



League of Women Voters of Torrance

Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

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

Tel. 310-618-8711

LWVT Voter

May 2009

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.

Inside this Issue:

Local Action News	2
Convention Report	2-3
LWVT Annual Meeting	4
LWVLAC News	5
LWVCalifornia News	6
LWVUS News	7
Calendar	8
Contacts	8

The *LWVT Voter* is published monthly except July and December. 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. 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

As I leave office, I would like to extend heartfelt appreciation to the members and to the board members who have been a part of the LWVTorrance revitalization. It has been so gratifying to see life come back to our organization and to deepen our personal relationships as we all worked together.

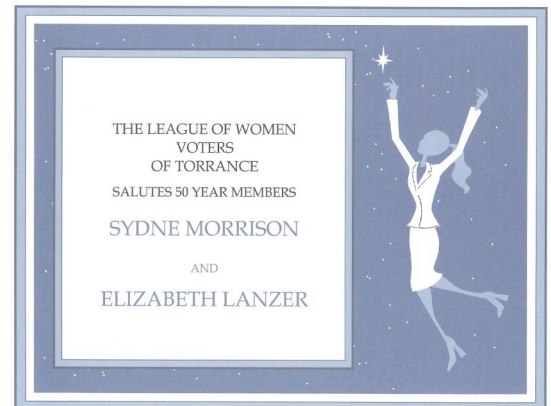
There are exciting developments in the League at both the State and National level that are sparking discussions about the very heart of this organization and how it operates. Like Torrance a few years ago, the LWVC felt it needed to revamp and took bylaw changes that would allow administrative repositioning to the Convention. We will see the results after their Board Retreat this summer. There is overt concern among the membership that advocacy issues will not have the same support as they have in the past and members at the convention made the LWVC Board aware of this.

The major conflict at the National level is more complex. It centers on the future health care legislation specifically, what stand the League should take – politically safe incrementalism that allows support of the President's currently proposed plan, or likely-to-be defeated single payer advocacy? LWVUS has signaled that it is not endorsing any single payer bills, keeping its options open. Many grass roots members who have been working for nearly two

decades support or oppose the Board's direction. As a result, some are calling on their state leagues to challenge the LWVUS direction. There is more information in another article on the specifics. My point here is that League has challenges at all levels and this causes all of us to "have another think". We are examining how we work together to get things done, how we apply our positions, whether we should use political expediency or take a more purist tack.

These circumstances point out just how alive the LWV actually is. We are constantly striving to accomplish our mission more expeditiously while being loyal to the very heart of League work – the study and its resulting positions. Members offer solutions and other members bring up conflicts – and then the discussion really begins. In the heart of the conflict, we hear voices striving for consensus on the subject and the direction of the League. This is the passion of our organization and we can be proud of our efforts.

Barbara Barker



League of Women Voters of Torrance News

LWVC Convention Report

Our League did not send a delegate to all the plenary (business) sessions of this year's LWVCalifornia convention because of a shortage of funding. Our President attended only the Sunday Plenary as a voting delegate for the Torrance League. Barbara also worked on a Saturday workshop and caucus with the LWVC Health Care Committee, of which she is a member.

LWVT won two awards during the Convention. LaVonne Wuertz, Editor of the *LWVT Voter*, brought us the Communications Award for 2009. Venora Lee and Linda Brown headed up a Membership Committee that worked on the Membership Recruitment Initiative, earning a certificate from LWVUS, which was presented at the Convention. Congratulations to all the members who made this happen.

**Congratulations to the League of
Women Voters of Torrance**

Winner of two awards

**LWVC Communications
Award 2009 for
Excellence in the publication of
our local league *LWVT Voter***

and

**LWVUS Certificate of
Appreciation for participation in
and commitment to the
Membership Recruitment
Initiative**

There were almost 180 delegates at the Convention. The Program proposed by the Board passed. This consisted of 1) Retain all existing LWVC Program Positions; 2) No New State Study, Update, or Concurrence, and 3) Proposed Issues for Education and Advocacy a) Redistricting Implementation, and b) Government Reform, including State and Local Finances, Initiative and Referendum Process, State Constitution, Campaign Financing, and Voting Rights. Not-Recommended Items proposed by members in attendance won majority votes but failed for lack of the needed 60% majority. These were to do a Prison

Board of Directors 2008-09

President: Barbara Barker*
1st Vice President: Pat Kromka
2nd Vice President: Sue Herbers*
Secretary: Kay White*
Treasurer: Sandra Strong

Directors

Advocacy: Lola Ungar
Communications: Sydne Morrison*
Financial Development: Vacant
Juvenile Justice: Vacant
Government/Elections: Sue Herbers
Membership: Venora Lee
Natural Resources: Andrea Wagner
Observers: Vacant
Program: Vacant
Public Relations: Lola Ungar
Social Policy: Barbara Barker
Voter Editor: LaVonne Wuertz*
Voter Service: Pat Kromka

Off-Board Portfolios

Coastal Issues: Briana Krank
Education: Mark Steffen
Energy: Rick Wagner
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
Local Action: Gladys Meade
MGIK (Membership Initiative): Barbara Barker and Venora Lee
Nominating: Celeste Bailey

Tri-League Liaison: Linda Brown

[Continued on page 3]

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

[Continued from page 2]

Study, to adopt State and Local Finances, Water and Health Care as issues for education and advocacy; and one to simply include Health Care as an issue for education and advocacy.

