



League of Women Voters of Torrance

Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

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

LWVT Voter

May 2008

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Torrance, 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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All LWVT members are encouraged to provide relevant articles and calendar events for publication in the *LWVT Voter*. Articles must be nonpartisan and are subject to editing. Submissions are emailed 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

As we prepare for our annual meeting, I am looking back to all our activity during this past year. In July 2007, we held our OneCareNow Health Care Event and Rally and hosted a Tri-League lunch. The Tri-League Kick-Off was held in September. We worked on the Immigration Study through October and November, held two Candidate Forums in October, participated in the Middle School Leadership Conference in November. Our Holiday Potluck was held in December.

In January, we took part in another Tri-League Brown Bag and Legislative Interviews. February brought the League's 88th Birthday and our Chocolate Sunday Party. In March we had the Tri-League Lasagna Dinner and the big Sunshine Week Event. April brought the latest Candidate Forum. And now we look forward to our 2008 Annual Meeting. Whew!

My thanks to all the women and men who made these meetings happen and to all who came out to attend them.

Barbara Barker

Fundraising

Many of our members may not be aware of our financial situation. When you pay your dues of \$60, we forward \$21 to the LWV California, \$1.50 to LWV/Los Angeles County, and currently \$26.80 to LWVUS (most likely rising to \$28 at the June Convention). This leaves \$11.70 in our own treasury for individual members and only \$6.85 for an additional family member. We do not want to raise our dues so we must look to additional donations from our own members and to other methods of fundraising.



Please consider making LWVT one of your annual beneficiaries. If you want the contribution to be tax deductible, make it to LWV Education Fund – Torrance. Send it to Sandra Strong, our Treasurer, and she will be happy to deposit it.

The Fundraising Committee is in the process of sending out letters to local businesses to ask for their support, and the Membership Committee is also working with the Fundraising Committee on an event to be held in September. We need our members to participate in the planning and producing of this event.

Please make a donation to LWV Torrance if you can.

Don't forget to attend the annual meeting: 8:30 am, Saturday, May 31, at Marie Callender's, 21211 Hawthorne Blvd in Torrance!

League of Women Voters of Torrance News

Looking Toward the LWVUS Convention in June

By Barbara Barker

As LWVT's delegate to the National LWV Convention in Portland next month, I have signed onto e-lists, where members bring up areas of interest. I submitted a question about State PMPs (per member payments) and found that California was about in the middle of the mix, which is very good for such a large state.

That subject led to one on how many leagues maintained offices – and many do, but not the majority.

And then the discussion moved on to the loss of membership and loss of willingness on the part of members to take an active part in League activities. I was struck by this message from Xandra Kayden of the Los Angeles League and the LWVUS Board.

“There was an interesting book written a couple of years ago by Theda Skocpol called Diminished Democracy decrying the loss of grassroots organizations like the League. Since the 1970s, most national organizations have been formed by small groups of elites and professionals run out of New York or Washington, with members who do nothing but contribute their dues and respond to other appeals. What is lost is the engagement of citizens at the local and state levels. She believes that the active participation of people in such a structure gives added strength at every level: greater credibility at the local level because they are part of a larger organization; greater credibility at the state and national levels because they have members at the local level. She goes on to argue that there is a cost to democracy in America with that decline, and I agree. We have something that is rare today, but no less valuable because of it.

I am looking forward to more of this discussion in hopes that we can find the way to increase the democracy of our local leagues.

Additionally, the LWVUS Board is recommending Advocacy and Education on Health Care as we move into the next year with a new U.S. President. There are groups in discussion about a recommendation for a “review” of the Health Care Position or some other method of updating it to reflect changes that have occurred since 1992.

