



LWV/LACounty

An Interleague Organization

VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

An Interleague Organization — Antelope Valley • 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

www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org

LWVLACounty@msn.com

December 2013/January 2014

Calendar 2013

Wed. Jan. 8	County Board Meeting	TBA
Sat., Jan 25	County Winter League Day	Lakewood Country Club
Sat., Mar 29	County League Convention	TBA

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From Our President's Desk...

Good job with local elections in our many communities! As you move forward with programs that give information to the public, and later in the spring with voter service activities for the June election, please consider the communities around your League service area that do not have Leagues – the “orphan” areas. Voters in these areas would like to have access to our election information. Try to find a way to serve the people in these areas where there are no LWV units.

We're sorry about the cancellation of the Fall League Day on agriculture. We contacted many experts and organizations, but couldn't match up schedules. In the meantime, the County Board voted to recommend to LWVUS that they extend this study. It's very complicated – as the study committee has discovered.

Save the date! County Winter League Day is coming up on January 25, 2014. We'll meet at the Lakewood Country Club. The focus will be the rollout of the ACA. You'll have a chance to ask your questions. A reservation flyer is in this Voter.

Program planning is also coming up. This is your opportunity to give input into the work of the national and county Leagues, as well as your own Local League. Program planning is a vital part of our grass roots process. You may want to recommend a new study – or even no new study – or the update of a current position, or an issue for education and advocacy. Think about what areas are important to your League.

As the holidays approach, I wish you all a joyous holiday season with family and friends.

Nancy

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 310-377-0735

League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County Board of Directors, 2013-2014

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Natural Resources

Jack Sullivan, LWV/LAC

Water Goals: California has released the California Water Action Plan. The plan discusses future goals for water in California. There are a total of ten goals presented. Three of them are of particular interest to Southern Californians: conservation, regional self-reliance, and expanded water storage. Conservation is an obvious goal both for the short term and the long term. Much has been done with respect to conservation in Southern California but there is more effort to be made. In particular, the way in which people irrigate their gardens will likely become more of a focus, with more emphasis on shifting to low-water plants.

Regional self-reliance will involve water agencies in Southern California and will likely focus on both groundwater cleanup and ground water replenishment. We can reduce somewhat our reliance on imported water by carefully management of ground water resources. Expanded water storage will likely happen, if at all, in Northern California but will also likely be politically controversial. You can access the Water Action Plan at: [http://resources.ca.gov/docs/Final_Water Action Plan.pdf](http://resources.ca.gov/docs/Final_Water_Action_Plan.pdf).

There continues to be debate about Governor Brown's proposal for tunnels to divert water around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for export to the south. Such a diversion would lessen the impact of the Endangered Species Act on current diversions but would also likely have a big effect on the Delta. The State will issue an EIR on the tunnels in December, so expect the debate to intensify early next year.

Harvest Rainwater: Andy Lipkis, of the organization Tree People, in a recent op-ed piece in the L. A. Times argues for more rainwater harvesting. He suggests that cisterns, swales, sunken areas in landscapes and constructed wetlands can all be used to capture water for use later or for percolation into aquifers. Not only would this help with local

water supply, it would reduce some of the damage caused by flooding after large storms. <http://www.treepeople.org/>

Food Reduction: A draft Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report was leaked last week (NY Times, 11/2/13). The leaked report suggests that global warming may result in a 2% reduction in food production per decade in the future. At the same time, demand for food is expected to rise by 14% as population grows from 7.2 billion people to 9.6 billion people. This additional demand might be met by putting more land into food production. However, this would require the clearing of additional forested land, which would reduce the amount of forest available for carbon sequestration. Clearly policy makers around the globe face difficult decisions in the future. For more on the IPCC, go to <http://ipcc.ch/>.

SmartVoter®

SmartVoter Training at LWVLA

The LWVLA will have the SmartVoter trainings on **Saturday, Jan. 18, 2014 and Wednesday, Jan. 22 from 10:30 to 12 noon** each day, with an opportunity to stay later for additional advanced training.

We ask that everyone who can, please bring your laptop or ipad because this is hands-on training.

The trainings most likely will take place at the LWVLA office.