The Proposed 2009-10 Budgets passed: LWVC General Fund total budget of \$376,000 and LWVC Education Fund total budget of \$628,000, both with use of reserve funds.

Three "Will of the Convention" Resolutions passed. One was to urge LWVUS to work to actively support the principle of Single Payer National Health Insurance (see box for wording). Another reinstated the Publication of the Pros and Cons in some format. The third supports the principle of transparency to all

election procedures and urges LWVUS to add this principle to the SARA Resolution.

A similar resolution on Single Payer health care was passed at the LWV Conventions in Colorado, New York, and Indiana; it failed in New Jersey; and one will be introduced in Massachusetts. This has become an interesting National development.

The California Convention ended on Sunday afternoon with the election of officers. Janis Hirohama, LWV Beach Cities, will continue as President.

Barbara Barker

From League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville:

A Resolution from the LWVC State Convention, May, 2009

Whereas, the LVUS position on health care calls for A HEALTH CARE SYSTEM which is universal, comprehensive, equitable, and affordable both to individuals and to the nation, and

Whereas, the LWVUS position (adopted in 1993) supports A NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums, and

Whereas, A SINGLE PAYER health care plan can best fulfill these criteria,

Therefore be it resolved,

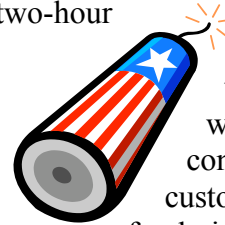
that LWVC ask LWVUS to actively support the principle of SINGLE PAYER NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE by

vigorously advocating that a single payer legislative proposal be included in deliberation of health care reform by Congress and the Administration and

insisting that side-by-side comparative analyses of single payer proposals with other proposals for health care reform be part of these deliberations.

Calling All Firecrackers!

We need members to work our fundraising booth on the Fourth of July at Wilson Park. We will be able to set up two-hour shifts if enough members offer their time. We will be working with a food concessionaire serving the customers. This is a big fundraiser for the League so please contact Barbara Barker if you can offer some time. There is usually a shuttle system from a remote parking lot to help mitigate the congestion.



LWV is the organization where your hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to tangible civic improvement.

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

Reminder!

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF TORRANCE**

ANNUAL MEETING

Guest Speaker:

Dr. George Mannon
Superintendent, Torrance Unified School District

“State of Our Schools”

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2009

8:30-11:30 AM

Marie Callender’s Restaurant
21211 Hawthorne Boulevard
At Torrance Blvd. (Restaurant Row)

Registration and Breakfast \$20.00
(Includes Meal, Tax and Tip)

**League of Women Voters of
Torrance?**
or
**League of Women Voters of the
South Bay?**

Your vote counts at the Annual Meeting

**TRI-LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
BEACH CITIES – PALOS VERDES –
TORRANCE**

Invites You to Our Summer Meeting

TOUR AND LUNCH

**WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER
DISTRICT
TREATMENT FACILITY**



THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2009
11:00 A.M.

WHERE: TREATMENT FACILITY
1935 HUGHES WAY (OFF SEPULVEDA)
EL SEGUNDO

RSVP – PEGGY BARTLETT – 310-545-1087
LINDA BROWN – 310 – 320-3815

(Reservations in by July 2, 2009)

League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

LWVLAC Jail Study

(from the May LWVLAC *Voter*)

At its 2008 annual Convention, County League membership voted to undertake a study of the County Jails. A committee has met and selected the study's scope – Overcrowding in the L. A. County Jail System, with Focuses on Recidivism, Educational Programs, Costs, and Mental Health. We are currently researching these topics – delving into printed reports, clicking about the internet, and talking with knowledgeable people.

Our timeline includes finishing our research in June, working during the summer on preparing materials and consensus questions, and submitting a study packet to local Leagues for consensus meetings in the Fall. But, our committee is small. There are a few of us, representing only three local Leagues, working on this project. We are hoping that more County League members will join our endeavor. Volunteers, please call Vi Iungerich, at (310) 541-5092 or Betsey Coffman at (909) 626-1540. We need your help.

County Registrar Releases 2008 Post-election Report

(from May 1, 2009 press release)

Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) Dean Logan announced today the release of the 2008 Post-Election Report, a compilation of data and statistics resulting from an unprecedented election year where more Los Angeles County voters participated than in the past 40 years. The 2008 election generated the second highest voter turnout since 1968. Included with the report, is a compact disc which provides a compilation of individual maps for those who wish to drill down for more detail. The full report and maps are available on the RR/CC website www.lavote.net.

The report provides an array of information on voting trends, voter outreach activities, and demographic data; countywide and for selected districts. Easy-to-read interactive

maps, charts and graphs of voter registration and turnout statistics for the 2008 Presidential Election along with historical information compiled from past elections are contained within the report.

