



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

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

Tel. 310-223-689 email lwv.torrancearea@um.att.com

LWVTA *Voter*

September 2011

Calendar

Thursday, September 1, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting***

Saturday, September 10, 2011, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Annual Fall Kickoff, hosted by PVP League,
 Doubletree Hotel, Torrance

Thursday, September 22, **LWVTA's Wahoo's Eat to Educate Day** Present the flyer when you go at Wahoo's Fish Tacos (corner of Torrance Blvd and Amie) on September 22nd . Wahoo's is donating 20% of the ticket values of what you eat on that day (excluding alcohol).

Tuesday, October 4, 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. **Candidates Forum - Lomita City Council**, Lomita City Council Chambers, 24300 Narbonne Avenue, Lomita, Sponsored by: City of Lomita & League of Women Voters Torrance Area

Thursday, October 6, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting***

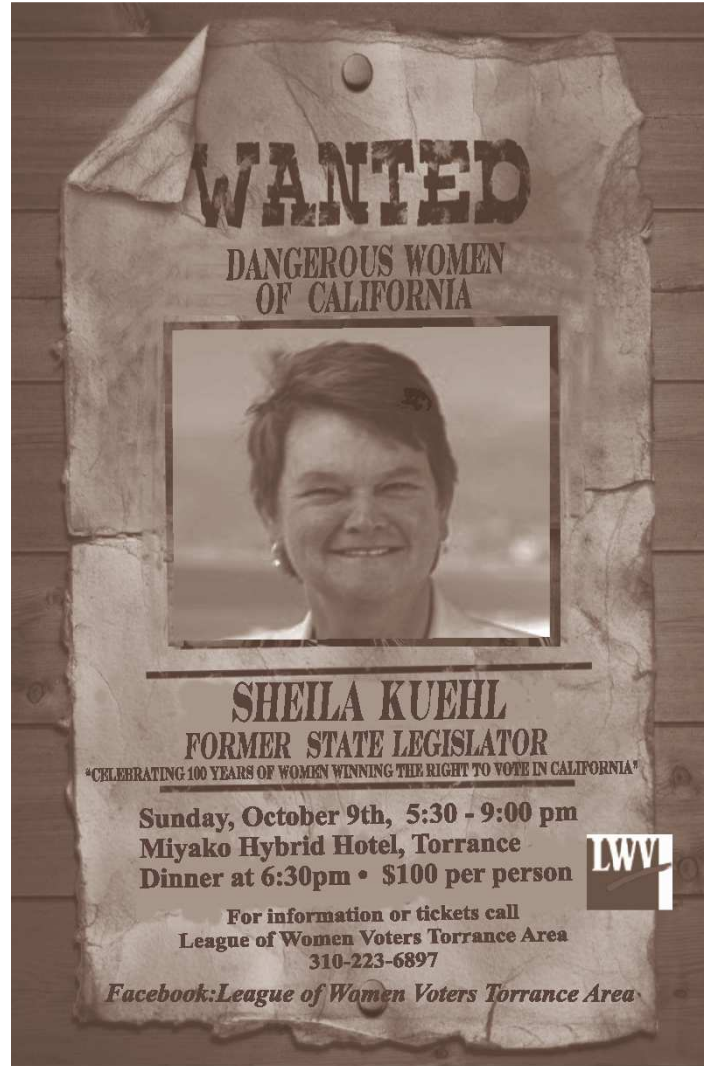
Sunday, October 9, 5:30-9 p.m. **Dangerous Women of California** : The Centennial of Women Winning the Right to Vote, Miyako Hybrid Hotel, 21381 S Western Ave, Torrance

Monday, October 10, **100th Anniversary of Women winning the vote in California**

Saturday, October 22, **LAC/LWV Fall League Day - Redistricting**, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. , Rio Honda Country Club

Thursday, November 3, 7 p.m. - **Board Meeting***

*(Call for location)



Contents

Calendar 1
 Education Report 2
 President's Message..... 3
 Federal Role in Education 3
 Legislative Interview 6

You are cordially invited!
This is one of the most exciting events we have had in many a year. Do not miss it. Members' invitations will be arriving shortly.