For more information and exact meeting place please email or call **Roz Tyson** at roztyson@pacbell.net or 818-255-8465.

Current Developments in our Jail and Prison Systems

By Betsey Coffman

The U. S. Department of Justice has announced that it is opening an investigation of civil rights violations in the L. A. County Jail System. The case will be separate from the current FBI criminal investigation of prisoner abuse in the County Jails and was filed despite the County's Independent Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence recent encouraging report. In August the head of that Commission told the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors that good progress was being made in changing the "culture of violence" documented in their 2012 Commission report. Meanwhile, on the political front, the Sheriff recently confirmed that he will run for re-election in June, 2014. Others in that race include Paul Tanaka, former L. A. County Undersheriff and current Mayor of Gardena, and Bob Olmstead, a retired Sheriff's Department officer who testified in the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence investigation.

The California state prison system has also been an object of interest to the federal government. Four years ago, after determining medical and mental health services to prisoners to be inadequate due to extreme overcrowding, the federal court ordered the inmate population be reduced to 137.5% or less of the "design capacity" of the prisons (This, in turn, has resulted in overcrowding in county jails, causing the L. A. County system to contract with the city of Taft, California to house 500 long-term inmates in the Taft Community Correctional Facility.) And, realignment did not solve the state's overcrowding problem, leaving state prisons with more than 9,600 excess inhabitants. Governor Brown, who is still appealing the inmate reduction order, came up with a plan to lease cells from incarceration facilities, private or public, both in and outside of California, and received approval of funding for this from the state Legislature. However, State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, countered with a request that the court order confidential discussions with stakeholders which would include options besides leasing cells, and the federal court has done so with a report back due

by October 27, 2013. Other options could include paroling frail and elderly inmates and facilitating resentencing hearings for 2,000 prisoners eligible under the provisions of Proposition 36. Steinberg is an advocate for prisoner rehabilitation, and succeeded in including funds for such programs in the recent Legislative funding for Brown's plan.

In November of 2012, voters approved Proposition 36, the Three Strikes Reform Act, which authorized shortening the sentences of inmates who had been sentenced to life in prison on a non-serious, non-violent third strike crime (e.g. petty theft, simple drug possession). Eligible inmates must petition the court, and a judge may reduce the sentence, but only if the judge decides that the petitioner would not be an unreasonable risk to public safety. If the Judge so decides, the prisoner may be granted early release. The petition has to be filed in the County where the third strike crime occurred, and the District Attorney must review each case and may challenge the release. In cases of a D.A. challenge, a hearing is held, with evidence presented by both sides. So far, 95% (1,011) of these petitions have been granted, and the inmates have been released. The Stanford Law School "Three Strikes Project" has been active in representing these petitioners and following their progress after release. Less than 2% of those released have been charged with another crime. Although the time since release has been short, this recidivism rate is considerably below the state average. In 2003-2004, in California, over 16% of released prisoners were charged with another crime after 90 days, and 40% within a year. The state does not provide reentry services to Proposition 36 released persons, although it does provide such services to other inmates when they are released. A number of private organizations are trying to fill in this gap. (*Progress Report: Three Strikes Reform (Proposition 36), 1,000 Prisoners Released.* Published by Stanford Law School Three Strikes Project and NCACP Legal Defense and Education Fund)

Jails - continued from page 5

The Los Angeles County League has studied the County Jail System and adopted the following position:

Support for reducing overcrowding in the county jail system by improving jail computer systems, routing prisoners more efficiently, expediting pre-trial case management, and studying criminalization standards for possible modification. **Oppose** using private jails. **Support** for a variety of sentencing options for low-risk offenders. **Support** for providing comprehensive health care services for emergency, urgent, and on-going health problems, physical and mental, for all inmates; **Support** for segregating mentally ill inmates. **Support** for offering basic educational and vocational training programs and social rehabilitation and re-entry programs to all inmates. **Support** for providing adequate public funding to maintain state standards. **Support** for effective, continual internal and external oversight of jail conditions and practices and for safe release practices.

