



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

October 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.

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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

Once of the best things I have done in my life was to join the League of Women Voters. I have made lifelong friends and learned so much about our local communities. I joined the League through the "you have to do this" message from a friend and neighbor and, in turn, have asked other friends to join. The League is reaching out and asking you to ask a friend or neighbor to join us to continue with the great work that we do.

We are doing candidate forums this month. I'm so proud that we conduct the forums with fairness and equal time for all. Hope to see you there.

*Linda Brown,
Co-President*

Directors' Reports

Education—Tom and Gerry Rische

TORRANCE ENROLLMENT: Torrance school enrollment was down a bit this year, to 24,057 students. With a total of 8,558 high school students, the four big high schools were all within 100 students of each other: South had 2133; Torrance High, 2131; North, 2122; and West, 2047. Shery Continuation School had 155.

With 5,654 in 8 middle schools, enrollment ranged from 797 at Calle Mayor to 590 at Hull. There were 9,815 enrolled in the 16 elementary schools ranging from 1,006 at Victor to 343 at Yukon.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE FORUMS:

School Board elections are coming up on Tuesday, Nov. 3, with seven candidates running in Torrance for three seats. Torrance candidates include incumbents Mark Steffen and Al Muratsuchi, and Michael Wermers, Rick Marshall, Kevin E. Bellenfant, Kathleen Wood, and Sameer Bhavani. Forums are as follows:

Wednesday, 9/23: Southeast Torrance HOA Forum, John Adams School Cafeteria, 7PM

Monday, 10/05, Southwood HOA Forum, Anza School Cafeteria, 7PM

Thursday, 10/15, Southwood Riviera-Seaside HOA Forum, Calle Mayor Cafetorium, 7 PM, social hour 6:30 PM.

Monday, 10/19, Torrance League of Women Voters Forum, Community Room, Katy Geissert Library, 6:30PM

Thursday, 10/22, North Torrance HOA Forum, North High School Library, 7PM

(Continued on page 2, Education)

League of Women Voters of Torrance News

Education *(Cont'd from page 1)*

El Camino board elections will not be held, as no one filed to oppose incumbent Maureen O'Donnell.

Health Care—Barbara Barker

The LWVT Health Care committee continues to be involved with the LWVC's coalition with California OneCareNow. Some members joined in a rally at Hollywood and Highland in Hollywood on September 30th supporting the Mad-As-Hell Doctors who have been crossing the country in support of single payer health insurance. We are proliferating messages in support of SB810, Senator Leno's Healthcare Bill in the California legislature via Facebook and other electronic messages.

At the national level, LWVUS is standing strong for the public option. In response to the Senate Finance Committee vote defeating amendments to include a public option on September 29th, the LWVUS president Mary Wilson sent a statement: "The public option is the key to consumer choice and to lowering health care costs. Both are essential elements of health care reform. The Finance Committee's failure will hurt consumers and result in higher costs. How could they be so short-sighted?" (Read more at www.lwv.org.)

Members who want more information or to take personal action might:

- .. Go to <http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/action/healthcare/index.html> or www.californiaonecare.org to stay in tune with the state coalition.
- .. Join the LWVUS Healthcare Listserve. This listserv has become an active forum for communicating health care issues. Post useful resources as well as the ideas and successes of your local LWV and community. Sign up at www.lwv.org (use links: For Members, Get Involved, League sponsored e-mail lists).
- .. Sign up for Email Alerts from Physicians for a National Health Plan (www.pnhp.org) and from Healthcare-NOW (www.Healthcare-NOW.org)
- Write or fax their representatives as requested by these sources, attend rallies, post Facebook notices, or send informative emails to their friends and acquaintances.

Board of Directors 2009-10

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Energy: Andrea Wagner
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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 News (cont'd)

Natural Resources—Andrea Wagner

Water, fuel, and climate change continue to be topics of local as well as general concern. Efforts include actions such as restricting water usage (with unintended consequences of water system failures), exploring new sources to meet demand, and active education of the public to their role in improving conditions.

