to Robert Barnes and Anne E. Komblut's article in the *Washington Post* March 11, "Obama vs. the Supreme Court, Round 2, over campaign finance ruling" wrote the following letter to the editor. Read the Barnes/Komblut article at washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/11/AR201003110031402448.html.

Feedback for the high court

Monday, March 15, 2010

Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. expressed doubt about having members of the Supreme Court attend the State of the Union address ["Obama vs. Supreme Court, Round 2," front page, March 11]. He was upset that President Obama directly criticized the court's 5 to 4 decision injecting corporate funding into candidate elections.

Since the Supreme Court is the opaque and most isolated branch of government, perhaps the justices should recognize that a little honest feedback can be a good thing.

It is particularly important in this instance, since the decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* clearly revealed that the majority on the court has an astonishingly naive view of how corruption works in our nation's capital. Everyone else in the room understood that allowing huge sums of unregulated cash into our elections will undermine the role of individual voters and further expose our elected officials to the siren calls of corporate lobbyists.

Buck up, Mr. Chief Justice. Occasionally there are some things you really need to hear.

Mary G. Wilson, Washington

Source: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/14/AR2010031402448.html

The following are excerpts from Mary G. Wilson's March 18 letter to the members of the House of Representatives

Updating Campaign Finance Laws for the 2010 Elections

...After *Citizens United*, we urgently need enhanced disclosure. This is the most basic step toward

protecting the role of the voter in making decisions in elections....

After providing enhanced disclosure, the next most important step for Congress is to do no further harm....

Rep. Van Hollen and Senator Schumer have released a legislative framework providing for heightened disclosure, more complete disclaimers, barring election spending by foreign corporations, barring election ads by government contractors, clarifying coordination rules, and ensuring candidates can afford to respond to heavy corporate or union spending. We believe this is a responsible and balanced approach

Fair and clean elections, determined by the votes of American citizens, should be at the center of our democracy....

Source: LWVUS website

JOIN THE LEAGUE Yes! I want to make a difference!

I want to make a difference in the decisions that affect my life. I know every new member makes the League more effective in influencing public policy on issues I care about.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Telephone: (Day) _____

(Evening) _____

Email: _____

Individual \$60

Household \$90

Student \$30

Please make checks payable to: League of Women Voters of Torrance

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Torrance
Post Office Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Keep up to date with important League of Women Voters communications. Check out national, state and county issues on-line at:

National: www.lwv.org

State: ca.lwv.org

County: www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

Torrance: <http://torrance.ca.lwvnet.org>

2010 Calendar

Apr 1, 7 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
April 19, 6:30-8:30 pm	Candidates Forum for Torrance City Council, Civic Center Library
April 24, 9:30-noon	County Ballot Briefing, Hollenbeck Palms
May 6, 7 pm	Board Meeting (Call for location)
May 15-16	State Leadership Council, Sacramento
May 22, 8:30-11:30 am	LWVTA Annual Meeting, Marie Callender's, Hawthorne & Torrance Blvds.
June 8	Torrance Municipal Election, California Primary Election
June 11-15	National Convention, Atlanta, GA

For protection of privacy, when sending emails that include anyone outside this membership, please address the names on the Blind CC (BCC) line so that the addresses do not show.

Board Meetings are open to all members and held on the first Thursday of each Month except May.



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Torrance, CA 90508

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