



# LWV/LAC Summer County VOTER July/August 2005

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### BALLOT BRIEFING Sept 24, 2005,9:30 am-12 Hollenbeck Home, 573 Boyle Av, LA

Pros and Cons Briefing on the November 8, 2005 ballot measures is designed for Voter Service speakers personnel, and interested league members. Each Los Angeles county league should have representatives at this briefing

An Advocacy Training session is also to be held at Hollenbeck Home meeting. Local league presidents, as official spokespersons for their leagues, may want to attend the Advocacy training and have other local members cover the P/C briefing. All told, at least two representatives These ballot briefings are an excellent time to ask questions and clarify issues. They also offer a great chance to meet and talk with counterparts in other leagues over tea, coffees and nibbles. See you there! -- or alternately, at the LWV LA City presentation, September 29 at the Presbyterian Church on Wilshire Blvd just west of the LWV LACity office.

- Sept.13 LWV/LAC Board Meeting
- Sept.24 Ballot & Advocacy Briefing,Hollenbeck Home (see above)
- Sept.29 Ballot Briefing LWV LACity (ditto above)
- Sept.26 Enact Meeting TBA
- Oct. 1 LWVC Regional workshop So.Cal Riverside TBA

### BEGIN NOW \* PREPARING FOR SMART GROWTH

The County League is leading a study titled, *Preparing for Smart Growth in Land Use in the Unincorporated Areas of Los Angeles County*. The committee has produced a Study Guide that addresses all the aspects of why you need to care, become aware and get involved with land use happenings in the unincorporated areas of the County. As more development is approved in outlying areas of the County, more and more of your taxes will be needed to provide for the infrastructure and public services needed for those developing communities.

The Study Guides have been distributed to individual Local Leagues. If your League needs extra copies of any portion of the Study Guide, we can e-mail them to you at no charge. Request from ([skyhawk172@socal.rr.com](mailto:skyhawk172@socal.rr.com).) For extra copies of the printed Study Guide, your treasurer can order them for \$5.00 each from the same e-mail address.

During the past month, committee members interviewed Supervisor 5<sup>th</sup> District Mike Antonovich's deputies Paul Novak, Sussy Nemer, and Chief Deputy Kathryn Barger. They told us of the concerns of the Supervisor who is essentially the mayor of the largest unincorporated undeveloped areas of north LA County. We talked about land development proposals and how the Supervisor and his deputies confer

with local cities, town councils, and neighboring counties on a regular basis.

We also interviewed Director Frank Meneses, Russ Fricano and Susan Tae who talked about the current planning and subdivision process at the County Department of Regional Planning. We learned that a small staff must know and understand the different territories of the unincorporated areas, shuttle between long distances, and be responsible for all proposed or current development throughout the County's unincorporated areas.

**January 25, 2006 is the deadline for return of the consensus.** For that reason, local leagues will need to plan unit meetings in the next few months to study the issues in the unincorporated areas, as well as to compare and contrast local development issues in their own areas of influence.

Be sure to include in your calendar a special County League Day on Land Use planned for **Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM at the Buena Vista Library Community Room in Burbank.** The theme will be related to developments in the unincorporated areas with well known participants to aid you and your members with consensus building. Additional information will be provided in the next issue of the Voter  
~~Lola Ungar, Chair Land Use/Smart Growth Committee

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

**Hope you ordered your Pros and Cons from the State office before August 15 !!**



## LWVUS PRESIDENTS COUNCIL 2005

It was a pleasure to represent LWV/LAC at LWVUS Presidents June Council in Washington, DC. The major focus was on a 360° View of the League and on Civil Liberties. Several sessions featured the key activities for League success: *Visibility, Fundraising, Membership and Action*. LWVUS board members reported on activities under their responsibility during the year. Both a panel on Civil Liberties issues and a workshop on Balancing Liberty and Security illustrated the extent to which the national office and board acted on the program choice of the convention delegates in 2004.

