



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 Area • Whittier

Editor: Mary Ellen Barnes Website:<http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org> Email:LWVLACounty@msn.com February 2012

LWV / LACounty Board of Directors 2012

Executive Board
Nancy Mahr
President

Lois Ledger
First Vice President

Margo Reeg
Second Vice President

Kay White
Secretary

Dorothy Stewart
Treasurer

Directors

Joan Arias
Betsey Coffman
Linda Herman
Vi Iungerich
Carlos Medina
Phyllis O'Connor
Sally Seven
Carol Slavin
Jack Sullivan
Georganne Thomsen
Lola Ungar

Calendar 2012

- Sat, Mar 31** County Convention, 10:00 – 2:00,
Pickwick Gardens, Burbank (see flyer inside)
- Sat, Apr 28** Ballot Measure Training, 9:30 – 12:00
Hollenbeck Palms
- Sat, July 28** Popovers in Pasadena – details TBA

In this issue...

- President's message.....page 2
- The Third Industrial Revolution..... page 3
- Water Issues.....page 3
- County League Day Write-up.....page 4
- County Convention Flyer.....page 5,6
- Tri-League Lasagna Supper Flyer.....page 7

From the President's Desk...

It's almost the end our out County League year. I'm looking forward to our annual Convention on March 31. We are so pleased that our LWVC Public Policy Director and advocate, Trudy Schafer, is able to join us as our keynote speaker. It will be the middle of state budget deliberations and many new pieces of legislation will be moving into the legislative arena. Trudy can give us some insights into the process as it is happening. I hope every Local League in the County will have delegates at the Convention.

Convention Kits will be mailed the end of February. You will see that the cost for Convention has gone up – set at \$30. Event costs are increasing everywhere – for rooms, equipment and meals. I hope the higher charge will not deter any League members from attending. Georganne Thomsen did some great negotiating to get the price down to this level. But we are always open to new ideas for meeting locations. Please send me any suggestions you may have for good places to check out for future County League Days and Conventions.

A piece of legislation that we hope to see re-introduced is SB 810, the single-payer health care bill for California. It was a disappointment that the bill failed to be passed again this session. So gear up to give it strong support as the new session begins.

Many County services are impacted by the state budget cuts and realignment. This is especially true in the social services arena. Program planning suggestions from the Leagues reflected the concern we all have for these services.

Thanks to all who attended the January County League Day. We were in close quarters, but managed very well. You all had a lot of ideas to share on the way in which the Initiative is used in California. Bob Stern's remarks gave us additional things to consider as we study this process.

Nancy Mahr

Be Part of the County League Board

The County League nominating committee is seeking people to serve on the LWV LACounty Board.

- **It is 2-year commitment.**
- **The Board meets once a month, with a break in the summer.**
- **Meeting locations vary.**
- **We'd like to see each member League represented on the Board.**

Look beyond your community at the County picture!

**Please send all suggestions and volunteers to: Arlene Block,
Nominating Committee Chair
goarlene@cox.net**

Natural Resources: THE THIRD INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Freeman Allen, LWV Claremont Area

Jeremy Rifkin sees Germany leading the way to the future in his latest book, The Third Industrial Revolution. Convergence of Energy and the Internet. Five pillars support the revolution. First, a goal for conversion to green energy. Second, a way to collect renewable energy from sources such as sunlight, wind, geothermal, tides, and waste. Third, a way to store energy, such as with hydrogen generated using excess electricity. Fourth, Internet technology used to create a distributed energy transmission system. Fifth, plug-in transportation, such as electric vehicles already on the market or fuel cell vehicles likely be available in about three years.

Germany is rapidly converting to such technology. Their goal is now 35% green energy by 2020, well ahead of the initial goal of 20%. Every building in Germany is to become its own power plant through renewable technologies – to be power positive. The excess electrical energy stored in hydrogen gas can be converted back into electricity as needed and distributed where needed through the Internet-like system. Germany is already testing six distribution systems. According to Rifkin, hundreds of thousands of jobs have been created, and there may be an initial infrastructure in place by 2025, and a fully-developed system by 2035.

