



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 March 2010

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Calendar 2010

- Sat, Mar 27.....Convention, 9:00-2:00
- Wed, April 7.....County Board Meeting, 9:30-1:30
- Sat, April 24.....Ballot Training, 9:30-12:00
- May 15-16.....State Council
- Tues/Wed May 25-26.....Board Retreat and Board Meeting
- Wed, June 2.....County Board Meeting, 9:30-1:30
- Fri-Tue, June 11-15.....National Convention
- Wed, July 7.....County Board Meeting, 9:30-1:30
- Sat, July 31.....Popovers, 9:30-2:00

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From the President's Desk...

As my term as president come to a close, I can look back on important issue and activities that our County Leagues have addressed over the past two years: redistricting; election information, including material on judicial candidates; testimony; health care reform; launching the jail study; and many more educational and voter service programs that Local Leagues have sponsored.

Our numerous and varied activities – whether action, advocacy, or education - confirm the grassroots nature of the LWV. Our local members are doing the work - research, presentations, organizing meetings, speaking up. We should all be very proud of our accomplishments.

That grassroots base has taken League a long way. This year, LWV celebrates its 90th birthday. Read the review of League milestones in this Voter. Several of you have already printed this overview in your local Voters.

Saturday, March 27, is the date of the County League Convention 2010. Our speaker is the Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, our newest County Supervisor. Ridley-Thomas was elected to the 2nd District seat in 2008, following the retirement of Supervisor Yvonne Burke. He will provide an update on County issues and the County budget.

In addition to the address by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, we have important business to conduct at Convention. We will vote in the LWVLACounty officers for the coming two years. We will set the budget for 2010-11. And, we will determine the program priorities for the County League for the next two years. Of course, County League program is your program, as the eleven local Leagues in the County are the County League members.

We are meeting at the Carson Center, which is in Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' 2nd District. The County League Board voted to keep the cost at \$25 so that coming to Convention would not be a burden on local Leagues. A Convention flyer and registration form is included in this Voter.

Looking ahead, we have spring elections, and ballot measures, and, in the fall, more elections and what looks to be a large number of ballot measures. Check the Voter Calendar for the dates of the County ballot measure training session.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your County League president and to work with our local Leagues.

Nancy

Redistricting Information

You can track the progress of the Citizens Redistricting Commission selection at www.WeDrawTheLines.ca.gov.

Don't Let That Water Get Away!

by John Sullivan, Natural Resources Director LWV/LAC

The storms continue to come in from the Pacific, some with a lot of rain and others with only moderate amounts of precipitation. It looks as if the L. A. basin will experience a fairly normal rainfall this year, about 15". The effects of the drought are still with us in the form of lower reservoirs and aquifers. The winter storms will help, but we still have to be watchful of our water consumption. It is possible that the drought will return again next year.

The state of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is still perilous and the fight over how much water to draw out of the Delta—and how much to leave for the Delta ecosystem—continues. Senator Diane Feinstein had hoped to amend a bill in Congress to allow for an override of the Endangered Species Act and increased pumping from the Delta. That proved not to be possible, but she has indicated that she will attempt to pursue her goals by other means. In addition, both population growth and economic growth will continue to put pressure on our scarce water resources.

All of this means that residents of the L. A. Basin will need to continue our efforts in conserving water. Two strategies available to homeowners in the basin are capturing rainwater and utilizing graywater, that is, water from washing machines and dishwashers.

Rainwater harvesting involves a number of strategies to keep rainwater from running into storm drain systems. This can involve the use of barrels and cisterns designed to capture

rainwater from roof gutters and store it until needed. It can also involve “sculpting” one’s

garden to reduce rainwater runoff. Of course, you have to be careful not to create a mosquito habitat. Brad Lancaster, in *Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond* (Rainsource Press), has much more on rainwater harvesting.

A graywater strategy involves reuse of water you have already used once. It involves diverting washing machine or dishwasher water into a storage area for use later in the garden. Last August, the California Building Standards Commission (<http://www.bsc.ca.gov/default.htm>) eased the regulations involving graywater. Now licenses will usually not be required, homeowners will be able to discharge to a simple mulch basin, and no expensive pumps or filters will be required. It is the case that local municipalities can supersede this code so check with the local city hall before starting a graywater system. Art Ludwig, in *Create an Oasis with Greywater* (Oasis Design), has much detail on constructing graywater systems.