The LWVUS has adopted by concurrence the following Sentencing Policy:

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

Hearing on Whittier Hills Oil Project At Board of Supervisors

By Margo Reeg

“The Leagues of Women Voters of Whittier and Los Angeles County urge you to support the conditions and intent of Prop. A and deny Whittier’s intention to remove seven acres from park and open space land and use it to generate local revenue through oil extraction,” concluded Margo Reeg in her testimony at the LA County Board of Supervisor hearing on the Whittier Hills Oil Drilling Project on October 29. Reeg cited LWV positions on land use, water and air quality .

According to the County Counsel in his opening remarks, Superior Court Judge Chalfant placed an injunction on the project to prevent Matrix from

moving forward on the oil drilling project in the Whittier Hills. The BOS chose to hold the hearing to allow for public participation even though it is not required by law. In response to the question of the board’s responsibility, Counsel said that the Board as the governing body of the Regional Parks and Open Space District retains its right to approve changes in contracts for use of 1992 Prop. A bond funds.

More than 130 people showed up to testify at the hearing which lasted over 3 hours. Opening statements were made by the staff of the Open Space District who summarized the issue which focuses on the City of Whittier’s decision to remove land from park lands purchased using Prop. A park bond money and drill for oil on that land, retaining the revenues for their general use.

In addition, a representative from Sapphos, the firm contracted by the Open Space District to research and prepare a report for the District and Supervisors, detailed the timeline involved in this oil deal from the passage of Prop. A in 1992 and the purchase agreements made by Whittier using Prop. A funds. At the time Whittier agreed to leave the land in open space and parks “in perpetuity.”

Many people spoke to the value of preserving park lands for future generations and pointed out the esthetic advantages of this open space and the wildlife it protects. Several, including a resident of a housing project near USC, talked of the negative health effects of living in the proximity of oil drilling operations. One large group of former Youth Corps members praised the Prop. A measure which provided them with jobs and training in new park lands.

Some argued that Whittier had never sought approval of the District to trade the oil drilling site for another piece of land contiguous to the parkland. This is the key issue in the hearing.

Supervisors Yaroslavsky and Antonovich remarked that the Board would have to enact new ordinances to protect all the other parks purchased with bond funds if Whittier were granted permission to change the purpose and use of this park land and drill for oil.

**League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County
Program Planning – Where Study Leads to Action**

When we think about Program Planning, consider that our positions are based on consensus achieved through study by all local Leagues and the subsequent adoption of a position statement at our Annual Convention. Our most recent study dealt with the County Jail System, ultimately providing us with a comprehensive statement that will enable us to address a number of issues that are currently of concern within the County Jails. What issues are percolating to the top right now that will engage your time and energy for the next two years?

As you consider L.A. County issues, remember that your proposal can be for a new study, an update of a position that we currently have or education and action around a current position.

In order to make sure that our positions are timely, you will also need to review our current positions as they will be reconsidered at County Convention. These are included in the booklet titled, "Adopted Program 2010-2012. The new League position on the County Jail System was sent out separately in 2011. An updated version will be in your Convention Kit.

At the state level four issues were adopted for Education and Advocacy and the national study on agriculture is extremely comprehensive. But closer to home, there may be an issue within Los Angeles County that we should take a closer look at. Many of our studies were completed quite a while ago and perhaps an update may be in order.

A few of our County Board members have served as the League representatives to the Registrar-Recorder/County clerk's Voting Systems Assessment Project. Is that a subject we would like to learn more about? What does your League consider the "Lively Issues" in Los Angeles County?

We need your results by Jan. 30. 2014. List your first, second and third choices in that order and send to:

Linda Herman, 28070 Ella Road, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275 by January 30, 2014.

For further information call or write to Linda at: 310-541-3373 or lhermanpg@cox.net.

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Date of meeting _____ No. in attendance at meeting _____

Name of League _____

Choice No. 1

Choice No. 2

Choice No. 3

Please sign - name & email address

Mental Health News

by Vi Iungerich, Mental Health Director

Health-Care Law Closing Gaps in Mental Health

Over this past summer, a study done by the California Health-Care Foundation found that half of the state's adults and two-thirds of the adolescents with mental health issues were not receiving any mental health treatment. In addition, private health insurance has historically limited or lacked mental health services. Patients then are forced to seek care through the public system. Nearly \$7.8 billion in public money was spent in the fiscal year 2012-2013 on mental health care with the largest share \$3.3 billion paying for Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Now, the Affordable Care Act is expected to improve access for many. The law expands who is eligible for Medi-Cal and also includes mental health services in the health-care marketplace. Finding enough providers is expected to become a problem. It is noted that it is important for doctors to become aware of the connection for many with both substance abuse and mental illness. An estimated 125,000 uninsured people will become eligible for Medi-Cal who will need mental health services.