Coming events of interest:

- October 10, Advanced Composting Workshop, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Columbia Park, 4045 190th St., northwest corner of 190th St. and Prairie Ave., Torrance. Topics include organic gardening, the art and science of good soil, environmentally responsible ways to control pests, conserving water around the garden, and using native and drought-tolerant plants.
- October 17, Ocean Friendly Gardening & Landscape Workshop, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Hawthorne Library, 12700 Grevillea Ave., Hawthorne. Learn how to develop an ocean friendly garden using native plants, water efficient irrigation devices (such as “smart” sprinkler controllers and drip irrigation), permeable materials and on-site water retention techniques (to reduce dry-weather run-off pollution to our oceans).
- October 24, West Basin’s 11th Annual Water Harvest Festival, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility, 1935 S. Hughes Way, El Segundo (at Sepulveda). Learn about the Seven Wonders of California’s water world (Bay Delta, Mono Lake, Colorado River, State Water Project, Diamond Valley Lake, Desalination Demonstration Project, Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility).
- October 24, International Day of Climate Action to raise public awareness about global warming and influence world leaders to take decisive action on an international climate treaty to control and reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. South Bay activities:
 - Wilson Park, Torrance, picnic and discussion, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
 - Manhattan Beach Pier, Manhattan Beach human tideline, 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- November 6, City of Carson Environmental Educational Workshop, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center, Hall B, 3 Civic Plaza Drive, Carson. City of Carson has invited several

- agencies to participate and share information with the community regarding their roles and responsibilities to the public as related to environmental issues that affect Carson and the surrounding cities. Residents and businesses in Carson are strongly encouraged to participate in this public workshop.

The city of Torrance is working on a number of environmental issues, including:

- Finishing the green house gas (GHG) emissions inventory for the city
- Developing the GHG emissions inventory for the Torrance community
- Making more than 40% of the bus fleet hybrid electric by the end of 2011
- Developing a climate action plan
- Including a sustainable community strategy in the general plan
- Developing incentives (including potentially waiving of permit fees and expedited processing) for homeowners who install solar panels
- Implementing energy efficiency measures, including replacing the HVAC system at the city yard, changing out lights in traffic signals and the civic center, saving \$100,000 per year and removing 837 tons/year of CO₂ (the equivalent of planting 30,000 trees.) [This was funded through federal stimulus monies.]
- Reviewing/considering additional energy/water saving projects, including water usage at parks and solar panels on city buildings.

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

Open Government—Dee Hardison

National - The League in August submitted a “friend of the court” brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Citizens United v. the Federal Election Commission. The brief calls attention to effects on democracy if the Court would overturn existing federal and state limits on corporate expenditures in candidate elections. Oral arguments were heard on September 9th

At a Redistricting Conference in July, the League and other organizations signed a Statement on Essential Principles on Redistricting. The essential principles are (1) accurate and complete count in Census 2010, (2) process must be transparent, (3) process must allow for public input as plans are developed and (4) redistricting plans must be drawn to reflect diversity, especially racial and ethnic diversity, of the people in the district.

State - Redistricting

A public hearing was held on September 14th in Sacramento about the proposed regulations for the Citizens Redistricting Commission. As a result of all the comments received, the Bureau of State Audits has modified the proposed regulations and has posted the revised text of the regulations. There have also been revisions to the proposed regulations clarifying and implementing the Voters FIRST Act. Written comments to the modifications must be submitted by October 13, 2009.

The League is forming a Redistricting Committee of League volunteers to facilitate the best implementation of redistricting reform in California. All kinds of skills are needed for this committee. If interested in serving on the committee, check the state league website for more information and who to contact.

State Governance

Several groups are looking at how to deal with the current state governance issues in California.

1. Repair California is a coalition supporting a constitutional convention.
2. California Forward has a list of proposed reforms that could be achieved through either the legislative or initiative process.
3. CCS Partnership is a joint effort of the League of California Cities, California State Association of Counties and California School Boards Association. 500 local government leaders met in July, at a summit sponsored by

CCS, to discuss possible solutions to governance and fiscal reform.

