

# *LWV/LAC VOTER*

## *OCTOBER 2005*

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| Oct. 1  | LWVC Leadership Training in Riverside<br>9:30 - 3:00 (see Sept. VOTER)   | cosponsored by LWVLA, LWV/LAC and<br>Common Cause<br>(details: LWVLA 213.368.1616)   |
| Oct. 1  | Kick-Off for the No on Proposition 73<br>Campaign. Immanuel Presbyterian Church,<br>3300 Wilshire Blvd. 10:00 a.m.                         | Oct. 24 Last Day to Register to Vote   |
| Oct. 8  | Women's Studies at the Huntington<br>Library. 9:30 a.m. <i>Women in Poverty</i>  | Oct. 26 to November 4 Touchscreen Early Voting at<br>11 locations listed in your sample ballot   |
| Oct. 11 | LWV/LAC board Meeting in Glendale<br>10:00 a.m.  | Nov. 1 Last day to request an Absentee Ballot  |
| Oct. 22 | Action Presentation on Ballot Measures at<br>Loyola-Marymount Univ. 10:00 a.m. to noon.<br>Ahmanson Auditorium. 1LMU Drive,<br>Westchester | <b>Nov. 8 ELECTION DAY VOTE</b><br><b>Nov. 12 LWVLA Ed Fund Program Save the date</b><br><i>What's New: Changing Faces of the Media</i><br>Nov. 19 LWV/L:AC League Day on the County<br>Land Use Study 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.<br>at the Buena Vista Library in Burbank |

### *President's Message*

Election season is here again! For League people it seems that every season is election season in California! For some Leagues the primary focus is on local school board, water or library boards, and some city councils. For other Leagues a special election is or has been conducted to fill a vacant Assembly or Congressional seat. And for all, the state Special election on eight ballot measures means Pros and Cons engagements in the community and on cable TV.

But, for League presidents and Action Directors, this Special Election presents an awesome opportunity to tell the world of Southern California the League's positions on the ballot measures. We Oppose Propositions 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, and 78 and Support only Prop. 79. With positions on 7 of the 8 measures, we should be out in the community explaining why the League has taken these positions. The public needs to know that our positions are based on member study and consensus, but that the final decisions are made by our elected Board of Directors.

When the League takes action, we get to demonstrate that we have an understanding of the issues and reasoned arguments to defend our stance on these issues. We can dispel the image of blandness and aloofness that we sometimes generate at Candidate and Pro and Con forums. We should be firm and emphatic in arguing the reasons to oppose (at least in this election) most measures on the ballot. Voters need to hear a clear and reasoned explanation of the differences between Propositions 78 and 79, which both present plans for discounts on drugs, and why Proposition 79 is the answer.

To prepare to do Action, read the Action Guide from LWVC. The online version is on the Members only site at [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org). Choose the measures you want to focus on and check the materials of other organizations that are taking the League's position. Letters to the editor and Op-Ed pieces for which templates are in the Action Guide make taking action easier. Presidents and Action Directors may adapt the letter or the Op-Ed piece to reflect

specific circumstances in your community and send them off on League letterhead. The best timing is in response to a news article or a letter to the editor on that particular measure. League's arguments can be used to rebut another letter. If your League and an adjacent League share the same local newspaper try cooperating with that League to co-sign the letter and make publicity for both Leagues.

Use the "Vote With The League" handcards that were distributed at the Action Workshop on September 24. Print copies on colored paper or card stock, cut in fourths and distribute to friends, co-workers, neighbors, and at Candidate Forums, Farmers' Markets, etc. They can be made available at the end of Pros and Cons presentations for people who ask.

Print action articles in your VOTER. Articles for Prop. 76, State Spending and School Funding Limits, and Prop. 77, Redistricting, are in the Action Guide. Submit those articles as Op-Ed pieces. Make a point of discussing ballot measures with friends and

family. Point out the errors and distortions in TV ads and what the real provisions are.

Host a house party for one or more measures to promote the League's position and give attendees the opportunity to make contributions to the campaign. Here is an opportune time to join with other organizations like AAUW, Planned Parenthood, your local teachers or government employees union be more effective. You can speak to their group or they can provide a speaker for your party.

Volunteer for a phone back organized by a group working on a ballot measure, such as California Teachers' Assn. On Prop. 74, Public School Teachers-Permanent Status or Planned Parenthood on Prop. 73 Parental Notification. It is fun, it can be effective, and the message is scripted so it is easy.

This is an election where League and individual action is essential to counteract the huge amounts of money being spent to promote many ballot measures. It is really exciting and gratifying when grassroots efforts, one-to-one, or to a group or in the press can overcome the moneyed special interests.