Mental Health in Jails and Prisons

In July a federal judge ordered an examination of mental health treatment or non-treatment in the state prisons. There is now a push to identify the mentally ill in the jail and prison populations and to provide alternatives for care. In Los Angeles County, the jail system has a multitude of opinions from judges, prosecutors, and law-enforcement officials who all have a say in jailing mentally ill offenders. But, because each case is decided in isolation and there is no broader concern or option, thousands of sick people are locked up with no plan to help them get better.

One program which seems to help is the specialized Behavioral Health Courts. This program is offered to some severely mentally ill people by providing them with treatment rather than locking them up. For example, in 2010 San Francisco people who received help from this

court had the largest drop in rearrests when compared to control groups; 39% compared to 7%. Key to this program is that the person must agree to treatment and oversight. Case workers are successful in helping these people to get a correct diagnosis, medications, housing and career counseling.

Oversight of Mental Health Funding

Nearly a decade ago voters approved Proposition 63 which is a tax on those individuals earning more than 1 million dollars for 1% of their income tax to go to counties for mental illness programs. This program has collected almost \$7.4 billion over the past six years. However, during this time the state has provided little to no oversight on how the counties spent this money. Especially missing was any look into the effectiveness of programs. An audit was finally requested of the counties after The Los Angeles Times reported that some counties were using these monies for yoga and martial art classes.

In August, this audit was presented to lawmakers and found that counties were not performing on-site reviews to ensure that the use of funds was appropriate and that no serious effort had been made to determine if the programs were effective. Although the audit of four counties (including Los Angeles County) found none of these counties were expending funds in violation of the act, the audit also determined that specific objectives for assessing effectiveness were missing and until recently an Accountability Commission did not have a framework in place for evaluation. The lawmakers agreed with the recommendation for improving oversight.

Sibling Bullying

Many folks believe sibling bullying is a normal part of childhood and helps with adult resiliency. Some recent research finds that sibling bullying is equally damaging as outside bullying and because it is often hidden can be more severe than parents are aware of. This results in mental health damage to the children. The emotional pain of bullying is also found to be as acute as physical pain.

Agriculture and Food Affected by Roundup

By Vi lungerich, Agricultural Committee (LWVPVP)

One of the issues for our new national study is the effect of GMO seeds and the use of Roundup herbicide. On October 16, the Wellesley League of Women Voters invited Dr. Stephanie Seneff, an MIT researcher, to present some of the most recent results of her research into glyphosate effects on our diet and health. You can view a video of her presentation at <http://people.csail.mit.edu/seneff/>. I encourage everyone to view this troubling and thoroughly convincing video which is the first listed video on this web site and dated Oct.16.

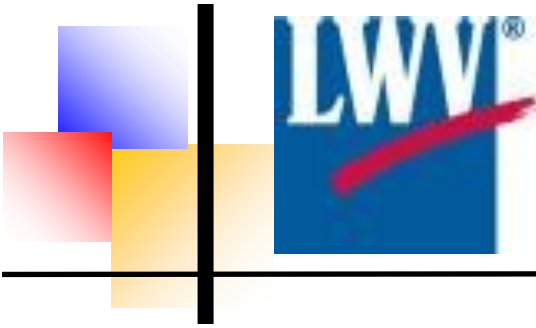
Roundup is an herbicide prepared and patented by Monsanto and because of its inexpensive cost widely used on about 90% of many major crops, particularly corn, soy, cotton, sugar beet, canola etc. The active ingredient in Roundup is glyphosate. Monsanto has marketed Roundup as a non-toxic chemical to people because we have no way to use it in human physiology directly. It is toxic however to the physiology of many plants. And this is where it becomes a problem to people. If it is eaten by people thorough their food—corn, soy etc., it is used by and kills the gram positive bacteria in the human gut and also helps to grow the gram negative bacteria in the gut. We depend on the bacteria of our gut to provide us with many needed amino acids which they can make and we cannot, and many of the minerals and enzymes which they also provide to keep our metabolism healthy. The myriad impact of losing needed microbes is devastating and the diseases now being traced to this unbalance is also very unsettling.