In 2008, when oil prices reached \$147 per barrel, the price of almost everything rose and purchasing slowed markedly. Shortly after that, the financial system collapsed. \$150 may be close to the upper limit for oil prices where our economy can survive. Is it time for us to embrace the Third Industrial Revolution?

Natural Resources: Water Issues

John D. Sullivan, LWV LACounty Board, Natural Resources

Water will again be on the agenda in California in 2012. For the whole state, the Sierra Nevada Mountains are key to our water supply. Snow melt in the spring provides water for agriculture, industry and domestic use. Unfortunately, the 2012 water year is off to a slow start. As of February 1, the Sierra snow pack was 37% of normal. A year ago, the snow pack was 212% of normal. Unless we have more precipitation in the next two of months, we are in far a dry summer and fall. Also remember that southern California imports 50% of its water from Northern California and the Colorado River

The water picture is complicated by the fact that the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is an ecosystem in decline. This decline is due in part to withdrawals of water from the Delta for transport south to agriculture and to Southern California. The Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) is being developed in an attempt to rescue the Delta. The BDCP has two “coequal” goals: fix the Delta and ensure a reliable supply of water to the south. The ultimate BDCP will likely include a facility (a canal, tunnel, or an underground pipeline) to move water from the Sacramento River around the Delta to the south.

The cost of the BDCP is estimated to be from \$10 billion to \$54 billion and the question arises as to who will pay for it. Many are now arguing that the beneficiaries of the facility (farmers in the San Joaquin Valley and most of Southern California) ought to pay with increased rates on water. Whether the residences and businesses in Southern California will be willing to pay the extra cost remains to be seen.

One final note on water bonds: in 2010, the legislature developed a water bond for the November ballot and then pulled it in response to the fear that the voters would be in no mood to vote for a new bond given the dire state of the economy. Instead, the legislature planned to put it on the November 2012 ballot. There is now talk in Sacramento of either pulling the water bond from the 2012 ballot or reducing it drastically in size, again in response to the dire state of the economy.

All of this portends both a dry 2012 and a dearth of funds to improve water infrastructure and insure a reliable water supply to the southern part of the state. One very likely outcome will be an increased stress on local sources. This will include emphasis on recycling and increased efforts at conservation.

County League Day – Shared thoughts from the speaker Bob Stern

By: Joan Hardie, Co-President, LWV Glendale/Burbank

The signs of a successful county League day are a packed room, happy faces, lots of chatter and a great speaker, all those were on hand at the Jan. 28th LA County Winter League Day. Our Speaker Bob Stern of the former Center for Government Studies talked to us about “California’s Initiative and Referendum Process, Abolish, Reform or Retain as Is?” The topic is timely given the California state League will embark on statewide study regarding the topic this fall.

To begin the discussion, Mr. Stern reminded us that our constitution is the largest in the country, largely because of the initiative and referendum process. And although the sheer size of the constitution may seem too paralyzing to run a government, he is a believer that the people of California will never give up the process because of their distrust of the legislature. So rather than abolish or retain as is, his solution is to reform the initiative and referendum process. Here are some of his ideas:

PROBLEM: Improve quality of initiative—Currently once an initiative qualifies, no changes to the language of the initiative can be made.

SOLUTION: Provide a public comment period for legislators and public to analyze each initiative. Allow proponents to negotiate changes with the legislature. If changes to the initiative are agreeable to the proponents and the ballot is acted upon by the legislature and the governor signs it, it can be removed from the ballot.

PROBLEM: Signature gatherers, do we really need them? – Why do we ask for signatures to get something on the ballot? What does it mean? It means that the proponents (usually special interest groups) have at least one million dollars.

SOLUTION: Try something new. Charge \$50,000 filing fee and allow fewer signatures, or get rid of signature gatherers altogether, and use the Internet as way of collecting supporters. In order to sign the ballot on the Internet, a supporter would have to answer/agree with three questions/statements prior to their electronic signature counting as a legitimate supporter.

PROBLEM: Improve Voter Information – Although the ballot pamphlet is loaded with good information, because the deadline is in August and we don’t vote until November, the financial contribution information is not always accurate. Also, many people don’t read it, in 1990 when there were 28 ballot measures; the pamphlet was 220 pages long.

SOLUTION: Produce one-minute videos that people can view on the Internet or government channels. And use one page handouts listing supporters and opponents of the ballot measure, this might provide the type of information the voter is more interested in.