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Board of Directors 2007-08

President: Barbara Barker
1st Vice President: Pat Kromka
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Treasurer: Sandra Strong

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Juvenile Justice: Vacant
Government/Elections: Sue Herbers
Membership: Venora Lee
Observers: Vacant
Program: Vacant
Public Relations: Lola Ungar
Social Policy: Barbara Barker
Voter Editor: LaVonne Wuertz
Voter Service: Pat Kromka

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Telephone Tree: Sydne Morrison
Nominating Committee: Adriene Henry

Committees

Budget: Marcia Cribbs
Fundraising: Janice Steffen

Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown

Torrance City Council Candidates on TV

The April Candidate Forum sponsored by LWVT, American Association of University Women of Torrance, and the Torrance Council of PTAs will be shown from now through June 2 on Torrance Community Television TCTV Time Warner Channel 28 at 6:30 p.m. Thirteen of the fourteen candidates participated in the forum.

Candidate Open Mic segments will be aired at 8:30 p.m. through June 2.

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

LWVT Gathers Signatures for Redistricting

Members of LWVT went to the Torrance Farmers' Markets, the Education Council of Torrance and other places to gather more than 50 signatures toward Redistricting. The petitions were sent in to be counted. If enough signatures have been gathered, we will see the proposition on the November ballot.



Thanks to Linda Brown, Venora Lee and Eunice Hargrove who joined Barbara Barker in gathering the signatures. We have also heard that some of our members, including Virginia Hilker, knocked on neighbors' doors and responded to the letter that was sent from LWVC, returning even more signatures.

Health Care

SB840, the Universal Single Payer Health Care for All Californians Bill vetoed by the Governor last year, is, in fact, still healthy. It has passed the Senate and is currently in the Assembly. We will be working toward increasing its support in an effort to have a 2/3 vote should it be vetoed again. We need to get this bill passed and eventually implemented so that California will be a single-payer universal health care model. This is especially important as the Presidential Candidates are indicating that they will be working toward some form of national health care. The states that have implemented plans will be the best barometers of what works well and what does not.

The LWVUS Board is recommending Advocacy and Education in Health Care as part of the 2008-2010 Program and will be making press statements, writing letters and appearing at Congressional committees to support the best plans. Many Leagues from all around the country have been working in this field and are anxious to discuss it at the Convention.

The LWV Storybank

The League of Women Voters is taking a new approach to increasing membership and we need your help! As part of the recently launched LWV Membership Recruitment Initiative, LWVUS is developing a Storybank to collect and house the wonderful stories of achievement from League members across the country. We need your personal stories on what League membership has meant to you to make the Storybank a success.

What is the LWV Storybank?

The League of Women Voters Storybank is a collection of stories from League members across the country. The stories reflect the value of being a member of the League, *the* organization where hands on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. We are seeking story submissions from members just like you - exceptional women who have exceptional stories. We need stories about what the League means to you, how your experience has mattered in your own life, and what it has meant to your community. The stories will, in time, be available on the LWVUS Web site for others to read.

Why is LWV collecting stories?

There is no better way to explain the benefits of membership than to share stories from current LWV members that communicate the benefits of League membership. Stories should highlight the value of membership in the League; everyone's story is valuable and

(continued on page 4)

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

(Storybank, continued from page 3)

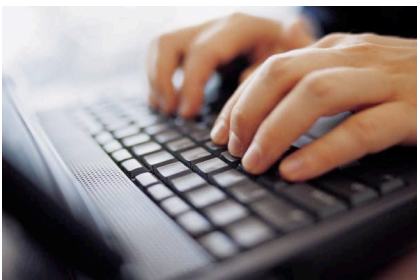
important. The League of Women Voters is a place where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement; your work has demonstrated this and sharing your story can inspire others to join.

How are the stories used?

The stories that LWV collects will have multiple uses. LWV may highlight your story by posting it on our local or even the LWVUS Web site, using it in new membership materials, sharing it with members of the media, and encouraging your local League to promote it.

How can I submit a story?

Submitting a story is simple! LWVUS has created a user friendly online submission form. To submit, visit www.lwv.org/Storybank. Type in your information, story, and click "Submit My Story". Information about the Storybank is available in the "Membership Recruitment Initiative" section of the "For Members" area of www.lwv.org. Or, click on the Storybank ad on the LWV homepage to link directly to it. For additional information, e-mail storybank@lwv.org.



Torrance Council of PTAs

PTA

everychild.onevoice.