The list of ailments linked to this loss includes autism, obesity, Alzheimer's, depression, due to depletion of serotonin; the depletion of cytochrome p450 enzymes which regulates sterol, sex hormones, the detoxification of toxins, and stabilization of blood and bleeding disorders; and lastly causes a deficiency in sulfate metabolism which is linked to several nervous and brain disorders including Parkinson's. The unbalance of microbes also

causes "leaky gut" Crones Disease, Celiac Disease and other digestive tract disorders. In addition to all these problems, the gram negative bacteria of the gut uses glyphosate as food to grow. These bacteria then produce formaldehyde which is another human poison in the body. These negative bacteria are also part of the bacteria that cause such problems in the hospitals because they cause infections which are resistant to antibiotics.

The proof of the problem with glyphosate is mainly statistical, but that evidence appears to be overwhelming. For example, Roundup was introduced in 1974 and that was when Autism first became noticed in health papers. Then it was one child in a thousand. As Roundup continued in use, cases increased in lock-step with its use. In 2007, one child in 150 was diagnosed. By 2013 one child in 50 has been diagnosed. If this path continues by 2025 one of every two children will be diagnosed. Autism is an ailment that shows digestive tract problems, brain issues, and other markers consistent with the known effects of microbe depletion. A recent study (11 million) of people under the age of 20 released from hospitals showed an increase of 49% with Crones Disease and 71 % increase in ulcerative colitis in the years 2000 to 2009. Recent studies show Crones Disease can be cured by replacement of the microbes in the gut with those from a healthy person. All of these statistics (as well as many more) can be traced directly to the increase of Roundup in our food and also the finding of glyphosate in the urine of people well over safety limits. It is a chemical that is not followed by the government because it is assumed to be "nontoxic" and safe. Lastly there has been a worldwide push to increase its use globally and it is being sold and used more and more in India (on sugar cane) and in China on a variety of crops.

There does not seem to be any safe limit of this chemical for our gut and the only protection currently for the public is to eat nothing but organic food.



**League of Women Voters
of Los Angeles County**

The Affordable Care Act: Where are we now?

Saturday, January 25, 2014

9:30 AM — 1:00 PM

Lakewood Country Club

3101 Carson Street, Lakewood 90712

2014

Luncheon Buffet — \$30

Vegetarian choices available

A panel of experts from Covered California, Los Angeles County, and the Long Beach Health Dept., will tell us about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

For more information e-mail or call Linda Herman at lhermanpg@cox.net or 310-541-3373

*Please sign up early—send form and check payable to LWV/LA County by January 11, 2014
Mail to LWV/LAC Treasurer, 3970 Sepulveda Blvd., Unit 201, Torrance, CA 90505*

League Name _____

Attendee Name(s) _____

Reservation(s) # _____ @\$30.00 = Total Enclosed \$ _____ (Allergens _____)

After Jan. 11, Reservation(s) # _____ @\$35.00 = Total Enclosed \$ _____

LWV/LA County VOTER

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.

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Send your email address to the Voter editor to be notified of the latest VOTER posted on our website at: www.lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org and to be included on the email distribution list.

Send to: mebarnes@aol.com

Join Us

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. **Find a local League below :**

Beach Cities - beachcities.ca.lwvnet.org

Claremont Area- claremont.ca.lwvnet.org

East San Gabriel Valley- esgv.ca.lwvnet.org

Glendale-Burbank - gb.ca.lwvnet.org

Long Beach Area - lba.ca.lwvnet.org

Los Angeles - lwvlosangeles.org

Palos Verdes Peninsula - lwvpalosverdes.org

Pasadena Area - lwv-pa.org

Santa Monica - lwvsantamonica.org

Torrance Area - lwvtorrancearea.org

Whittier - whittier.ca.lwvnet.org

December 2013/January 2014

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



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