PROBLEM: Campaign financing – More money spent on initiatives than lobbying legislatures. Also, Citizens United means no limits on independent expenditures.

SOLUTION: More disclosure on the sponsorship of ads. Propose contribution limits, maybe \$100,000.00.

These are just some of the ideas from Mr. Stern’s thoroughly enjoyable talk. His discussion was a great primer for upcoming study. At the end he reminded us that we have a process, and he believes it would work better if it were more like the legislative process. He also emphasized his belief that Californians would never repeal the initiative process and given that, we should work towards improving it. Although the Center of Government Studies no longer is functioning, they still have a website with very useful information, <http://www.cgs.org/>



LWV/LACounty

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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

50th Annual Convention

Saturday, March 31, 2012

9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Sacramento Update:

What Is the Legislature Up To?

Trudy Schafer

LWV California Senior Director for Program



**1001 Riverside Drive, Burbank
Tel. 818-845-5300**

CONVENTION KITS for delegates will be mailed to Local League Presidents by the end of February. Additional copies will be available at the meeting.

**All members are encouraged to attend.
Parking is free.**

✂ -----

Please send form and check payable to **LWV/LACounty by March 16, 2012**

Mail to **LWV/LACTreasurer, 3970 Sepulveda Blvd., Unit 201, Torrance, CA 90505**

Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

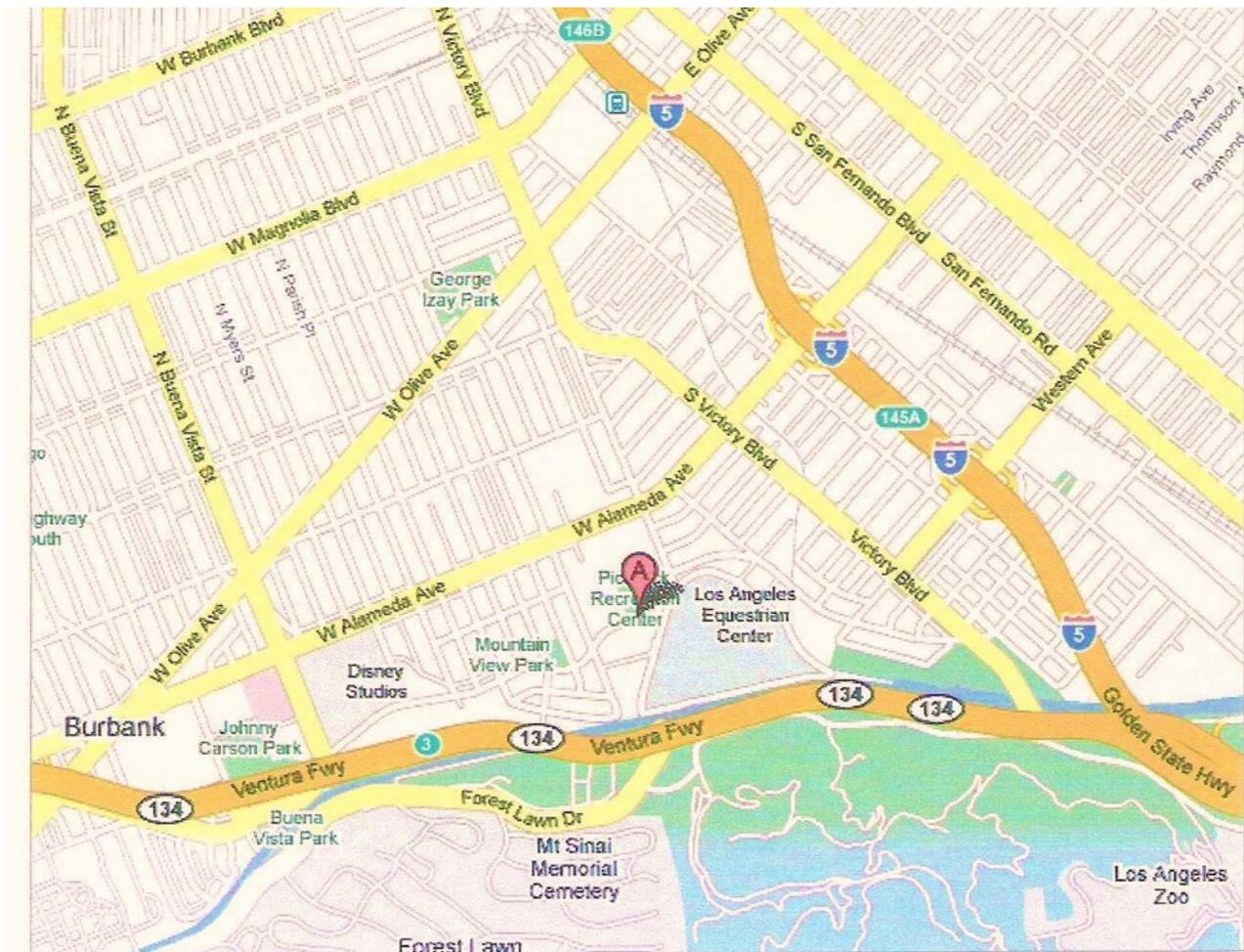
Check if Delegate Check if Vegetarian Specify Food Allergies _____
Attendee Name _____