Your contribution includes a donation of \$60 to the LWVCalifornia EdFund (LWVTA's account), a 501(c)(3) organization, to support its efforts for voter education and involving citizens in government.

Education Report By Tom Rische

This month's comments from Torrance Supt. George Mannon:

1. What's new on the school budget scene? Nothing has really changed. We are waiting for Dec. 15, when the State will announce whether or not there will be mid-year reductions based upon the State revenue.
2. How big is the budget this year? \$173,305,000 How does it compare with last year's--and the all-time high? 2010-2011 budget was \$171,505,000 2007-2008 budget was \$204,750,021 Are mid-year changes expected? It is almost impossible to predict at this point. We will be monitoring state revenues each month as they are announced.
3. What fall enrollment is expected? 23,918, about 200 students less than 2010-2011
4. Hull school's reopening is set Aug. 31. What arrangements for reopening are set? There is a dedication ceremony on August 31st at 5:30 at the school. The Breeze article Wednesday, Aug. 3, was pretty good, but it had the number of middle schools in TUSD incorrect, since we have 8, not 4. The building of Hull is a celebration for the entire community.
5. What effect do you think class size has on teaching? It makes it much more difficult for teachers to manage and supervise larger classes. I think high school English teachers are placed in an impossible position of emphasizing writing, but not have the time to grade assignments. It does not work.
6. Any comments/ elaborations on the Breeze coverage recently of full-timers and long-term substitutes? Really a non-issue. We will issue temporary contracts to teachers if enrollment holds at the projection.
7. Any opinions on Diane Ravitch's "Death and Life of the Great American School System: how testing and choice are undermining education"? (That book will be used by an Omniflore class this fall; Tom Rische, moderator.) I had the pleasure of meeting her and discussing her book last year. I think every American should read this book and recall that Diane has moved in her professional career as an advocate of charter schools to now believing they are attributing to the demise of public schools.
8. Any comments on anything that you would like to make? Keep up the fight. The financial crisis is far from over.

Special Thanks and Recognition

are extended to the following members who donated to the LWVTA and/or donated separately to the LWVTA EdFund

Ann Wittels	Margaret Carter
Celeste Bailey	Marilyn Van Oppen
Linda Brown	Pat Kromka
Dorothy Stewart	Patrick & Teresa Furey
Ethel Sellars	Richard Smisek
Kay White	Ruth Nadel
LaVonne & Kenneth Wuertz	Virginia Hilker

Donations totaled \$360 to the LWVTA & \$530 to the LWVTA EdFund!

Thank you all, Lola & Athena, Co-Presidents

Board of Directors 2011-12

Co-presidents: Lola Ungar* & Athena Paquette Cormier (Fundraising)*
 1st Vice President, Smart Voter: Pat Kromka*
 2nd Vice President, Voter Editor: Geneva Martin*
 Secretary: Kay White
 Treasurer: Sue Martin*

*Executive Committee

Directors

Action/Library/Transportation: Judith Gerber
 Communications: Sydne Morrison
 Health/Webmaster: Barbara Barker
 Membership/Land Use: Lola Ungar
 Natural Resources: Margaret Carter
 Social Policy/Education: Gerry Rische
 Voter Service/Pros & Cons: Jackie LaBouff
 At Large: Eunice Hargrove
 Public Relations/Facebook: Emma Simmons



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.

President's Message

Annual Fall Kickoff

This year the Palos Verdes Peninsula League will host the Annual Fall Kickoff event on **Saturday, September 10, 2011, 11 to 1 PM at the Doubletree Hotel, Torrance**, with speaker Kenneth Bennett from the L.A. County Registrar/Recorder's Office who will speak about *Choosing a New Voting System for L.A. County*. Some of our own League members have been working with the Registrar/Recorder during the past few years on this project and we will learn what our voting system needs, the options and the selection process. Reservations are \$30 and checks are due by Sept. 2. See the enclosed flier.