Save Our Schools

E-Waste Donation Day

Saturday June 7th 10:00-3:00pm
TUSD EMB Parking Lot
2336 Plaza Del Amo, Torrance CA 90501

1-800-GOT JUNK is donating 50% of the profits from this event to the TEF/TUSD Save Our Schools Fund to replenish proposed state budget cuts of \$9.2 million for the 2008-09 school year.

Acceptable items include: Computer monitors, CRTs, TVs, projection TVs, CPUs, towers, printers, fax machines, all-in-one centers, radios, stereos, speakers, phones, answer machines, kitchen appliances, microwave ovens, small refrigerators, and household appliances.

Thank you for supporting the continuing efforts of the Torrance Council of PTAs, www.torrancecouncilofptas.org

1-800-GOT-JUNK?
THE WORLD'S LARGEST JUNK REMOVAL SERVICE

League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

Mahr Calls for Jail Study Support

Los Angeles County convention attendees in April voted to undertake a new study—the county jail system. In her president's message in the May *LWV/LAC Voter*, new County president, Nancy Mahr, asked that County leagues begin thinking about how they can help with the study. She stated that it is an example of an over-arching issue, an important subject, and that “it will take a good deal of work to establish the scope and complete the study. It will need leadership and the participation of all of our County leagues on the study committee.” Undoubtedly, we will be hearing more about opportunities for support.

See the May *LWV/LAC Voter* at www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org for articles that discuss the League's interest in and involvement with jail system issues.

Election Observers

Did you know that you can apply to participate in the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Election Observer Program every election; but if you wish to apply for the June election, you will need to hurry. The deadline is Tuesday, May 20!

The following is from the RR/CC's website:

“The program is part of the County's commitment to conducting open and transparent elections. Through the program, Election Observers are afforded the opportunity to observe Logic and Accuracy testing of election systems equipment, Vote-By-Mail Ballot processing, Election Day activities at polling locations and Check-In-Center, tally center operations and post election processing. A full copy of the Election Observer Plan is available online at www.lavote.net.

“Representatives from County Political Party Central Committees, Community Voter Outreach Committee member organizations, the Los Angeles County Grand Jury and other interested citizens are invited to participate in this program.” Note, however, that “observation posts are limited.”

To participate, you are required to fax to Maria Vadai at 562-868-8109 an Election Observer Designation Request sheet that can be downloaded from www.lavote.net. If accepted you

will be required to attend a pre-election orientation and training on May 22 at 5 p.m. in the RR/CC Department in Norwalk. Detailed information is available on the website or you may contact Maria Vadai at 562-462-2662.

This is a great opportunity, so if you miss it this time around—how about November?



About the League

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League has two separate and distinct roles. The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, which conducts our voters service and civic education activities, is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational organization.

The League of Women Voters of Torrance, a membership organization, conducts action and advocacy and is a nonprofit 501(c)(4) corporation. The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and on which they have come to consensus. 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.

With membership comes the opportunity to work with well-informed, grassroots activists on a broad range of public policy concerns. The League provides members with opportunities to learn valuable, transferable skills, including how to organize and run productive meetings, write more effectively, speak in public, organize and run effective campaigns, conduct research studies, and coordinate general civic leadership training.

League of Women Voters of California News

AARP. LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA CONDEMN DECEPTIVE NEW RADIO ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN BEING BANKROLLED BY LANDLORDS FUNDING PROP. 98.

Director of the League of Women Voters of California.
“ We want to alert voters—do not be fooled by these deceptive radio advertisements. This ad doesn’t tell voters that Prop. 98 has hidden provisions that eliminate renter protections and rent control, undermine environmental protections and threaten other laws that protect homeowners and our communities. Voters be aware. The League of Women Voters of California urges voters to vote NO on 98.” ###

Groups Issue “Fraud Alert to Warn Voters of Landlords’ Deceptive Scheme

[Excerpts from a press release dated 4/23/08]

Pasadena, CA – Opponents of Prop. 98 today issued a “Fraud Alert” to voters, warning them to beware of deceptive new Yes on 98 radio ads beginning today. Rallying at a news conference in Pasadena at the California State Headquarters of the AARP, representatives from AARP, League of Women Voters of California, senior and tenant organizations blasted new Yes on Prop. 98 radio ads as a deceptive campaign being funded by apartment and mobile home park landlords who are trying to trick voters into supporting Prop. 98....