We will never be able to decentralize completely our water delivery system. However, by making use of graywater and rainwater harvesting, we can have at least some control over our water supplies and reduce some of the pressure on California’s stressed water supplies.

FOR 90 YEARS LEAGUE MEMBERS HAVE CONTINUED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Founding From the spirit of the suffrage movement and the shock of the First World War came a great idea – that a nonpartisan civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded on that idea.

The 1920's Since the League had inherited its structure from the National American Women Suffrage Association, in 1920 it was a federation of affiliated state Leagues, most of which had been in existence as state headquarters of the NAWSA.

The 1930's The depression of the 1930s and the onset of World War II brought far-reaching change to the League.

The 1940's The 1944 convention made major changes in the basic structure of the League, proclaiming it an association of members, rather than a federation of state leagues, and abolishing the department system of managing the various facets of the League program.

The 1950's The witch hunt period of the early fifties inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program focusing on the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution.

The 1960's In response to the growing civil rights crisis of the 1960's the League directed its energies to equality of opportunity and built a solid foundation of support for equal access to education, employment and housing.

The 1970's The 1974 convention also amended the bylaws to allow men to join the League as full voting members.

The 1980's The League was in the forefront of the struggle to pass the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982 and contributed significantly to enactment of the historic Tax Reform Act of 1986.

The 1990's The League launched "Take Back the System", a voter campaign to reclaim government and elections and sponsored a Presidential Primary Debate in 1992.

The 21st Century The League was instrumental in the enactment of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2002. The League worked to renew the Voting Rights Act, and filed a number of amicus briefs relating to campaign finance reform issues, racial bias in jury selection and Title IX.

Education Fund & Overseas Ed Fund In the late 1940's and 1950's, the League established two 501(c)(3) educational organizations that, like the LWVUS, are nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations, but, unlike the LWVUS, also can accept contributions that are deductible for income tax purposes.

Conclusion While the League's programs, priorities and procedures have changed over the years to meet changing times, a League pamphlet written in 1919 describes with remarkable accuracy its basic aims today: **The organization has three purposes to foster education in citizenship, to promote forums and public discussion of civic reforms and to support needed legislation.**



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48th Annual Convention

Luncheon

Saturday, March 27, 2010

9:15 AM – 2:00 PM

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS



Supervisor Ridley-Thomas has represented the nearly 2.3 million people of the Second District on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors since December 2008. During his first year in office, he shepherded through an agreement with the University of California to provide medical services at the new Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital which is scheduled to open in late 2012. He also persuaded the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to fund a light rail system from Crenshaw Boulevard to Los Angeles International Airport and move up the opening from 2029 to as early as 2016. Together, the hospital and rail projects will generate more than \$2 billion in spending and create over 16,000 jobs.

Carson Community Center

801 E. Carson Street

Carson, CA 90745

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.

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Send form and check payable to **LWV/LAC**

Mail to LWV/LAC Treasurer, 427 E. Walnut Ave., Burbank 91501

League Name _____

Please highlight delegates names with a (D).

Name(s) _____

Deadline is March 16, 2010

Reservations # _____ @ \$25.00 = Total \$ _____

If Postmarked After March 16th

Reservations # _____ @ \$30.00 = Total \$ _____

Chicken Entrees # _____

Vegetarian Entrees # _____

Note Food Allergies # _____

A 90th Birthday Message from LWVUS President Mary Wilson

Ninety years ago, Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed a League of Women Voters to "finish the fight" and work to end all discrimination against women. And so the League of Women Voters was founded on Valentine's Day in 1920, six months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

Today, we remain a grassroots organization with more than 150,000 members and supporters and 850 Leagues throughout all 50 states. Though the League is known widely for our voter education efforts, we've also brought our expertise to critical issues such as health care reform, global climate change and many others.

As we enter into a new year, we know that the League will continue to do what it has been trusted to do for more than 90 years:

1. Discuss the important issues;
2. Ask the difficult questions;
3. And demand accountability from our government.

And every one of our critical 2010 initiatives will **give citizens a greater voice** -- in the upcoming census, the 2010 elections, the next round of redistricting and more.

The League of Women Voters is the organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement . . . Over the last 90 years, the League of Women Voters has truly left its footprint on American history, and our democracy is stronger for it.

