



LWV/LACounty

An Interleague Organization

VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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January 2015

Calendar 2015

Wed. Jan 14	Board Meeting,	Pasadena
Sat., Jan 31	Winter League Day	CANCELED
February 4	Board Meeting	Location TBA
Sat., Mar 28	County Convention	Carson Community Center
Fri - Sun, May 15-17	LWVC Convention	San Diego
June 19-21	LWVUS Council	Washington D.C.

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From the President's Desk...

Our year ends and begins with a deep sadness over the passing of Board Member Jack Sullivan. Jack, an emeritus professor of Political Studies at Pitzer College in Claremont, was a long-time friend and supporter of the League. He served on the State Board, was a member of the LWVC Natural Resources committee, had been active in EnAct, and was the County League's Natural Resources Director. His many contributions to the County Voter were informative and timely. Jack kept us all up to date on the many environmental issues facing California and Los Angeles County. We are thankful for the time and expertise he gave to the League. He will be missed by all.

We had planned our annual Winter League Day around water issues. The loss of Jack's insight and leadership was a setback for the program. Due to difficulties in obtaining speakers, plus a conflict with services for Jack, we have canceled the January County League Day.

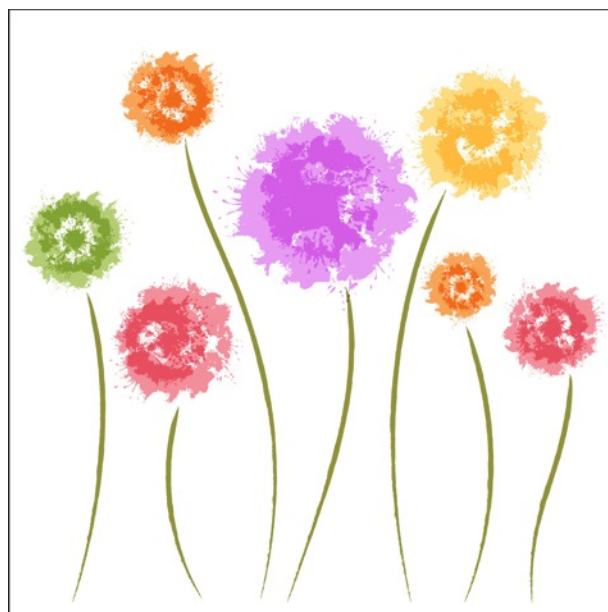
Just a reminder regarding program planning for LWVC. Your responses are due in February 2015. There is helpful program planning information on the LWVC website. As you hold your local program planning meetings, consider where there is the most need, where the League will be most effective, and what activities best serve our mission. And consider what resources are available to carry out program ideas that you discuss – including local resources. If you want to keep up with what other Leagues are considering, join the program planning listserve.

Circle March 28 on your calendars. That is the date of the County Convention. This year it will be a half-day session and will be held at the Carson Community Center in Carson.

Thank you all for the work you do with and for the League of Women Voters. You are the face of the League in the communities you serve.

Nancy

Nancy Mahr
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Human Trafficking Report

Jean Thomson, Committee Chair, LWVLosAngeles Human Trafficking

The monthly LWVLosAngeles unit discussion meetings were widely acclaimed! The speakers for each unit were experts in their field and helped us to gain an understanding of this horrendous, venomous plague that eclipses even drug trafficking. We had the pleasure of interesting college students from local colleges participating in our meetings.

Researching the internet, I was surprised at (and at the same time appalled that I was unaware of) the hundreds of videos, YouTube series, articles, and survivor stories, etc. that have been documented. Some described the worldwide instances of trafficking, some were within a specific country, and some were based in the U.S.

California is now getting a lot of attention within the law enforcement, legislative, and media areas. Many of the organizations trying to help victims are finally becoming recognized for their efforts, and the three entities are beginning to work together more solidly. The media is beginning to focus on the issue -- some newspaper journalists and network broadcasters have presented stories on this topic. The sensational nature of sex trafficking stories belies the fact that the incidence of labor trafficking is as common and detrimental to the victims.

Training of law enforcement officers is underway, and the recent passage of Senate Bill 1165 "will help expedite the adoption of sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education in schools across California". Billboards have been appearing locally, publicizing the anonymous hotlines. Recent legislation also assesses stiffer penalties for traffickers. The National Council for Jewish Women leads a coalition of non-profit organizations -- notably CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking) and the Mary Magdalene Project, along with both City and County officials -- to train volunteers who conduct outreach to ensure

that targeted businesses know about Senate Bill 1193. This law requires certain businesses to display posters that include information in three languages about human trafficking and hotline phone numbers.