LWVC Supports Prop. 99 which addresses a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision by clarifying that single-family occupied properties may not be condemned for transfer to other private parties while reinforcing the right of governments to regulate land use and to acquire property for valid government purposes.



The ads attempt to draw on voters concerns about eminent domain. However, the ads intentionally exclude any mention of the real reason landlords have contributed 80% of the funding for this campaign: to eliminate rent control and renter protections.

Statewide, there are 14 million renters in California, and in Los Angeles the national Multi-Housing Council estimates that about 60% are renters. All will be impacted by Prop. 98 because the measure jeopardizes renter protections like fair return of rental deposits and just cause evictions...and eliminates rent control....

“Our organization believes in transparency in government and making sure voters are well informed,” said Chris Carson, Government

Use Smartvoter (www.smartvoter.org) to:

- Find your polling place and what is on your ballot
- Read brief profiles and statements by the candidates. Candidates may update their statements as late as the day before the election.
- View campaign financing and voting records
- Read non-partisan summaries of ballot measures
- Get information on voter registration
- Get data on past elections
- Link to other election-related websites
- Find a schedule of candidate forums

Be informed. Go to Smartvoter. It will be updated periodically between now and June 3.

League of Women Voters of the United States News

LEAGUE SAYS SUPREME COURT VOTER ID DECISION "DISGRACEFUL"

(LWVUS Press Release dated 4/28/08 regarding the decision upholding Indiana's voter ID law)

Voters Cannot Look to Court to Ensure Fair Elections

Washington, DC - "This is a disgraceful decision by a court that has no credibility on election issues. The court has shown once again that it does not respect voters," said Mary G. Wilson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Because of the procedural status of the case, there was no record on which the Court could judge how great the burden of a photo ID requirement would be on voters. Nonetheless, the three key justices found that the burden was not "excessively burdensome." This finding is "intellectually as well as morally bankrupt," Wilson said.

"There is a concerted effort in this country to disenfranchise legal voters and, unfortunately, this Supreme Court has joined those ugly efforts," Wilson said.

This is a "bad decision for our democracy," Wilson asserted. "Just because the Supreme Court says a bad policy is constitutional doesn't mean legislatures should adopt it," she said. "The League of Women Voters will be fighting against these limitations on democracy in the states and, when necessary, in Congress," she said.

"It is simply disgraceful when the Supreme Court refuses to protect the constitutional voting rights of Americans," Wilson said.

"We can no longer look to this Supreme Court to ensure fair elections," Wilson concluded.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana, LWV of Indianapolis and the League of Women Voters of

the United States filed a joint *amicus brief* in the Supreme Court case, Crawford v. et al. ###

In the current LWVUS e-newsletter, President Mary G. Wilson wrote that

"Nationwide, it is estimated that as many as 11% of U.S. citizens don't have government-issued photo identification— that is, as many as 21 million Americans."

She noted that already in Missouri an attempt had been made to pass legislation requiring a government-issued photo ID that had the potential of disenfranchising up to 640,000 people, especially the poor, the elderly, minorities, and the disabled.

Items above are from LWVUS sources.

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>

2008 Calendar

May 17-18	LWVC Council, Sacramento
May 31, 8:30-11:30 am	LWVT Annual Meeting, Marie Callender's Restaurant, 21211 Hawthorne Blvd. (Torrance Restaurant Row)
June 3, 7 am-8 pm	Primary Election for Congressional, State, County Offices, Torrance City Council, Propositions
June 7, 10 am-3 pm	Save Our Schools E-Waste Donation Day, 23336 Plaza Del Amo, Torrance
June 13-17	LWVUS Convention, Portland
June 21, 11 am-3 pm	Old Board/New Board Meeting, location to be announced

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 usually held on the first Thursday of each month.



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Torrance, CA 90508

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