Dangerous Women of California

Do not miss this event on **October 9, 2011, 5:30-9 p.m. at the Miyako Hybrid Hotel, Torrance** when the Torrance Area League will host our very own Celebration and Fundraiser called *Dangerous Women of California* with the dynamic **Sheila Kuehl, former State Legislator, staunch supporter of women's rights and single payer healthcare, and former child TV actress on the Many Lives of Dobie Gillis. Jean Adelsman, former Breeze Managing Editor**, will be the Mistress of Ceremonies. Reservations are \$100 and limited to only 120 people so hurry and reserve your seat by sending your checks and donations to LWVTA, P.O. Box 964, Torrance, CA 90508. We also look forward to many opportunities to obtain vacation getaways and other auction items. Call Athena or me with any questions. See the enclosed **WANTED** flier.

Fundraising

LWVTA at **Wahoo's Eat to Educate day will be September 22nd** so present the flyer when you go for breakfast, lunch or dinner at Wahoo's Fish Tacos (corner of Torrance Blvd and Amie) on September 22nd. Wahoo's is donating 20% of the ticket values of what you eat on that day, excluding alcohol.

Education Events

Barbara Barker is working with the Learning with the LWVTA Steering Committee on a new series called, **"Learning with the League."** The committee will be working on a publicity campaign for the series including fliers, email messages, press releases, Facebook, etc. Elected and appointed officials in our represented cities will be

invited. Neighboring Leagues will be asked to include an advertisement in their newsletters. Our members will be asked that "each one bring one". We may be able to film the events to replay on local cable and youtube via our Facebook Page. If you are interested call or e-mail Barbara Barker.

Redistricting

Have you been following the gyrations of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission's plans for the state but especially for the South Bay? There is a great controversy concerning the splitting the vote of the residents of the City of Torrance where the residents of the Riviera area will be voting in separate districts from the rest of the city for the state Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives. Go to votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov or wedrawthelines.ca.gov to see the plans and to voice your opinion.

Sincerely,

Lola Ungar, Co-President

Federal Role in Education

At the Beach Cities League's September and October membership meetings they will be discussing and answering Consensus Questions to provide input to the National League of Women Voters Position on the "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education." Barbara Barker is interested in this topic and hopes that you will study the issue and attend both meetings. See their website for more information: <http://www.beachcities.ca.lwvnet.org/FederalRoleinEducation.html>

The first meeting is on: Tuesday, September 27, 2011, 7 - 9:30 p.m., Manhattan Village Mall Community Room 3200 Sepulveda Blvd., Manhattan Beach The Community Room is in the hallway adjacent to the restrooms near William Sonoma. Park in the rear and enter through the back door.

Topics for the September meeting will cover the History of Public Education, Common Core Standards and Assessment including Consensus Questions 1-9. The October 25th meeting will cover Equity and Funding (includes a discussion of special populations and early childhood education) including Consensus Questions 10-15.

DROP IN AND HELP RAISE MONEY FOR



September 22nd, 2011



3556 Torrance Blvd., #E
Torrance, CA 90503

Present this flyer and Wahoo's will donate 20% of
Your entire purchase to help support the
League of Women Voters

*Please remember to turn this flyer into the cashier to receive
credit. No flyers may be distributed in or around any
Wahoo's location at anytime.
Valid All Day

Wahoos.com

DROP IN AND HELP RAISE MONEY FOR



September 22nd, 2011



3556 Torrance Blvd., #E
Torrance, CA 90503

Present this flyer and Wahoo's will donate 20% of
Your entire purchase to help support the
League of Women Voters

*Please remember to turn this flyer into the cashier to receive
credit. No flyers may be distributed in or around any
Wahoo's location at anytime.
Valid All Day

Wahoos.com

**LWV FALL
KICK-OFF
MEETING!!!**

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 11 am to 1 pm
DoubleTree Hotel Torrance/South Bay, Salon A
21333 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503

SPEAKER: KENNETH BENNETT
from LA County Registrar/Recorder's Office

CHOOSING A NEW VOTING SYSTEM FOR LA COUNTY
what we need, options, & selection process