4. Center for Government Studies has published an article on pros and cons of a constitutional convention.

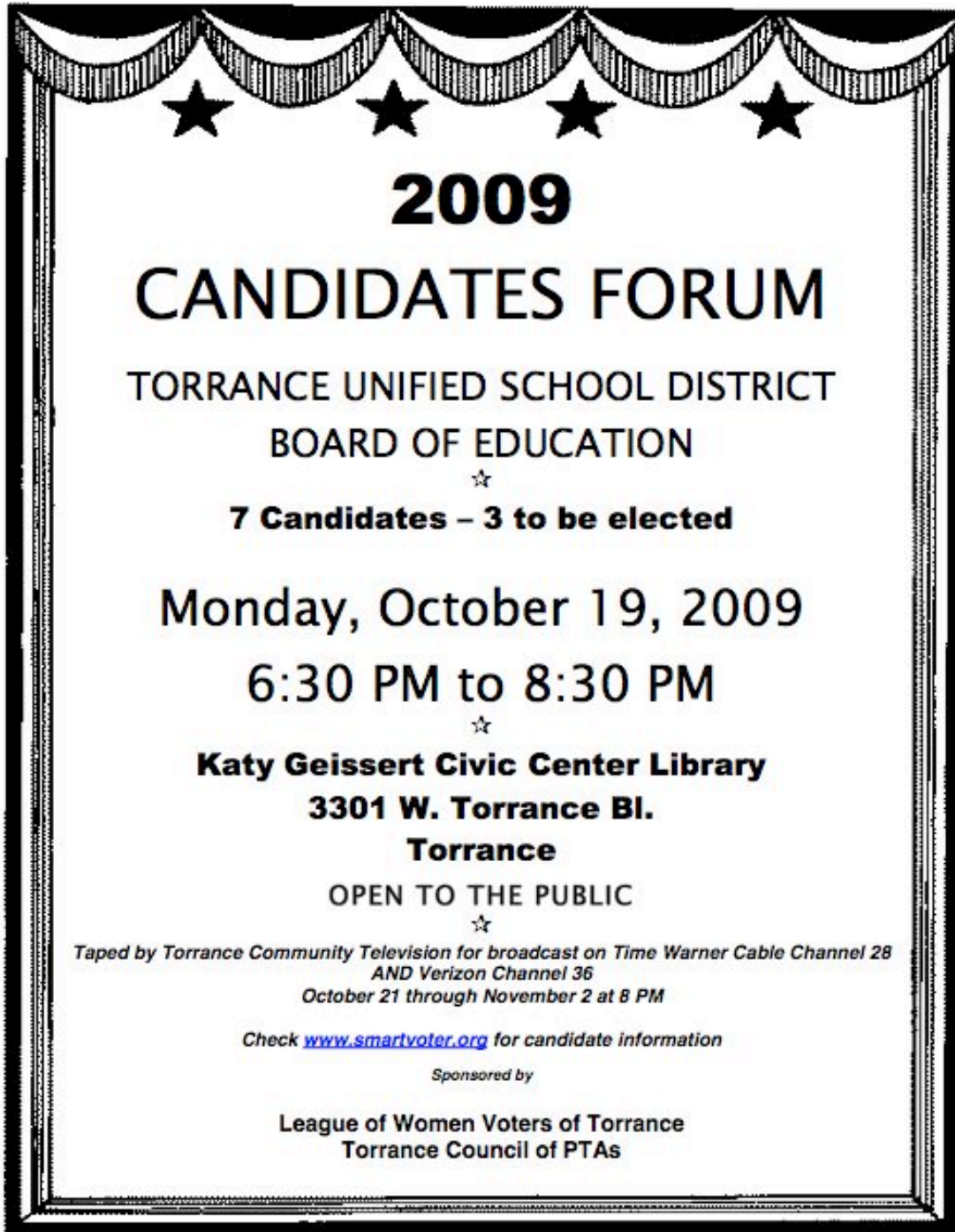
A Regional Workshop sponsored by LWV California will be held on Saturday, October 10th in Covina. The Workshop will have a presentation about the need for Constitutional Reform in California and the role of the League. Contact Bonnie Hamlin at (515) 658-6212 for more information.

Election Reminders

Monday, October 19 is the last day to register to vote in the November 3, 2009, election. Voter registration forms are available at city clerk offices, libraries, fire stations, and post offices. LWVT will register voters at the Torrance Farmers' Market Saturday, October 10.

Voters can request Vote by Mail ballots (form is on the back of sample ballots) from Monday, October 5 through Tuesday, October 27. Ballots must be in the mail in time to reach the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk by 8 pm, November 3. Late ballots, regardless of postmark will not be accepted.

