



# LWV/LACounty

An Interleague Organization

# VOTER

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

An Interleague Organization — Beach Cities • Claremont Area • East San Gabriel Valley • Glendale-Burbank • Long Beach Area  
Los Angeles • Palos Verdes Peninsula-San Pedro • Pasadena Area • Santa Monica • Torrance • Whittier

Editor: Mary Ellen Barnes Website:<http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org> Email:[LWVLACounty@msn.com](mailto:LWVLACounty@msn.com) August 2010

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2010-2011**

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### Nominations

Arlene Block

### Calendar 2010

Wed. Sept 15.....County Board Meeting - Location TBA

Sat, Sept 25 .....Pro/Con Ballot Measure Training  
Hollenbeck Palms

Wed, Oct 6.....County Board Meeting 9:30 - 1:30 TBA

Wed, Nov 3.....County Board Meeting 9:30 - 1:30 TBA

Sat, Nov 20.....Jail Study Presentation, 9:30-2:00  
Taix Restaurant

Wed, Dec 1.....Holiday Lunch and Board Meeting TBA

Sat, Jan 29, 2011.....Winter League Day - Rio Hondo Country

### Inside this issue...

President's Message.....Page 2

Incarcerated Parents Project .....Page 3

L.A. Reentry Roundtable Meeting (Jail Study).....Page 4

Protecting Open Space in L.A. County..... Page 5

Los Angeles LWV-Heritage Square Event.....Page 5

Popovers Report.....Page 6

LWVUS Convention Report.....Page 6, 7

LWV Speaker Training Flyer.....Page 8

## From the President's Desk...

The halcyon days of summer – I don't think this phrase applies to League members! New boards are organizing, planning for the coming year of program and action. We may not be holding summer programs, but we're still busy.

The County board is has some organizing to do. We have accepted with regrets the resignation of Amy Bishop Dunbar, who was elected to the board at the 2010 convention. We welcome Phyllis O'Connor (LWV Long Beach), appointed to the board for a one-year term. She will be handling Health Care. The board has lost some of its long-term memory: last year, Dorothy Larson (Pasadena Area) became an off-board member; this year Carol Slavin (Pasadena Area) and Katherine Dunlap (Los Angeles) left the board. Each of these women has served many years as directors on the County board, as well as in their local Leagues, and we miss their expertise and knowledge of County board operations. Carol has been our observer for the Board of Supervisors, and Katherine was the Program Director. Those two positions are now open – we welcome volunteers and/or suggestions.

Election season is coming up. The Fall County League Day on September 25 will present training on ballot measure pro/con presentations. Watch for a flyer in the September County Voter. That issue will also include the LWV positions on the measurer. But you can get a jump-start on that information and more by visiting the State League's website.

The County Jail Study is well underway with the workshop at Popovers. Each League received two copies of the outstanding resource book prepared by co-chairs Betsey Coffman (Claremont) and Vi Iungerich (Palos Verdes). We are in the process of finalizing consensus questions. On Saturday, November 20, Betsey and Vi will hold a training session for local League jail study committee leaders and members. This will be a lunch meeting at Taix restaurant in LA. Reservation forms will be in the October County Voter. At this time, the target date for completing the local meetings and consensus May 1, 2011.

State program planning is also coming up. Presidents will receive information from LWVC on this activity. Again, the state website is a good resource.

Save the date in January for Winter County League Day. Our speaker will be Jean Ross, director of the California Budget Project. She is both knowledgeable and an excellent speaker. This will be a real treat – if one can refer to anything relating to the California State budget as a treat! January 29, 2011.

This is going to be another big year for League with elections, redistricting implementation, the jail study, another state budget crunch, health care reform, and more. Your Leagues will have a lot to do!