LUNCH MEETING Hosted by PVP LWV
\$30 per person, choose chicken or vegetarian,
send reservation & checks by Sept 2 to
LWV PVP, PO Box 2933, PVP 90274

Name _____ Lunch selection _____
Specific allergens _____
Enclosed is check for \$ _____ for _____ person(s)

Legislative Interview –

Assemblymember Betsy Butler – July 25, at her office in El Segundo with Joan Arias, LWVBC & Athena Paquette, LWVTA and Stephanie Molen, District Director, Office of Betsy Butler, Assemblymember 53rd District

After a brief introduction to the League of Women Voters and the goal of our Legislative Interviews, we asked Assemblymember Butler the following questions. Her responses follow the questions with Joan Arias' comments and definitions in *italics*.

1. Do you support efforts to increase transparency and provide more information to the public through such steps as requiring disclosure and quick reporting of all election-related spending?

Response: Yes! Campaign Finance Reform is critical. We need fair and accurate information with reasonable record keeping. It is unfortunate that our pilot project with the Secretary of State's Office did not succeed. There is currently a bill that would enable \$200 donations to go without being reported (at the present time, the limit on unreported donations is \$99; any donations \$100 and higher need to be reported).

(In response to a follow-up question about how she would like to control campaign financing or change policy and what changes she would make) There should be a set limit on campaign financing from whatever source or sources that are reported. We need to take Independent Expenditures out of the equation (in US elections, Independent Expenditures are political campaign communication which expressly advocates for the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate that is not made in cooperation, consultation or concert with or at the request or suggestion of a candidate, a candidate's authorized committee or a political party.)

(Assemblymember Butler talked about how she had been attacked with false accusations when she ran for Assembly and the money spent by her attackers on the 17 print brochures and materials that were sent to voters in the 53rd District. She also commented on the idea of limiting the money allowed on a campaign depending upon the office sought.)

We need to know where the money is coming from until we have true campaign finance reform. Real campaign finance reform could establish an overall limit on finances for campaigns no matter the source. The limits would be based on the level

of the office sought. That is, the limit able to be raised would be higher for Congressional elections and the Presidency as opposed to the State Legislature. By capping the amount of money spent on a campaign, we level the playing field and help diminish campaign negativity since the money is no longer unlimited. This would include self-contributions, corporate contributions and small donor contributions.

2. What can you do to help improve civic discourse and reduce the level of rancor and partisan bickering in national politics?

Response: We have our challenges in the State. Term limits and the last budget situation with the governor was interesting. We need to get rid of the 2/3 vote requirement to raise taxes because we can't pass tax increases without bipartisan support and this is problematic. Through the course of the discussions, a number of Republicans were on board but they were threatened by the party and radio talk show hosts Ken and John. Legislators were scared that they'd get their heads on a stick – that they would be targeted for recall as what happened last election.

There needs to be fair and non-biased media outlets. Somehow Democrats always allow others to have messages that hurt us. I am disappointed with this aspect of my party. We need better communication because the changes we need to look at are the long-term costs of a non-educated society, of poor health care and poor environmental control. I was (pleasantly) shocked when Proposition 16 ("New Two-Thirds Requirement for Local Public Electricity Providers - Initiative Constitutional Amendment") and Proposition 23 (the proposition that would have suspended AB 32, a 2006 law – The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 until the unemployment rate dropped to 5.5% or below for 4 consecutive quarters) both lost. Californians didn't accept that and that shows that voters are intelligent and that despite the investment by many corporations, it is possible to defeat such initiatives.

We need clear campaign finances and fair media coverage. When I ran for office, I did not want to go negative. Candidates and representatives on both sides are equally threatened by the blood sport nature of politics today and by the issues that have become so harsh deterring them completely from a life of public service. We have hour-long floor debates on such issues as open carry (*carrying loaded weapons openly*), same-sex

marriage, and other issues in which the fringe elements have taken over. Some of these discussions are unproductive and represent grandstanding from fringe elements. The attitude is anti-establishment, anti-incumbent. I don't know how to fix that! I'm a pretty conservative Democrat but I've become more liberal because we are combating an attitude that government is bad and yet we need a safety net. People need to be educated and feel safe in their communities. That's government.