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



2009

CANDIDATES FORUM

TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

☆

7 Candidates – 3 to be elected

Monday, October 19, 2009

6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

☆

Katy Geissert Civic Center Library
3301 W. Torrance Bl.
Torrance

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

☆

*Taped by Torrance Community Television for broadcast on Time Warner Cable Channel 28
AND Verizon Channel 36
October 21 through November 2 at 8 PM*

Check www.smartvoter.org for candidate information

Sponsored by

League of Women Voters of Torrance
Torrance Council of PTAs

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



CANDIDATES FORUM
FOR
LOMITA CITY COUNCIL

6 Candidates – 3 to be elected

Wednesday, October 14, 2009
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Lomita City Council Chambers
24300 Narbonne Avenue
Lomita

Open to the Public

Sponsored by:
City of Lomita
League of Women Voters of Torrance

√ www.smartvoter.org
for nonpartisan election information



League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County News

Excerpts from a press release dated September 21, 2009, from the office of the Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk:

RR/CC Kicks-Off Unprecedented Effort to Modernize County Voting Systems Community Leaders, Election Advocates, Political Parties, and Local Election Officials Set Out to Define New Vision for the County's Future Voting Systems

Norwalk, CA—The Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office kicked off an unprecedented initiative aimed at creating a road map for the eventual overhaul of the County's aging voting systems...last Wednesday. The Voting Systems Assessment Project was the focus of an all day symposium hosted at the California Institute of Technology titled "*Technology, Diversity, and Democracy: The Future of Voting Systems in Los Angeles County*," with support from the Caltech-MIT Voting Technology Project. The event gathered more than 100 community leaders, election advocates, voters, political party representatives, and election administrators (representing city, county, state, and federal levels) to discuss and identify the current and future needs a new voting system will have to meet in serving the County's more than four million registered voters....

The event featured focus group discussions where participants tackled core voting systems issues such as accessibility, security & accuracy, usability, and flexibility. The goal of the focus groups was to allow the diverse stakeholders to define the needs and principles by which each of these factors can be measured, specifically as it pertains to the unique needs of Los Angeles County....

Among the organizations participating in the forum was the League of Women Voters. [Twelve members from the League participated according to the LWVC website.—Ed.] ...

Los Angeles County is one of the nation's largest counties and includes some of the most diverse election jurisdictions in the country. Its electorate is larger than voting populations in thirty-eight of the fifty states in the union. Additionally, the County provides election information and assistance in six different languages other than English (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese), in compliance with the Voting Rights Act. Many of these complexities are not unique to

Los Angeles County but they are compounded not only by the size and diversity of the jurisdiction but also by the current state of its voting system. Through this project the Registrar plans to outline a strategic plan for the County Board of Supervisors and Chief Executive Office, which will present a series of recommendations aimed at identifying and implementing a new voting system for Los Angeles County voters.

The first convening served as a starting point to identify the fundamental principles that will drive subsequent roundtables specifically focused on ease of use, technology, legal requirements, and regulatory framework. The meetings to be held October through December of 2009 will draw on a diverse array of experts, from computer scientists, academics, and other voting technology experts to policy makers and regulatory agencies – to contribute to the planning effort. A parallel dialogue with voters, students and community organizations will continue throughout the project. The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk will invite voters to provide input by creating a project page on its website—www.lavote.net.

About the League

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 and advocacy. 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.

League of Women Voters of California News

Redistricting Implementation

The following is reprinted from the LWVC Redistricting Implementation document dated September, 2009, and located on the LWVC website.

Background: What Is Redistricting?

Every 10 years, after the federal census, new districts must be drawn for governmental legislative bodies. Under Proposition 11, the Voters First Act, California state Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts will be drawn by a "citizens' commission" rather than by the legislature, thereby removing direct political interests from the process. This will be a vitally important improvement to our election systems in California.

The Commission. There will be a 14-person citizens redistricting commission, politically balanced (5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, 4 others). Commissioners will be chosen for their impartiality, analytical and personal skills, and to reflect our state's demographic and geographic diversity. In addition, Proposition 11 lists certain conflicts of interest that would make a person ineligible to serve on the commission. Applications (online) to become commissioners will be accepted from December 15, 2009 to February 12, 2010. The final selection process will be completed by December 31, 2010.

