



LWV/LAC VOTER NOVEMBER 2005



To Special Election LWV Voter Service Crews

cheers for all that dedicated energy

applause and

President's Message

Voter Apathy! Voter Burn Out!

We hear people worry and complain about low voter turnout and speculate as to the cause. So,

Clerks at the Jackie Robinson Center early voting site where I served as the Inspector decided to do something about voter awareness of our site and also perk up a slow day. What was their solution? They took a cue from tire dealers, cell phone stores, and student car washes: they stood on the street and waved the large VOTE HERE sign at the traffic. Our 19-year-old college student even walked across the crosswalk carrying the sign like a banner.

Amazingly enough our "business" picked up. About 20 voters came in during the hour that the clerks were actively marketing our location. Granted, most of those voters had their sample ballots with them so voting was not just an impulse, but several said they had been looking for the site. At times the call out to drivers was "Early Voters, Vote Here! Don't wait in a long line on November 8."

For several days during the early voting period, October 26 to November 4 we also gave voters a piece of Halloween candy. Would you guess Costumes and Masks on Halloween?

Of course, we voting "junkies" or "civic participation nuts" think that everyone should be as aware of the issues and as eager to vote as we are. But, since that isn't the case, we have to promote the cause of voting by creating interest in the ballot issues and representative bodies. A variety of methods could work: ads on buses, "cheerleaders" outside polling places, student debates on the ballot measures in class or on campus, provocative PSAs on radio, websites, strategic interviews.

The LWV Los Angeles teamed with Common Cause to present three different types of Pro and Con forums at three different universities during the weeks leading up to the election. The first, Proposition

Exposition on October 17 at USC, featured research by the USC California Policy Institute on three of the Governor's core reform initiatives—Prop. 74 (Teacher Tenure), Prop. 76 (Budget Caps), and Prop. 77 (Redistricting). Proponents and opponents also participated. The second, Hot Topics—Cold Facts, on October 22 at Loyola Marymount University, covered all the eight measures with the League presenting the proposed changes to statute and the Constitution while representatives of the Supporters and Opponents gave the arguments Pro and Con. The final event, Behind the Props, on November 2 at UCLA School of Law, also discussed all of the ballot measures. The event at USC was cosponsored with the Commonwealth Club of California. The League received funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to advertise the events at Loyola Marymount and at USC. The LMU event was televised by LA36 and on radio.

Using the power of university and civic partners to enlarge our audience and to engage young people in critical policy issues will enhance the League's effectiveness in the community.

Let's remember that doing something new or provocative may actually be "League-like" because it increases voter awareness and participation.

Margo

**VOTE on or before
NOVEMBER 8**

Now that we've done the above, we turn to the Other Sturdy Stuff of League: LAC League Day Land Use in Unincorporated Areas. Reservations to Treasurer by November 14 !!!



Various Views and Visions of Development in the Unincorporated Areas of Los Angeles County

The population of Los Angeles County is increasing as growth and sprawl extend to the unincorporated areas, workforce housing is becoming harder to find, traffic is at a standstill everywhere, open space is disappearing, and your taxes are going up, up, up.

Well known participants with various views and visions related to development in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County have been invited to attend a special League Day on Saturday, November 19th from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM at the new Buena Vista Library Community Room, 300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank.

Guest speakers will be **Helene Buchman**, Regional Transportation Planner (and LWV Torrance member); **Jan de Leeuw**, Distinguished Professor and Chair, UCLA Department of Statistics and representative of the Condor Group of the Sierra Club; **Claire Schlotterbeck**, Executive Director, Hills for Everyone, Chino-Puente Hills; and **a representative from Los Angeles County Regional Planning**. They will address growth, sprawl and related land use issues, incorporation and annexation, and the obstacles and advantages of development in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

Other special guests at the meeting will be 6 Russian visitors and an interpreter, who are spending a week in Los Angeles County through a national grant from LWVUS and are staying with members of the Claremont Area League.