*Nancy*

### Save the Date - Fall County League Day

#### Ballot Measure Pro/Con Speaker Training

Saturday, September 25, 2010

9:30 a.m. to noon

Hollenbeck Palms Activity Room

**Friends Outside and L. A. County Agencies Introduce  
Incarcerated Parents Project at Century Regional Detention Center  
By Betsey Coffman, Co-Chair Jail Study**

On June 17, 2010, Friends Outside, an organization which works with Los Angeles County Jail inmates and their families to alleviate problems associated with family members' incarcerations, held a meeting to introduce The Incarcerated Parents Project. In conjunction with the L.A County Department of Children and Family Services and the Sheriff's Department, Friends Outside presented plans to reduce children's placement in foster care when parents are incarcerated by arranging supervised visitation, assistance with dependency court matters, liaison between incarcerated parents and their children's case workers, and services for these children and their caregivers. Since foster care placement is more apt to occur when mothers are incarcerated, this program is being introduced at the County's only women's jail – the Century Regional Detention Center or CRDC.

Poignant talks by a mother and her adult daughter highlighted the importance of maintaining bonds between parent and child. They described how their visits during the mother's incarceration helped the Mom to change her behavior and the daughter to realize she was loved and would be reunited with her mother.

The existing TALK program, in which CDRC women attend a series of classes to learn about child development and parenting, will continue. In these sessions the women prepare activities for playing and interacting with their children and are allowed visits without the usual restriction of a glass barrier between inmates and visitors.

Prior to the presentation of the Friends Outside and County agencies' plans, a CRDC Deputy Sheriff --Sergeant David Haney-- played piano medleys, while attendees were offered a buffet lunch and exhibits containing information about the sponsoring groups. Subsequent to the

program, attendees divided into two groups for a tour of the CRCD facility. Sgt Haney's group visited one of the modules or "pods" where women inmates were housed. At this time, the women were in their cells surrounding a central common room, with the exception of the many women who occupied bunk beds around the perimeter of the central room. There was a woman Deputy at a table in this room in an area marked off by red tape, which the inmates must receive permission to enter. There was a vending machine, which apparently contained food items which the incarcerated women could purchase with plastic cards, if they had money on deposit with the jail system. The women seemed curious about our presence, with many standing behind their cell doors or propped up on their elbows in their bunks looking at us. The Sergeant pointed out a toilet and bathing area – I walked over and looked in, and it was clean and tidy. There was an adjoining recreation-exercise area, which we did not enter. According to a report I had read in the 2009 26<sup>th</sup> *Semi-annual Review by the Police Assessment Resource Center (PARC)*, this area contained a basket ball hoop, chairs and telephones. The module looked very much as described in the PARC report, which stated that these units were designed for 96 inmates, but their capacity has been increased to 124 with the addition of the bunks. The one exception was the lights were dimmed, while the report described the modules as well lit. I concluded that this might be a rest period for the inmates. The most notable aspect of this unit visit seemed to me to be the calmness of the atmosphere, and the ease with which the Sergeant spoke with one or two of the inmates, and they with him. On leaving, I remarked that being incarcerated here did not seem as bad as I would have expected. He assured me that he had worked in many jails, and this was the best. Sgt. Haney seemed to like his work and appeared proud of the facility and how it was operated.

**LA RE-ENTRY ROUNDTABLE MEETING (PRISON/JAIL REPORT)****By Viola Iungerich Co-Chair Jail Study**

The LA Re-entry Roundtable met June 2 at the Tarzana Treatment Center in Tarzana. This group provides information about both the LA Jail system and the State Prison System. Jean Thomson from the League has been active with this group and was also present. The meeting this month focused on a presentation about the AB900 Secure Community Reentry Facilities Bill—a bill which will fund the building of Community Reentry Facility for the State Prison System. These are small prisons, to be built to house about 500 inmates each for the last year of a prison sentence in their home community. They will be maximum security facilities but will not have fences or barred windows or look like prisons. They will have a good deal of program space and the idea is to have prisoners in programs where they will have intense help to help curb the recidivism of inmates. The recidivism of the inmates from prison systems, of course, impacts the jail system as those rearrested are put into the county jail until they have a hearing that sends them back to the prisons.

So far, the state and the developers have not been able to identify any sites for LA County. If sites are not selected by 2014, this legislation will be terminated for any facility that is not “in the pipeline”. Other states, particularly Michigan, have implemented a program such as this very successfully. Instead of building more prisons, they have focused on cutting down on the recidivism rate of inmates with these programs. Recidivism declines about 30% with inmates who go through such a program and the program is designed to take those inmates most likely to be rearrested for treatment. There are other fringe benefits from this program as well. Communities find that violent crime decreases, there is less need for police protection, court expenses are decreased and there is less overcrowding in the jails and prisons in general. And of course the functioning of these facilities adds to the employment of the area where it is located and to businesses and services that supply them. Local community programs would play a big supporting/interactive role and be included in the overall programming of these prisons.