The Work of the Commission. The commission's work will begin in January 2011, and the district maps must be completed by September 15, 2011. After organizing itself, the commission will engage staff, both management and technical (demographic), and possibly consultants. Following receipt of the census data from the federal government, the commission will hold meetings at various locations around the state to hear public input about how their communities should be represented. Then the staff under the guidance of the commission will prepare preliminary electoral district maps, based on the mapping criteria established by Proposition 11.

These preliminary maps will be published for public review and comment, and further hearings will be held to hear such comment directly. Emphasis is placed on making the redistricting process open and transparent to the public. After considering all comments, the electoral district maps will be revised as necessary, and then approved by the commission. Approval will require at least three votes each from the Democratic, Republican and other commissioners to assure its nonpartisan nature.

Find more information on redistricting at www.lwvc.org and on the commission at www.bsa.ca.gov



LWVC Supports Preregistration by 17 Year Olds

Lola Acosta, President of the League of Women Voters of Sacramento County, representing the League of Women Voters of California, spoke in favor of and urged the Governor to sign Assembly Bill 30, which allows 17 years olds to preregister to vote. She noted that nearly half of the 18 to 24 age bracket are not registered to vote. Believing that all those eligible to vote should "cast an informed vote," LWVC also believes it should be easy to register and re-register. "Under current state law, some 17-year-olds already can preregister if they will turn 18 before the next election. But all other 17-year-olds cannot.... Under AB 30, teachers of American government could preregister all 17 year old students when they are studying civics and discussing issues, candidates and the election process in class, simplifying current practice."

[Source: LWVC website]

League of Women Voters of the United States News

LWVUS Opposes Amendment Intended to Block Carbon Pollution Regulation

LWVUS, collaborating with several environmental groups, in September sent a letter to senators opposing Senator Murkowski's revised appropriations amendment to Appropriations Bill HR 2996, which concerns carbon dioxide pollution and the Clean Air Act.

"The filed amendment's spending limitation would go well beyond blocking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from curbing carbon dioxide pollution from power plants, refineries, and other big "stationary sources." It also would block EPA from implementing the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA*. . . . If this amendment passes, EPA could not issue the historic consensus standards that President Obama announced in May with the support of the auto makers, the UAW, states, and the environmental community."

LWV and the 2010 Census

LWVUS is an official partner in the 2010 US Census and encourages local and state members to get involved in the Complete Count Committees in their communities. "The CCC program consists of community and government leaders dedicated to building awareness of the 2010 Census." For more information about the committees, contact zarguedas@lwv.org.

In July Torrance Mayor Frank Scotto appointed a 2010 Census Complete Count Ad Hoc Committee from a pool of interested applicants. The committee has met once and will meet again October 15 at 4 pm in the City manager's Assembly Room to discuss the 2010 Census Outreach Plan and to schedule upcoming events.

[Sources for this page: LWVUS and City of Torrance websites]

Protecting Our Privacy

LWVUS partnered with more than 30 other groups in writing a letter to several senators commending them for introducing legislation amending "many provisions of law that have diminished Americans' privacy in the last eight years" and urging the Act's passage. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Patriot Act and subsequent legislation granted the government much broader powers of surveillance of the American people. The legislation that is now being considered is S.1686, the Judiciously Using Surveillance Tools in Counterterrorism Efforts (Justice) Act. Among its measures, it "increases protections for communication such as phone calls and emails. . . . Provides reasonable safeguards for sensitive records. . . . and ensures that secret searches [of homes and businesses] do not become the norm by limiting the circumstances in which this power is available."

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

- Oct. 1, 7-9 pm Board Meeting (Call for location)
 Oct. 10, 9:30-2:30 pm LWVC workshops, Covina Woman's Club
 Oct. 13, 11:30 am Congresswoman Jane Harman, State of the Region address, \$40 luncheon, Torrance Marriott, rsvp 310-540-5858
 Oct. 14, 7-9 pm Lomita City Council Candidates Forum, Lomita City Hall
 Oct. 19, 6:30-8:30 pm TUSD Candidates Forum, Torrance Civic Center Library
 Oct. 24, 3 pm South Bay LA 350 Climate Action Manhattan Beach Pier
 Nov. 3 Election Day, Lomita City Council, TUSD
 Nov. 5, 7-9 pm Board Meeting (Call for location)
 Dec. 3 Board Meeting & Holiday Potluck Lola Ungar's home



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Torrance, CA 90508

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Time Dated