**Gracia Hillman, Chair of the Election Assistance Commission (EAC.) was featured at the Sunday Plenary Her main point was that elections work fairly well for the 60% of Americans who typically vote and HAVA is addressing voters. But what can be done to engage the other 40% who rarely vote or are not even registered? Issues such as the choice of election day (a work day) and ID requirements limit participation. Hillman would like to see voting be more accessible to all people. Possibilities could include making Election Day a holiday and minimizing identification requirements.**

***HAVA, the Help America Vote Act***, written to solve problems experienced by the voting public and to help insure confidence in our elections, does the following:

- Mandates the EAC, composed of 2 Republicans and 2 Democrats, be charged with helping states comply with voting requirements and ensuring that voters are well-served.
- Gives the states the right and responsibility to implement voting laws.
- Requires one accessible voting device in each polling place by 2006.
- Calls for more and better pollworker training
- Directs the EAC to create standards for all voting machines. Those draft standards were just released in June 2005. (This is quite late for states and counties to purchase certified equipment in time for elections in 2006.)

Ms Hillman, Executive Director of LWVUS in the early 1990s, concluded that 60% turnout is nothing to be happy about. We need to work on engaging the other 40% of eligible Americans. She believes that outside civic groups such as the League need to ask how they can help elections officials make elections run more effectively and then work to accomplish that goal.

## VOTING RIGHTS ACT\*\* REAUTHORIZATION

August 6, 2005, marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1965 landmark Voting Rights Act (VRA) which banned poll taxes, voter literacy tests and other discriminatory tools used to prevent people from voting. The Act prohibits racial discrimination in voting and establishes the right to bilingual election materials. The VRA was renewed in 1982 and will be reviewed for reauthorization by Congress in 2005-06.

Several key temporary provisions which affect voting in California must be reviewed for renewal.

- Require California, Texas and New Mexico and many counties throughout the country to provide bilingual election procedures and materials for certain large minority populations. (Section 203 and 4(f)(4) *require L A County to provide election materials in seven languages.*)
- Require jurisdictions with histories of discriminatory behavior toward minorities in elections to submit any proposed changes to voting laws or procedures to the Department of Justice for approval. Changes must not impact minority voters negatively. (Section 5 *covers redistricting in state and local areas, at-large elections, re-registration requirements and polling place changes.*)
- Allow federal experts and poll observers to monitor jurisdictions with histories of voter exclusion. (Section 6-90 is used by a *number of legal centers or legal defense funds in L A to monitor polling places for bilingual poll workers, ballots, changes in polling place location, long lines.*)

**Congress should hold hearings on the reauthorization of the VRA to provide for public discussion and public record to ensure that the provisions survive constitutional scrutiny as being narrowly defined to address specific needs.**

As a member of California Voter Empowerment Circle and as LWV/LAC President, I attended a June meeting in Washington, DC, called to discuss plans and strategies to promote the reauthorization of the VRA. A rally with workshops was held in Washington on July 25-26. Organizations are encouraged to educate their lawmakers and to hold Community Forums during the next year to educate the public on the value of renewing the Voting Rights Act.

A public hearing will be conducted by the Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights under Law in Los Angeles in September. ~~**Margo Reeg**, LWV/LAC President  
@@



**County Health Care Facilities and Measure B**

The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (LACHCS) operates five hospitals (LAC/USC, Harbor/UCLA, Olive View/UCLA, King/Drew and Rancho Los Amigos). It also operates one multi-service ambulatory care center (High Desert Health System), six comprehensive health centers and more than a dozen other outpatient clinics. Each year LACDHS provides about 600,000 inpatient days; more than 2 million outpatient visits; 300,000 Emergency Department visits, 350,000 Public Health visits and 500,000 outpatient visits from 55 partners in its Public Private Partnership Program.