LA County has about 1/3 of the state’s parolees, and about 50% of all parolees are returned to prison within three years. However, LA County has not yet committed to this program and no sites have yet been identified. In other counties, sites have mostly been located in industrial areas (these areas being most acceptable to the counties participating).

Another program was also mentioned for the Women’s Jail. Friends Outside has received funding to facilitate incarcerated mothers visiting with their children. This is being started with the cooperation of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) who provides information about the children and their caretakers to a case manager. For now only children serviced in the Lakewood Office of DCFS are eligible. The hope is to support a relationship with the mothers and children and to support the women in their return to the community. Eventually the program might hold 300 visits a month in the women’s jail. Although there is a child-parent program TALK at the women’s jail, it is restricted to relatively few women. This program would serve more women in the jail.

The Center for Health Justice has also opened a new drop-in site very near the Men’s Jail. It will shortly be opened from 7 AM to 10 PM five days a week. It will be a center for people leaving jail to receive information about programs, referrals for housing and health facilities, jobs, etc.

## Protecting Open Space in LA County

John Sullivan, Natural Resources, LWV/LAC

With the arrival of summer, demand for open space will increase. People will seek open space for recreation, refreshment, and for enjoyment. The common space available to us is limited and often quickly becomes congested. To provide just one example of the demand for open space, 320 cars were counted recently in the parking area of the Claremont foothills park.

In the L. A. basin, open space has largely given way to development at the same time that population has been increasing and, along with it, the need for more open space. Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize winner in Economics (2009), for her work on common property resources, has often stressed the need for local control and local management. (See, e.g., *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*) Ostrom has focused on the need for institutional development to protect or create commons. Fortunately, people in the basin have the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC <http://www.rmc.ca.gov/>) to help in protecting our common areas. Its mission is to "...preserve open space and habitat in order to provide for low-impact recreation and educational uses, wildlife habitat restoration and protection, and watershed improvements within our jurisdiction." RMC is part of the State of California's Resources Agency. Its territory is eastern Los Angeles County and western Orange County.

RMC recently celebrated its ten year anniversary and also dedicated the Hilda L. Solis River Outlook. Hilda Solis, Secretary of Labor, has served the San Gabriel Valley in Congress. A group from the LWV of the Claremont Area attended the ceremony. There were a number of speakers at the event and two themes dominated the presentations: we do need open space and water connects us in complex ways. For example, the mayor of Azusa noted that much of the debris at the beach comes down the San Gabriel River.

His city has organized volunteer groups to go down to the Long Beach area to help with beach cleanup, On the day of the ceremony, water was being released from a dam in the mountains in order to recharge aquifers in the valley. River flow connects us in a variety of ways. It recharges groundwater, but it also carries garbage from upstream areas down to the ocean.

The work of the RMC, then, serves to provide us with recreational space by protecting existing open space or helping to purchase property privately held and making it available for public use. LWV of the Claremont Area has received a grant from RMC to do a feasibility study on the Thompson Creek area in the northeast part of Claremont. The ultimate goals would be to preserve this area as open space for recreational and educational uses and to contribute to the recharge of the local aquifer. In sum, Ostrom's concern for protecting and properly managing commons is being carried out by the RMC and groups that it funds. The goal is to allow all of us to connect with nature and to learn from that experience. You can visit the Hilda L. Solis River outlook by taking the 210 Freeway and exiting on Azusa Ave/CA-39 and heading north.

### An Invitation to Celebrate Women's Equality Day

The Los Angeles LWV is celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's right to vote by holding a picnic potluck at the Heritage Square Museum on August 26. Everyone is invited. Bring a dish to share with 8-10 people and \$5 for paper goods and beverages. Participants are also asked to give a \$10 donation to the museum, which has waived its regular rental fees for the event. A walking tour of the museum will be provided. The Museum's current exhibit is "Their Rights and Nothing Less: A Celebration of Women's Suffrage."