There will be a PowerPoint presentation on Smart Growth. Then each panelist will be given 10 minutes to outline their views and visions related to growth, sprawl and related land use issues, incorporation and annexation, and the obstacles and advantages of development in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. Then we will have questions from the audience to round out the discussion.

Afterwards, members can enjoy lunch at various nearby League-member-recommended restaurants. The date again is **Saturday, November 19th from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM at the new Buena Vista Library Community Room, 300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank.**

There is a \$5.00 registration fee due by November 14th with light refreshments by the Glendale/Burbank League. Make checks payable to LWV/LAC and mail to LWV/LAC Treasurer, 427 E. Walnut Ave., Burbank 91501.

If you want to go and need a ride, I will be happy to coordinate carpools to the event. Please call me at 310-375-7410 or e-mail me at skyhawk172@socal.rr.com.

Lola Ungar, Land Use Director LWV/LAC

Directions

From the westbound 134 Fwy take the W. Riverside Dr. exit and turn right on Buena Vista. Library is on corner of Buena Vista and Verdugo. From westbound I-5 take the Olive Ave. exit and turn left. Follow Olive to Verdugo and turn right. 9 blocks to Buena Vista.

TAKING ACTION ON ISSUES

During the month of October, either officially as the President of the Los Angeles County League or as an individual League member, I have written many letters urging action by elected officials or the public. Issues ranged from the statewide ballot measures to Homeland Security, housing for hurricane evacuees, the Anti-Nonprofit Anti-voter education amendment to the Federal Housing Appropriations bill, an appropriations bill rider that supported drilling for oil in Alaska and along the California coast, a budget bill that would make over \$54 billion in cuts to valuable social service programs such as financial assistance to family foster care, food stamps for legal immigrants, student loans for college, medicaid, and support to SSI recipients, and the McCain amendment prohibiting torture of political detainees.

Letters urging voters to reject Props. 74 and 76 and to Vote with the League on all measures were sent to the LA Times but were not published. My Congressman Gary Miller (R-42) heard about the Non-Profit Gag Rule and the Budget Reconciliation bill because I called and wrote urging him to vote against these

punitive measures. The Gag Rule passed the House and the Budget bill was delayed over Veteran's Day weekend due to lack of enough votes. I contacted Sen. Dianne Feinstein concerning drilling in the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge and received an answer. I also contacted her about the McCain amendment to the Budget bill banning torture of political detainees.

We sent letters to Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, former President Jimmy Carter, and Los Angeles Supervisor Don Knabe concerning use of military bases as housing for hurricane evacuees. We received a lengthy answer from Supervisor Knabe on the County disaster preparedness plan and other security issues. The letter and Knabe's answer are printed in this VOTER.

I hope that many other League members have responded to the Action Alerts that have come from LWVUS or have been forwarded by local county League members. Our phone calls, emails and letters really do make a difference.

Margo

Letter sent by M Reeg, President LWV/LAC October 10, 2005 To the Honorable Don Knabe, Supervisor, District 4, Los Angeles County

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County has heightened its concern about emergency response and relief efforts to meet basic human needs in the event of a disaster – natural or terrorist – in Los Angeles County. The League has questions about the level of coordination among all responders, evacuation plans and availability of resources that would be required in addressing a disaster.

As the Los Angeles Times (9-11-05) noted in its "Put to Katrina's Test" article: "When it [a 42-page master plan to coordinate government agencies in a disaster] was unveiled in January, the Department of Homeland Security's National Response Plan promised 'vastly improved coordination among federal, state, local and tribal organizations to help save lives' from storms, floods, earthquakes or terrorist assaults..." Following Katrina, and to an additional extent Rita, most observers are still trying to understand how there seemed to be such an abysmal lack of coordination among all levels of responders. As the fatality list has grown and the number of dead increased, the perception is reinforced that there was a colossal breakdown in meeting

fundamental human needs at the local, state, and federal levels.