**Measure B Special Tax Revenue Fund for Year Ended 2004**

<b>County Hospitals</b>	
LAC+USC Medical Center	\$86,567,171
Harbor/UCLA Medical Center	27,533,821
King/Drew Medical Center	18,547,262
Olive View Medical Center	<u>7,351,746</u>
<b>Total County Hospitals</b>	<b>\$ 140,000,000</b>

<b>Non-County Trauma Hospitals</b>	
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center	\$ 1,361,272
Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital	427,597
Huntington Memorial Hospital	634,637
Long Beach Memorial Medical	1,322,619
Northridge Hospital	680,932
Providence Holy Cross	1,418,817
St. Francis Medical Center	1,710,365
St. Mary Medical Center	331,115
UCLA Medical Center	<u>122,385</u>
<b>Total Non-County Trauma Hospitals</b>	<b>\$ 8,009,739</b>

**County Health Care Division.**

On April 19 the LAC Board of Supervisors (BOS) directed Chief Administrative Officer David Janssen to draft an analysis *"of the advisability and implications, including fiscal, of separating Public Health from the Personal Health service components of the Department of Health Services (DHS) and creating separate departments for hospitals, health centers and emergency medical services"* (memo by CAO, 6/9/05). After receiving the report, the BOS voted on 6/28/05 to proceed with the division. Public Health Director Jonathan Fielding believes that the division could be finished by October. The main items listed for dividing DHS are 1) "concerns regarding the budgetary impact of the projected deficit from the

Personal Health Care Services (hospitals and clinics) on Public Health Services operations." 2) the different missions of Public Health and Personal Health ("Public Health's mission is to protect and improve the health of all 10 million Los Angeles County residents, while Personal Health's mission is to provide medical care for the medically indigent") and 3) "the size and complexity of various Public Health programs." The newly created Public Health Department will encompass Public Health Services, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy, Alcohol and Drug Programs Administration and Children's Medical Services. Currently Public Health programs account for approximately 19 percent of the DHS budget.

=====

Our Affordable Housing presenter at Popovers, Elizabeth Wright, (from SCANPH) did not have enough handouts at the workshop. If any member would like to download her presentation, please e-mail me at { [HYPERLINK "mailto:lake.d@sbcglolbal.net"](mailto:lake.d@sbcglolbal.net) } and I will get the connection for you.~~  
**Daphne Lake, LWV/LAC Voter Service Director**

## WHAT'S NEXT? COUNTY LIVELY ISSUES FOR 2006

County local leagues need to consider county issues as part of their program planning process. Once members suggest and a local board selects one or more issues to recommend to the county board for the LWV/LAC 2006-08 program, County Board can decide what to recommend to delegates at the 2006 convention. **Deadline for turning in county program planning suggestions is February 15, 2006.** Put this date on your calendars and schedule a planning session in time to meet the deadline.

**What's next?** The County Land Use Update study will wind up this year. The next study is up to members.

**Current issues of interest to members lead to discussion, then the choosing of one (or more) for study. Study leads to more discussion, which leads**

**to membership consensus and thus a new L WV position. Positions, adopted at conventions/annual meetings, are the basis for League action. Without positions agreed to by members, League cannot act, and therein lies League's strength. Our positions reflect member study and agreement. It all starts with "Lively Issues".**

**In the upcoming March 2006 convention, the LWV/LAC will consider new topics for study, or perhaps choose to update an existing position. What item at the county level should leagues be looking at for the next two years? Following are a few lively issues to think about. Other suggestions are encouraged. Speak up now!**

### Some Lively Issues for 2006:

- The Justice System, Superior Courts and Judiciary
- Health Care in LA County
- Mental Health Care in LA County
- Law Enforcement in LA County. (Have we ever looked at the Sheriff's department and our jails?)
- Update LWV/LAC Grand Jury position in light of the new system having been in place for several years.
- No new study, but emphasis on action in education, health care, or other selected current positions.

=====

**HELP FOR THE HOMELESS** For assistance, refer anyone who is homeless to CALWORKS at (877) 481-1044.

Gwen Cochran, LWV/LAC treasurer, has been serving as a Los Angeles County Consumer Affairs Department Consumer Counselor since 1992. She wants us to know about new county programs aimed at reducing homelessness and offers FYI this excerpt from a recent *Los Angeles County Consumer Affairs Department Consumer Counselor Newsletter*.