Please RSVP to Carlos Medina (323) 356-3567, or to the LA League office (213) 368-1616. Heritage Square Museum, 3800 Homer St., Highland Park, CA 90031

## Popovers 2010

Sunny skies greeted over 85 Leaguers and guests on Saturday, July 31, for Summer County League Day – our annual “Popovers in Pasadena.” Participants enjoyed workshops, an excellent speaker, and a tasty salad lunch.

In a workshop on redistricting, Chris Carson (Glendale/Burbank LWV) brought participants up to date on the process of forming the Citizens Commission, and on the next action steps for LWV. Jennifer Waggoner (LWVCA Board) led a workshop on communications, with an emphasis on the new venues technology has made available. Special thanks to Jennifer for coming from northern California to be part of our League Day. The Jail Study workshop, led by co-chairs Betsey Coffman (Claremont LWV) and Vi Iungerich (Palos Verdes LWV), introduced the study background material and began the preparation for Local League studies. Presidents and treasurers met together with Nancy Mahr (LWVLA County ILO) and Tom Carson (Glendale/Burbank LWV and County League Budget Chair) to review some League basics and go over specific financial reporting requirements.

The Hon. Judge Michael Nash, Presiding Judge of the County Juvenile Court, was the keynote speaker. He gave an overview of the divisions and work of the Juvenile Court and the ways in which the Court seeks to bring permanency to the lives of the youth and families that interface with the Court. He believes that the Juvenile Court system has the potential to help children and families in a positive way, and he has implemented court reforms that work to this end. Communication and coordination among the various courts and with public agencies is an important element if effective assistance to children and families. Judge Nash noted that the budget crunch in Sacramento has put funding in question for the 1600 youngsters in the County’s youth camps and the 1200 youths in Juvenile Hall. He suggested that the League could be supportive of the Court by lobbying the state Legislature and the Board of Supervisors for adequate money to serve people in need.

It was a successful Summer League Day. And the popovers were delicious, as usual!

## LWVUS Convention 2010 by Nancy Mahr

### *A History of Change. A Future of Hope.*

Atlanta welcomed over 700 LWV delegates, guests, and staff to Convention 2010, held June 11-15. We renewed acquaintance with League friends at the opening Meet & Greet event on Friday evening, enjoying the opportunity to socialize before the whirlwind of meetings, caucuses, and workshops that would fill the following three and a half days.

The first plenary session was opened with remarks from Congressman John Lewis, 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Georgia. He commended the League for its work in voter education and getting out the vote. He called the vote “the most powerful non-violent tool” in a democracy. He labeled the Electoral College “obsolete” and called for popular participation in the election of the president – resulting in applause and cheers. The work of the League was praised by a representative from the office of the Mayor of Atlanta and by the presidents of the LWV of Georgia and the LWV of Atlanta/Fulton County. Official greetings culminated in a message from President Obama, reminding us of the role each American can play in making the world a better place.

LWVUS President Mary Wilson addressed the Convention, noting that the work of the League has never been more important than right now. She stated that our work is key to the success of our system and to promoting the voice of “we the people.” A list of accomplishments included member recruitment (MRI), leadership development, working for common goals, and putting the League “out there” in new ways (e.g., Facebook). President Wilson described the work of the Membership Recruitment Initiative and introduced the national coaching team of Ruth Shur Fellows who are ready to help states move forward with membership growth. (Full speech on LWVUS website)

*Continued on page 7*

LWVUS Convention - continued from page 6

Robbie Davis, chair of the LWVUS Nominating Committee, and a member of the Pasadena Area LWV, presented the slate of nominees for national board, and gave a clear description of the work of the Nominating Committee in developing the slate of proposed officers and directors. The slate was elected as presented, and Elisabeth McNamara of Georgia is the new LWVUS President.

Other actions of the Convention:

### Studies and positions -

- Adoption of two national studies: (1) the federal role in public education, and (2) privatization. More information on these studies will be coming from LWVUS.
- Adoption of positions by concurrence: (1) updated Arms Control position, (2) position supporting the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of direct popular vote for election of the president, (3) addition to the current Equality of Opportunity position to support legislation permitting same-gender couples to marry under civil law.