“The historic 2008 Presidential contest was unparalleled in many ways,” said Logan. “As a result, a number of trends and patterns emerged that resulted in noteworthy levels of voter participation and engagement. The 2008 Presidential Election provided an excellent opportunity to learn from and improve our electoral process for the future.”

The interactive maps contained in the report have been created to provide a visual picture of the November 2008 election and, in some cases, its comparison to past elections. The maps are provided [by county, supervisorial district, and congressional district.]

Logan added, “The data collected during the election cycle will help us anticipate future voting trends and identify changing demographics of new generations of voters. . . .”



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 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.

League of Women Voters of California News

From the LWVC website . . .

League of Women Voters Expresses Disappointment in Proposition 8 Decision

The California Supreme Court issued its decision today upholding the constitutionality of Proposition 8. The measure, passed by the voters on November 4, 2008, amended the California Constitution to provide that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California.

In today's [May 26] 6-1 ruling, the Supreme Court rejected a constitutional challenge to Proposition 8 brought by the City and County of San Francisco, the County of Santa Clara, the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and numerous individual Californians. The LWVC, represented pro bono by the law firm of Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, had filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in January supporting the legal challenge against the measure.

The Court held that Proposition 8 is a valid amendment to the California Constitution and that it is not an invalid constitutional revision carried out through the initiative process. It also found that the measure does not entirely repeal or abrogate the constitutional right to privacy and due process of same-sex couples. The Court did, however, unanimously hold that Proposition 8 applies prospectively only, and therefore does not affect the continued validity of same-sex marriages that took place before the November 5, 2008 effective date of the initiative.

LWVC President Janis R. Hirohama said: "We are deeply disappointed by the Court's decision. The League opposed Proposition 8 because we believe in protecting individual rights and that no person or

group should suffer legal discrimination." She noted, "We are concerned that the ruling raises the possibility of future ballot measures being used to change or alter the state Constitution in order to single out other groups for discriminatory treatment." Hirohama added, "However, we are relieved that the Court agreed with the retroactivity argument raised by the League and others in finding that the marital status of same-sex couples who married before November 5, 2008 should be recognized and preserved."

The LWVC has long opposed measures that threaten individual rights, including Proposition 22 in 2000, which also limited marriage as only being between a man and a woman.



LWVC Convention 2009

For a convention summary, see the Convention Report on pages 2 and 3.



Every car counts!

**Donate your car, truck, motorcycle, RV
or boat to the League of Women Voters.**

Call 800 320.0476

**League of Women Voters of California Education
Fund**

We'll pick it up. You'll support the League,
get a tax deduction
and avoid the headache of disposing of an unwanted vehicle.

League of Women Voters of the United States News

From the LWVUS website . . .

League Celebrates Diversity on Supreme Court

(May 26, 2009 Press Release)

Washington, DC – Mary G. Wilson, national President of the nonpartisan League of Women Voters today made the following statement regarding President Obama's nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court.

"The League of Women Voters is pleased by President Obama's announcement this morning that he will nominate the first Latina, Judge Sonia Sotomayor, to serve on the nation's highest court.

"The nomination of Judge Sotomayor to fill the vacancy left by retiring Justice David Souter is a bold step by President Obama to diversify the Court.

"It is a time to celebrate our nation's diversity and differences. The nomination of the first Latina and the third woman to the country's highest court is cause for all Americans to be proud.

"Today's announcement is historic for all American citizens. Judge Sotomayor's nomination marks another milestone on our path toward a democracy that is truly representative of its citizenry."

National Popular Vote Compact

On the recommendation of the Program Planning Committee and the NPV study committee, the Board approved the following statement of position:

"The LWVUS affirms its support of the direct election of the president and abolition of the Electoral College, but the LWVUS has no position on the National Popular Vote Compact as studied in 2008-2009."

Memorial Day

According to the National Women's History Museum, women "created Memorial Day." Shortly after the Civil War ended in April 1865, Ellen Call Long organized a women's memorial society to reconcile embittered enemies, and groups were formed in the North and South to memorialize the dead and care for the war's disabled and its widows and orphans. On June 22, 1865, the women adopted a document stating that "the object of this meeting is to initiate a Memorial Association...that shall perpetuate in an honorable manner the memory of the gallant dead..."



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>

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.

2009 Calendar

May 15-17	LWVC Convention, Long Beach Airport Marriott
May 19	Special state election
May 30, 8:30-11 am	LWVT annual meeting, Marie Callender's, Torrance & Hawthorne Blvd.
June 6, 9-3 pm	Household hazardous waste & e-waste recycling, Am. Honda, 1919 Torrance Blvd.
June 13, 10-2 pm	Online LWVUS Virtual Council (See LWVUS website by May 29 on how to participate.)
June 13, 10-3 pm	Environ. Expo, Madrona Marsh
June 27, 10-1:30 pm	Old/new board meeting, home of Lola Ungar, potluck lunch
July 9, 11 am	Tri-League Go-See Tour: West Basin Municipal Water District. Lunch provided. RSVP Linda Brown.



League of Women Voters of Torrance

Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance

Post Office Box 964

Torrance, CA 90508

Address Service Requested

Time Dated