It will take a tremendous amount of time and effort to reduce the problem of human trafficking. Victims continue to be stigmatized. Sometimes they feel their perpetrator is the only friend they have, sometimes victims are beaten viciously. Often the Stockholm Syndrome applies; creating a problem for the courts to convict the trafficker since the victim may be unwilling to testify against the perpetrator.

Law enforcement and the courts are beginning to see those who have been trafficked as victims, rather than criminals. However, a major problem is the lack of resources, housing, and wrap-around services (legal, health, job counseling, etc.) for the victims. Many organizations need more volunteers to help.



LWVUS Legislative Priorities

You're Input Welcome

It's a new year and a new Congress. The LWVUS Board will be setting legislative priorities for the upcoming session in January. We ask members and local Leagues to submit their suggestions. Here is some background for you to consider as you decide what you would like to recommend.

The Board sets priorities using this filter: opportunities for the League to make an impact; program decisions made at Convention and/or Council; member interest; and resources available to manage effectively. We also look realistically at the political climate and composition of Congress. And doing that, we have to acknowledge that the incoming Congressional leadership has issued statements that are not supportive of League program. Realistically, we will have to expend resources on defending voting rights and threats to existing campaign finance law, good climate change work and the Affordable Health Care Act. So as you consider what to recommend as legislative priorities, ask yourself how important you think it is for the League to fight for our core issues.

If you would like to make suggestions for LWVUS advocacy priorities, please email Advocacy Committee Chair Chris Carson at carsonlwv@yahoo.com. Please indicate whether the suggestions are from an individual member, a committee, board or membership meeting. **Suggestions must be received by January 12.**



Tried and Tested Ways of Reducing Jail Overcrowding

by Selena Teji, California Budget Project

On November 4, California voters approved Proposition 47, a measure that downgrades certain low-level offenses to misdemeanors, thereby limiting the sentence for those crimes to a maximum of one year in county jail. [CBP's analysis](#) of Proposition 47 concluded that this reduction in length of stay could not only lessen the harm that incarceration causes to an individual's physical and mental health, but could also alleviate jail overcrowding by thousands of beds each year.

This potential for reducing jail-capacity needs should come as good news to state officials, given that California has invested \$1.7 billion since 2007 to build new jails or replace and expand old ones, in part to address jail overcrowding. Indeed, the 2014-15 budget agreement provides an additional \$500 million for jail construction, despite concern expressed by the [Legislative Analyst's Office](#) that such added capacity may not be necessary.

While passage of Proposition 47 is expected to help address jail overcrowding, counties could potentially build on this key advance by more fully using several other alternatives to incarceration that reduce jail populations while fostering public safety:

- **Counties could employ validated risk-assessment tools to ensure that only individuals who pose a high risk to public safety are detained in their jails.** Contra Costa County has been able to manage its jail population through a combination of several strategies, including use of a risk-assessment tool to determine what level of supervision and services people in their jail require. According to a [recent study](#), Contra Costa County has achieved lower rates of incarceration than the

rest of the state along with a decrease in crime that mirrors the statewide trend.

- **Counties could reduce the number of people detained in jail prior to their court date by providing alternative supervision in the community.** Santa Cruz County created the [Jail Alternatives Initiative](#) in 2004 to address a grand jury report pointing to unsafe conditions in the local jail due to overcrowding. The initiative established a pretrial services program that uses five different types of release based on the needs of the individual. This has allowed the county to maintain lower numbers of people in jail awaiting their court date compared to the rest of California.
- **Counties could perform a comprehensive analysis of who is serving time in their jails to identify populations that would be better served through community-based programs.** The City and County of San Francisco Sheriff's Department has been collaborating with local nonprofit organizations since the 1980s to develop [alternatives to detention](#) for populations with specialized needs. In particular, a growing number of homeless individuals were not eligible for release from jail while they were waiting for their court date because they did not have an address. Additionally, homeless populations are particularly vulnerable to high-risk health factors, such as infectious diseases, problematic drug use, and mental health issues. A local nonprofit created the [Homeless Release Project](#), which identified transient individuals who were detained pretrial for misdemeanor crimes and linked them with housing, medical care, mental health and drug treatment, and other necessary

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 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

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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