We need campaign finance reform – that's where the rancor comes in. We need more information and a balanced media. The national media needs to mandate fair and balanced reporting.

3. What are your major priorities for the 2011-2012 Assembly?

Response: My major priorities are consumer fairness and awareness – banning toxic substances and working to keep families, especially children, safe. Also, to grow the job market. I have bills in play to prevent elder identity theft, establish veterans' courts and address job creation and green growth. I also am working on broadening the film tax credit so we stop California from hemorrhaging film jobs.

I will continue to work on consumer protection legislation and speak for those who don't have a voice. The chemical industry is against my BPA bill (*Bisphenol-A – a toxic substance used in "sippy cups"*).

(*When asked about bipartisan support and how she makes that happen:*) Most of my bills have passed with bipartisan support. I WORK my bills; I talk to my colleagues and am proud that members of both parties are helping me and speaking for my bills.

SB 173 – (*awaiting action in the Assembly and opposed by doctors and insurance companies*) requires that, following a mammogram, individuals with dense breast tissue be told that they have dense breast tissue, that dense breast tissue can obscure seeing a problem and other abnormalities on a mammogram, and that they may wish to discuss with their doctors the potential value of additional screenings.

(*When asked about how as a new member of the Assembly, she picks her issues:*) I want to fight for families, people without a voice. I campaigned on

these issues: energy, environmental issues, the elderly (this district has the fastest aging population in California), jobs – green jobs in particular.

When asked about term limits: Term limits are good but ours are too short. 12 years would be better. Even in the United States Congress, 30-year limits would be good. In the past, when you began a career in the California State Legislature new members didn't say anything for the first two years! You learned. Right now you need to know who you're working with. I believe that public service and politics is about working to make people's lives better, healthier and safer.

Additional Questions

1. Do you believe that Congress should delay or curtail enforcement of the Clean Air Act?

We should NOT delay the clean air bill (AB32) BUT what's scarier are the particulates we can't see. The air in the Central Valley and the Inland Empire causes huge asthma rates. Thank heavens we are addressing this problem.

2. Do you support repealing or limiting the newly enacted national health care legislation, the Affordable Care Act?

I'm totally for National Health Care. I want to work on it. We may need to implement it before we can get people to look at the long-term effects and costs. For example, when we expanded the film tax credits, we could see the positive results.

We need to work and be creative as a state instead of turning against one another. We live quarter to quarter and we need to turn that around and plan, strategize and build for the future. It will cost a lot less money in the long term.

Reported by Laura Herrera, Office of Betsy Butler, Assemblymember 53rd District

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

Smart Voter: <http://www.smartvoter.org/>

California: <http://ca.lwv.org/>

California Education Fund: www.cavotes.org

Los Angeles County: www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

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



League of Women Voters Torrance Area
Serving Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Lomita and Torrance
 Post Office Box 964
 Torrance, CA 90508

Address Service Requested
 Time Dated

JOIN THE LEAGUE

Be a part of an organization where smart, active leaders create lasting change in their communities.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Cell Phone _____

Email(s): _____

Check here if you want to begin or continue to receive your VOTER (newsletter) by E-MAIL.
 (E-mail saves us printing and postage expenses).

Dues paid to **LWVTA** automatically include membership at the national, state and county levels.

Please check membership category:

INDIVIDUAL DUES \$70
 HOUSEHOLD DUES \$105
 STUDENT DUES \$ 35
 CONTRIBUTION TO LWVTA \$ _____

(Dues + contribution are not tax deductible).

Contributions can be tax deductible by making out a separate check to the LWVTA EdFund. We are part of the LWVC Education Fund and can use these donations for Voter Service, public meetings and to offset some of our Voter (newsletter) expenses.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO **LWVTA EdFund**
 \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF ENCLOSED CHECK(S)
 \$ _____

Please send form and check payable to **LWVTA**

Mail to **LWVTA**, P. O. 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. **NOT FOR WOMEN ONLY**