Your service as an appointee to the President's Homeland Security Advisory Council allows you a unique opportunity to work closely with the federal government and with leaders at other levels of government to assess and remedy contingency plans for responding to disasters. Public safety is fundamental to the mission of government. Clarity in mobilizing responses to a disaster is critical. Unfortunately Katrina has made it clear that much needs to be done to prepare a fully coordinated response to a disaster. And the rapid succession of another natural disaster, Hurricane Rita, in nearly the same area emphasizes that multiple disasters can and do occur in quick succession requiring multi-pronged relief and evacuation efforts. The same multiple disaster scenario could very well occur in Los Angeles County with an earthquake and fires. Both local and federal agencies must have plans ready. Your challenges are many as delineating plans for all levels of government proceeds.

Response October 26

Thank you for your recent letter regarding disaster preparedness within Los Angeles County. You make excellent points regarding our need to have strong plans that are well-coordinated at all levels of government.

County government has the awesome responsibility of investing its resources to prepare government and residents for disasters. As long as I have been a County Supervisor, and for many years prior to that, the Board of Supervisors has taken that responsibility very seriously.

Los Angeles County and its Cities use the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) to coordinate and respond to disasters. SEMS is based on the Incident Command System which was developed in California by Firescope in the early 1970s. SEMS provides common functional descriptions, common terminology, and a common organizational structure for the coordination of damage information and resource requests. Under SEMS, the County, also known as the Operational Area (OA) Coordinator, serves as the intermediate level of government that coordinates and communicates response needs between the Cities within its geographic boundaries and the State. As the OA Coordinator, we also coordinate pre-event planning, training, exercises, and much more with our Cities, community-based organizations, utilities, State agencies, and other OA partners. SEMS is an effective system that has served us well, ever since it was chaptered into law in 1995. Last year, President George W. Bush directed the entire nation to adopt a new National Incident Management System (NIMS). Much of NIMS is based on California's SEMS. The County of Los Angeles has already developed our NIMS Implementation Plan and is moving swiftly to integrate NIMS and SEMS for an even more successful Local, State, and Federal interface.

In 1989, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the development and construction of a State-of-the-Art County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC). We broke ground on the facility in 1992 and took occupancy in 1995. The CEOC is base-isolated to withstand an 8.3 earthquake. It has multiple redundant communications systems, fuel, water, emergency generators, audio/video capabilities, and a host of other technical capabilities. The CEOC is designed around the Incident Command

System, with planning rooms for Operations; Plans and Intelligence; Logistics; and Finance, Administration, and Recovery. The CEOC is equipped with an Emergency Management Information System that allows us to communicate directly with all 88 cities plus the Governor's Office of Emergency Services; County departments; Red Cross chapters; school districts; and other agencies using internet web--based technology. We are able to get rapid reconnaissance reports from our Cities, followed by more detailed damage information and resource requests. This ability to communicate with our Cities allows us to quickly identify areas of damage and to receive resource requests so that County and mutual aid resources can be sent to the impacted areas. We have a strong mutual aid compact in our State, which allows resources from local, State, and even other states' skilled responder pool to be deployed to the areas of greatest need. The County Fire Chief is the Fire Mutual Aid Regional Coordinator and our Sheriff is the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Coordinator. Consequently, we have well developed regional mutual aid plans.

Since disasters don't respect political boundaries, the County of Los Angeles continuously trains with other jurisdictions to simulate real-life situations. Every year, our Office of Emergency Management coordinates Countywide exercises for all County departments and all 88 cities. For the past several years we have concentrated on terrorist driven scenarios. Our program this year is based on an anthrax attack. It includes 36 tabletop exercises and will culminate in three CEOC functional exercises and a full-scale mass prophylaxis exercise.

Public education is an essential component of any preparedness program. The County's award-winning "Emergency Survival Program (ESP)" was developed in 1989 and has grown into an excellent multi-hazard program that is broadly used in California, as well as a number of other states and a few other countries. It is available on our OA website at www.lacoa.org and our ESP website at www.espfocus.org. Jurisdictions, disciplines, private and non-profit agencies are all encouraged to put their own logos on our materials. Our goal is to reach as many people as possible with preparedness information. We are best able to do that by making our materials accessible to everyone. We strongly believe in educating our residents on how to prepare themselves, since it is highly likely that in a disaster,

outside help will probably not be available for 72 hours or more.