United Nations Forum by Vi Iungerich

On March 1, 2010 the UN and the Global Creative Forum sponsored a day-long program at the Hammer Museum in West Los Angeles. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon opened the program with a conversation with Michael Douglas (UN Messenger of Peace). The focus of the forum was to interest the entertainment industry to consider stories which would highlight the work of the UN especially in the area of empowering women. The UN asked for help in reaching a world audience through stories that would help the UN reach its Millennium goals of world peace and prosperity.

The day consisted of three panels discussing the role of the UN and Hollywood, empowering women and some new cutting edge solutions. Secretary Ban Ki-moon spoke about his particular interest in and support of women. He has appointed 12 women to head major divisions—areas that up to now have always been held by men. He spoke about his own desire to make the UN more available for filmmakers and especially asked that Hollywood consider stories that concerned climate change, HIV, Weapons of Mass Destruction and the discrimination of women and particularly the violence against women. Among the statistics cited were the facts that 70-80 % of women globally were employed in farming. His development goals for the short term (until 2015) included getting world support for global climate issues, the elimination of malaria (this year), balancing development for the third world, eliminating hunger for 1 billion and diminishing sickness which results in child and adult mortality rates which are preventable with simple interventions. He also feels a key is women's empowerment since improvement in their lives results in community progress. Africa remains a major concern and the spread of nuclear weapons is another problem.

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UN article - continued from page 5

The first panel discussed how stories can educate masses. For example, few Americans are aware of the millions killed in the Congo- but individual stories can move an audience to understanding. Mira Sorvino, and actress spoke about the increasing problem with human trafficking and the increase of this problem in the United States and the world. She would like to see laws enforced and made more severe. Others spoke about the problem of some UN soldiers in the Congo rapping women along with the soldiers.-- (Culturally rape is not seen as a severe crime by many countries.) Other speakers spoke about the increase of HIV in women 25-34 years of age, and the truth about use of coal for energy and its environmental impact.

The second panel focused on empowering women. Dr. Gayle, CEO of Care, spoke about the impact of women against poverty. For each year of education given to women, the income of families improves by 10-20 %. Margaret Chan, Director-General of world Health gave several statistics. For most of the population the hierarchy of importance is men, slaves, animals and lastly women. About 15% of the 3.5 billion women of the world live in developed countries. 85% live in poverty. Women do the most work of any group and are held in the lowest esteem. Other speakers spoke about the increase and protection of child pornographers as well as the slavery of women. Solutions to some of the problems included in-kind donations (such as shoes), and looking at banking and money profits from dugs, terrorists and slavery. The impact of the Internet in exposing governments and groups in these behaviors is having an effect.

The last panel discussed some newer solutions. Stevie Wonder brought some of his talking aids and new technical aids for the blind. Ray Chambers (envoy for Malaria) spoke about his work in getting mosquito nets to all that needed them on track. He expects all populations to be covered by the end of this year. A plea was made for film equipment to be donated to the poor countries to help in explaining aids---(for example, so the population would understand the use of nets rather than sleeping on them). One of the most interesting panelists, James Colmenares, CEO of Quindred, spoke about his development of an Internet program. He used a method similar to that used by Obama in his effort to raise funds for his presidential race. Using 48 technical indicators, he made a grid of 50 metrics for 200 poor countries giving each country a score. The public can “play” this grid and change the score of any county by donating money or services such as micro-loans, mentoring a student or business person, etc. The tool allows tracking and the teaching of needs.

From the United Way L.A. Website...

Did You Know That...?

Los Angeles County is facing dangerous trends with regard to meeting the basic needs of its residents.

1. Approximately 73,000 homeless people sleep on our streets each night.
2. An alarming 1.6 million people in Los Angeles don't have health insurance.

Did You Know That...?

The number of workers nearing retirement is increasing while the number of young workers with the skills needed to replace them is declining.

1. That number jumps as high as 50 percent in many of our local communities.
2. Low literacy skills are a serious barrier to employability, higher wages and workforce productivity.

Did You Know That...?

Many people now hold one or more jobs, yet barely make enough money to support them their families.

1. Many people in Los Angeles hold one or more jobs and yet struggle to make ends meet.
2. The poverty level is defined as a family of four with an annual income of \$20,000 per year or less.

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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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/LACounty Treasurer,
427 E. Walnut Avenue, Burbank, CA 91501.

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



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