Deadline is March 16, 2012

Total No. of Reservations _____ @ \$30.00 = Total \$ _____

If Postmarked After March 16, 2012

Total No. of Reservations _____ @ \$35.00 = Total \$ _____



**DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO PICKWICK GARDENS
1001 W. RIVERSIDE DR., BURBANK**

I-5 - From the SOUTH After passing the merger of the 134 into I-5 (in Glendale) move immediately to the right lane and exit via the Western Ave. off ramp going west. At the bottom of the ramp, turn right on Western and go to Riverside Dr. and turn right. From there it is ½ mile to the front of Pickwick but do not park in front. Go on 1/10 mile around a curve on Riverside Dr. and turn into Pickwick’s long driveway past the Ice Rink into their large parking lot at the back near the Garden entry and sales office.

I-5 - From the NORTH... Exit Western Ave in Glendale, using the west off ramp, and turn right onto Western. Proceed to Riverside Dr. and turn right. See directions above.

134 - From the EAST... When passing through Glendale move right into the lane with the I-5 Bakersfield sign. Immediately after the merger into I-5, take the Western Ave. (west ramp) and turn right at the bottom onto Western Ave. Go to Riverside Dr. and turn right. See directions above under I-5.

101 & 134 - From the West Take the Hollywood freeway (101) east onto the Ventura (134 – East) and exit at Buena Vista off ramp in Burbank. Turn right at the bottom at the signal and then turn on to Riverside Dr. Pickwick is about 1.5 miles on your left, just past Mariposa Ave. Take Pickwick’s first drive on the left, past the ice rink entry and park at the back near the garden entry, passing the entrance to ice skating and park at the back near the garden walkway.

PARKING IS FREE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BEACH CITIES

Invites you to the Annual Tri-League Lasagna Supper

Monday March 19, 2012 6 PM—8:30 PM

**The Katy Geissert Torrance Memorial Library
3301 Torrance Blvd, Torrance CA**

**Our Guest Speaker for this event will be from the office of
County Supervisor Don Knabe**

**We will be looking at the current issues affecting
the South Bay and Harbor Area**

Cost \$15.00

Send your reservations to : League of Women Voters Beach Cities
629 19th Street Manhattan Beach, CA 90266 **Reservations are due by**
March 12, 2012

Name(s) _____

Amount enclosed _____

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.

SUBSCRIBE to the VOTER

Send the information below to be notified of the latest VOTER posted on our website at:
<http://www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org>

For a hard copy subscription send \$10 to:

LWV/LA County Treasurer,
3970 Sepulveda Blvd. # 201, Torrance, CA 90505.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

League _____

E-mail Address _____

Internet Election Resources

Smart Voter 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

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

Easy Voter Guide www.easyvoter.org

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

Secretary of State www.ss.ca.gov

Official text of ballot measures

CA Legislative Analyst www.lao.ca.gov

Analysis of all ballot measures

CA Voter Foundation www.calvoter.org

Data on campaign contributions to candidates and measures

CA Budget Project 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



Nancy Mahr, LWV/LA County President
28028 Ella Road
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275