As part of an in-depth review of the Hurricane Katrina response, the administrator of our County Office of Emergency Management was recently invited to testify before the House Committee on Government Reform regarding the County's preparedness. Los Angeles County was selected because we have experienced many Federally-declared disasters since the 1990's and because our emergency management program is highly regarded. In my opinion, Los Angeles County is very well-prepared and we are continuing to appropriate funds to ensure that we remain prepared. Since I am a member of the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee to the President's Homeland Security Advisory Council, I know that other counties are not as fortunate.

I believe that public awareness on this issue along with vital information on how to prepare for disasters is essential in keeping both local government and the citizenry prepared. I am willing to work with the League of Women Voters to do additional outreach or assist in any way possible.

Please know that this issue is very important to me and I very much appreciate the time you took to write to me.

*Signed Don Knabe,
Supervisor, Fourth District, County of Los Angeles*

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A Bit of Natural Resources Husbandry

from WatershedWise, Stormwater, Best Management Practices: A Primer. Newsletter of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Council, Vol 9, No. 12, Summer/Fall, 2005.

Stormwater Impoundment of Urban Run-off is a major potential source of water for the future, and one already being initiated. In wet years, such as 2004-2005, everyone bemoans Southern California's wasted water flowing into the sea. The recent issue of WatershedWise, published by the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council offers a series of essays and practical plans already being implemented in urban localities.

Vegetated roofs, sometimes called green roofs or living roofs prevent run-off while keeping buildings warm in winter and cooler in summer. Germany has been developing this technology for several years. A U.S. example, largest in the world, is the Ford Motor Company's 10 1/2 acre living roof on its Rouge River Plant in Dearborn, Michigan. In Los Angeles, there is a new green roof on the Science Center School in Exposition Park, and in Pasadena a green roof at the Art Center College. Gap Inc. headquarters in San Bruno, CA, finds their green roof insulates them from the noise of the San Francisco airport. Long Beach Aquarium's living roof will feature native coastal grasses. The University of Redlands has a new Environmental Center planted with native plants and built mostly underground. Saving water, saving energy, these are roofs for the future.

An impressive collection of practical approaches for individuals and communities are recounted as **"Best Management Practices" for saving stormwater**. Replacing impervious surfaces, installing catch basins or cisterns, efficient irrigation for homes and commercial landscapes, designing vegetated swales, plantings and buffer strips, or planning parks and playing fields to absorb water, building wetlands and detention ponds which slow run-off all offer major new approaches any community can initiate incrementally to save water for urban uses.

A major federally funded transportation bill, SAFE-TEA, carries innovative proposals for environmental enhancements of roadways for local cities added to the bill by Representative Linda Sanchez. In Whittier a stream-like bio-swale, natural landscaping, and a meandering path along a new roadway will allow water from run-off to flow through curb cuts and be naturally absorbed and filtered into ground water. For those persons worried that runoff will pollute the aquifer, another project of the Watershed Council has been a long-term research study exploring possible pollution from infiltrating run-off into aquifers. For four years researchers have monitored water infiltrated from six sites: two industrial sites, a school, a commercial building, a private residence, and a parking lot beside a park. Their conclusion is that "There is no significant degradation of groundwater quality from the infiltration of storm water-borne pollutants at these sites. In fact, groundwater quality has generally improved. Soil appears to be very efficient at removing bacteria from stormwater, and at trapping metals and other constituents." The long-term goal of this project is to develop a comprehensive regional strategy for implementing reduction of runoff and water saving for Los Angeles County. *Marlee Scaff, EnAct*

LEAGUE WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR REDISTRICTING REFORM

The LWVC issued this press release on Wednesday, November 9:

Yesterday the voters clearly said that Proposition 77 is not the way to reform the redistricting process in California. Jacqueline Jacobberger, president of the League of Women Voters of California, said, "Although the need to change the current situation is well recognized, voters understood that Prop. 77 had too many flaws to be a viable option for reform."