### Resolutions –

- Support lifting the travel restrictions for Americans going to Cuba.
- Support strengthening of regulation and oversight of mining and drilling operations.
- Call upon the Senate to change its rules to limit the use of the filibuster.
- Add “transparency” to the SARA Resolution (2005).
- Advocate for improved Medicare for all.
- Highlight the need for those responsible for the oil spill to be held accountable.

### Bylaw changes –

- Article III, Sec. 2 A (3): delete the word “honorary” before the words “life members.”

- Article IX, Sec. 4, Article X, Sec 4, and Article XIII, Sec. 3 and 4:

provide for a biennial budget to be adopted at Convention, starting in 2012.

- Article X, Sec 1: provide that council shall be held at a time and place or in a manner determined by the national board.

### Speakers

Leslie Sanchez: Columnist, Commentator, Author of *You've Come a Long Way Maybe*

Robert P.J. Cooney, Jr.: Author of *Winning the Vote, the Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement*

The Hon. Kathleen Sebelius: U. S. Secretary of Health and Human Services

### LWVUS Past Presidents

A panel of eight past LWVUS presidents was a Convention highlight. The women spoke about activities and antics during their terms of office, and commented on the League's future. They presented an impressive overview of achievements over the last thirty years. A video of this panel is posted on the LWVUS website.

I want to thank the League for giving me the opportunity to participate in Convention 2010. It is always inspiring to see League members in action, working to shape the direction for the coming year.

LWVUS has a great deal to offer our local Leagues. We need to make use of the print and online materials available for our education and outreach, and be part of the advocacy efforts.



## **League of Women Voters Speaker Training: Pilot Project for 2010-11**

It's time to get ready for election season. With ten controversial propositions on November's statewide ballot, plus local measures in some of our cities and school districts, there will be great demand for League-trained speakers.

Meanwhile, in *any* season, trained speakers are needed for League meetings and outreach to community groups. LWV / L.A.County and LWVLA (city) are collaborating to bring you a comprehensive and enjoyable way to prepare.

*Sign up for all three sessions.* Each one leads into the next.

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### **A Series of Three Sessions on How to Present Civic Education Topics**

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#### **I. Principles of Public Speaking (August 14)**

General guidelines – with an illustrative exercise – will be presented by Michelle Gilstrap, Past District Governor & Speakers Bureau Chair, District 52 Toastmasters International.

#### **II. Preparing Your Presentation (August 21)**

Experienced speakers will show how to use League materials and other resources to prepare nonpartisan talks on ballot measures and other timely issues.

#### **III. Practice with Your Peers (August 28)**

Everyone will give a five-minute talk on a simplified ballot measure or issue under consideration by the League. Friendly critiques will account for differences in personal style and level of audience.

**Dates:** Saturday August 14, 21, & 28, 2010

**Time:** 9:30a.m. to noon

**Place:** Tillman Water Reclamation Plant

6100 Woodley Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91406 (see map on reverse)

**To sign up, or for more info:**

Frances Talbott-White, talbwhite@yahoo.com; 310-397-4970

*-- enrollment is limited, but a second series is planned for September --*

The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County in both its values and practices affirms its belief and commitment to diversity, pluralism and affirmative action.

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.

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League \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Internet Election Resources**

**Smart Voter** [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)

Statewide propositions plus local candidates & issues on your ballot, with extensive Background materials and media links from LWV California Ed Fund

**LA County Registrar-Recorder** [www.lavote.net](http://www.lavote.net)

Election calendar, polling place look-up, absentee voting info, multilingual voting materials, Locations for Touchscreen early voting

**Easy Voter Guide** [www.easyvoter.org](http://www.easyvoter.org)

Concise facts on statewide propositions; Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese, and English

**Secretary of State** [www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov)

Official text of ballot measures

**CA Legislative Analyst** [www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov)

Analysis of all ballot measures

**CA Voter Foundation** [www.calvoter.org](http://www.calvoter.org)

Data on campaign contributions to candidates and measures

**CA Budget Project** [www.cbp.org](http://www.cbp.org)

Analyzes the fiscal effects of statewide ballot measures

This **VOTER** is ready for viewing on our website: [www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org)



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