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) has two new programs, one to help the already homeless, and a second for those about to lose their rental unit. Homeless families can stay in hotels/motels while they seek permanent housing. Those at risk of losing their rental unit are offered rental subsidy assistance to keep them in their homes or apartments.

**Homeless Assistance Program** --provides 14 days of temporary homeless assistance to allow eligible families to stay in hotels/motels while they look for permanent housing.

#### **Who qualifies?**

- Families applying for CALWORKS who meet the criteria of "apparent eligibility"
- Families on CALWORKS
- Families with an adult who is timed out and the children continue to be eligible for CALWORKS
- Families who have exhausted their homeless assistance benefits and are now homeless again.

**Rental Subsidy Assistance Program** --provides rent money to eligible families, a once-in-a-lifetime availability.

#### **Who qualifies?**

- Families applying for CALWORKS who meet the criteria of "apparent eligibility"
- Families on CALWORKS
- Children of families who are eligible for CALWORKS

---

---

## REDISTRICTING-Where WE Stand

In 1987 and 1988, the League of Women Voters conducted an extensive study of the redistricting process in California. We immediately applied our resulting position in support of Proposition 119, an unsuccessful attempt to establish an independent commission to draw district lines in California. The next two redistricting plans drawn by the state legislature (in 1991 and 2001) either were rejected by the courts or were widely criticized as being fundamentally flawed. Today we find ourselves in the middle of a sustained public debate on the future of redistricting in California, a debate that will continue for some time.

What does the League have to say about the way California should redistrict? In brief, we support a redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and in the House of Representatives, with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny of the process. And we support redistricting by a bipartisan commission rather than by the legislature.

The standards on which a redistricting plan should be based, regardless of who has responsibility for redistricting, should include (1) substantially equal population, (2) geographic contiguity and (3) protection of the voting strength of a racial or linguistic minority from dilution.

To the extent possible, these standards should also include respect for legal boundaries of cities and counties, and preservation and protection of "communities of interest." On the other hand, the standards should not consider the protection of incumbents or the preferential treatment of any political party.

The League places a good deal of emphasis on the importance of the structure of the redistricting process. It is clear that members feel that how redistricting is done is even more important than who

does it. League positions on opportunities for citizen participation in government decision making, the need for adequate notice of proposed actions and the need for open meetings are all crucial to member understanding of what constitutes a fair redistricting process.

The League believes that the redistricting process should include (1) specific time lines for the steps leading to adoption of the redistricting plan, (2) public hearings on the proposed plan, (3) an automatic nonjudicial backup procedure in the event of deadlock and (4) a requirement that any redistricting plan drawn by the legislature be adopted by more than a simple majority vote.

Members prefer redistricting by a commission over redistricting by the legislature. Balance, however, is considered important and commission members should reflect California's diversity of population and varied geography, as well as a balance of economic, social and partisan interests. Members conclude that a redistricting commission would make fair and effective representation a more likely outcome than the decisions of legislators, whose self-interests seem to dominate over their concern for fairness and the common good. Given only two practical choices---legislature or commission---the choice of a commission reflected members dissatisfaction with the legislature's previous redistricting performance as much as enthusiasm for a commission per se.

The questions of who should redistrict California and how such redistricting lines should be drawn are complex. All the criteria involve difficult and controversial definitions and decisions. The League position does not promise panaceas or quick fixes. Rather, it represents a thoughtful reflection on a complex political process and offers balanced suggestions for a road map to navigate the difficult journey.

*~~Chris Carson, LWVC Government Director*

---

---

The League of Women Voters welcomes new members, both men and women, who are citizens of voting age. Associate membership is open to all others.
--



CALIFORNIA DISTRICTS

**July/August 2005 County VOTER  
League of Women Voters  
Los Angeles County**

**Margo Reeg, President  
Liz Allen, Editor  
{ HYPERLINK "mailto:allenlwv@aol.com" }**

We're on the Web!! { HYPERLINK "http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org/" }

=====

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE LWV/LAC VOTER**

**Sign Up Today!! For hard copy subscriptions, the subscription is \$10.00 per year; contact Dorothy Larson. If you receive it by e-mail, it's free!!**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local League** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_