The League remains committed to pressing for a redistricting process that encourages public participation and scrutiny, has fair criteria for drawing the lines, and transfers responsibility for redistricting to an independent commission that reflects the interests and diversity of all California.

"Of all the issues on the special election ballot, redistricting offers the greatest promise for finding a fair, effective proposal that we can all endorse," said

Jacobberger. Since January, the League has worked with other public interest groups and policy makers to seek consensus on procedural reforms and substantive standards for districts.

"We saw the Governor and legislative leaders take steps toward redistricting by an independent panel, and during the campaign the media solidly endorsed that concept," she continued. "We pledge our efforts to redesign the redistricting process without the flaws that plagued Prop. 77. And we challenge everyone concerned about our representative democracy to work with us to put a real reform measure before California voters in 2006."

For more information, or to sign up for redistricting updates, visit the League's redistricting page at <http://lwvc.org/lwvc/action/redistrict/>

Program Planning – A Modest Proposal.

It's that time of the League year again; program planning for County for the next two years. So what are we going to do? The usual scenario is to adopt a new study or an update of an existing study and adopt some Issues for Education and Advocacy for the Board to keep an eye on. Instead of the same old, same old – I'd like to suggest the following alternative. Let's give a slightly new twist to Issues for Education and Advocacy. Why not select an issue of core importance to League that is timely for Los Angeles County and then spend a year or so working on it, in depth?

Here is an example: Campaign Finance Reform. We know that the law governing campaign finance reporting in LA County has never been enforced. Let's dig into this in a thorough League-like fashion. Hold a County League Day on the topic. Invite Robert Stern of the Center for Government Studies who wrote the original law; Susan Lerner from the Clean Money Campaign; an attorney from the LA County District Attorney's office who can speak to the practical enforcement issues and a representative from the County Registrar/Recorder who can speak to their problems.

Let them tell us: is the existing law enforceable? If not, why not? What would it take to make it enforceable? And where does public financing of campaigns in LA County fit it to all this?

At the end of the day, we'll have some idea of what the League might need to do about the current law. And members will have plenty of information to take back to their local Leagues about public financing of campaigns that they could use in their communities. Some Leagues are already at work on this issue and it will help build momentum at both county and city level. What emerges from this meeting could easily occupy the County League for the next two years.

This is one example; all of us could substitute other issues. But whatever the issue(s) chosen, it's an excellent method of educating ourselves about important public issues and building support for advocacy throughout Leagues in Los Angeles County.

Chris Carson, LWVC Government Director



League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County

Angeles County League is an inter-League organization with participants from the following Leagues: ities, Beverly Hills, Claremont, Downey, East San Gabriel Valley, Glendale/Burbank, Long Beach Area, Los Angeles, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Pasadena Area, Santa Monica, Torrance, and Whittier.

Various Views and Visions

Development in the Unincorporated Areas of Los Angeles County



Saturday, November 19, 2005

10 AM to 12:30

**Buena Vista Library Community Room
300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank**

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Panelists

Helene Buchman, Transportation Planner

Jan de Leeuw, Distinguished Professor and Chair, UCLA Department of Statistics
Representing the Condor Group of the Sierra Club

Claire Schlotterbeck, Executive Director, Hills for Everyone, Chino-Puente Hills

Representative, Los Angeles County Regional Planning

\$5.00 Reservation Fee

Refreshments by Glendale/Burbank League

Registration Deadline is November 14, 2005

Make check payable to **LWV/LAC**

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

Name(s): _____

League: _____

No. Reservations @ \$5.00 Total Reservation Fees \$ _____

**LWV/LAC VOTER
NOVEMBER 2005**

**Margo Reeg, President
Liz Allen, Editor
allenlw@aol.com**

We're on the Web!!
<http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org>



Happy Start of Holidays !!!

Mark your calendars:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| December 5 | EnAct meeting | Something on Green | TBA |
| December 13 | Board meeting | Pilgrim Place, Claremont | |
| January 28 | League Day on Energy study | Taix Restaurant, Los Angles | |
| March 25 | Los Angeles County Convention | | |