*Margo Reeg, LWV/LAC president*

## **TAKE ACTION IN OCTOBER!**

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### **Reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act**

The Federal Voting Rights Act, initially adopted in 1965 and amended in 1975 and 1982, guarantees the right of all citizens to vote. It prohibits discrimination based on race and bans the use of practices that have the effect of discriminating against minority voters. The 1975 amendments to Section 203 requires jurisdictions with significant numbers of citizens whose English ability is limited to receive translated voting materials and to have language assistance in the polling place. The 1982 amendment extended the right to have voting materials be accessible to

voters who are blind, disabled or illiterate and to have assistance in the polling place. It also stated that practices needn't be a result of intentional bias to be considered discriminatory.

The Voting Rights Act is up for reauthorization in 2007 when certain amendments made in 1982 will sunset. A coalition of civil rights and good government groups are launching an education campaign to form citizens and Congress of the need to extend particular sections of the Act which define discrimination and require elections

officials to ensure that the laws and practices employed in the conduct of elections do not have the effect of discriminating against people of any minority or disability groups.

The Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights under Law, (LCCR), has established a National Commission on the Voting Rights Act which has been hearing testimony at sites across the country on current implementation of the Voting Rights Act and the need to extend its provisions. The Western Regional Hearing was held at the African-American Museum in Los Angeles on September 27, 2005. Among the few observers at the hearing were Thea Brodtkin, LWVLA, and Margo Reeg, LWV/LAC.

Members of the Commission before whom involved parties made testimony were Bill Lann Lee, former US Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Hon. John Buchanan, long-term former Congressman from Alabama, Chandler Davidson, Professor at Rice University, and Joe Rogers, recent Lt. Governor of Colorado.

In panels throughout the day, representatives of the election officials, policy makers, civil rights attorneys, and Asian and Latino activist groups cited their arguments for the need to reauthorize Sections 5 and 203 of the VRA.

Conny McCormack, L A County Registrar Recorder, stated that her department had taken great pains over the past 10 years to implement the requirements including ballot and sample ballot translation, recruitment and employment of multi-lingual pollworkers and hotline operators, as well as adopting voting equipment that is accessible to

physically disabled and blind voters. It was her opinion that she would not have had the money to pay for these additional accommodations had they not been required.

Robert Rubin, legal director for LCCR in the San Francisco, Joaquin Avila, Seattle University College of Law, and J. Morgan Kousser, professor at Cal Tech, each cited cases in California of election districts and practices that had the effect of shutting minorities, usually Latinos, out of power by the use of at-large voting districts or by dividing a minority population into several districts such that they were unable to elect a representative.

Rosalind Gold, senior attorney for National Assn. of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO), Eugene Lee, attorney for Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), Debbie Hsu Siah, Chinese Information Center of Seattle, Eun Sook Lee, executive director of National Korean American, Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC), Kathay Feng, Executive Director of CA Common Cause, and Carolyn Fowler, California Election Protection Network, cited examples of election discrimination in polling places, in the registration and voting process, in the Asian, Latino and black communities. Although great strides have been made in improving the election process, many minorities are still intimidated or baffled by the registration and voting process due to language or literacy difficulties and the complexity of the ballot. They all agreed that the provisions of sections 5 and 203 needed to be renewed to help new citizens and minorities participate fully in the democratic elections.

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## The League of Women Voters Recommends

November 8, 2005 Special Election

**X PROP 73 *Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy.* OPPOSE**

Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives and all parents want what is best for their children. But good family communication can't be imposed by government. Mandatory notification laws may sound good, but in the real world, vulnerable teenagers who can't talk to their parents may resort to unsafe, illegal abortions.

**X PROP 74 *Public School Teachers. Waiting Period for Permanent Status. Dismissal.* OPPOSE**

The League supports fair, rigorous, and effective teacher evaluation and tenure procedures. However, this measure raises questions of due process rights and may limit the use of dismissal for cause. It does nothing to encourage teachers to enter and remain in the profession.

**X PROP 75 *Public Employee Union Dues. Restrictions on Political Contributions. Employee Consent Requirement.* OPPOSE**

The League supports fair, even-handed campaign finance reform, but this measure is bad policy. It restricts public employee unions' use of member dues for political activity but has no similar constraint on corporations.

**X PROP 76 *State Spending and School Funding Limits.* OPPOSE**

This constitutional amendment changes the state's spending cap, increases the governor's power to make budget cuts, and revises the Proposition 98 minimum guarantees for state support of education. It reduces flexibility to address changing needs and will cause cuts in essential services. School funding will be permanently reduced by \$4 billion per year. Our system of checks and balances will be undermined by giving this and all future governors the power to make cuts unilaterally. This is not budget reform!

**X PROP 77 *Redistricting.* OPPOSE**

California needs to reform the way legislative and congressional district lines are drawn, but this flawed measure doesn't measure up. The makeup of its redistricting panel and its neglect of communities of interest in drawing plans are bad policy. This proposal calls for an immediate redistricting that would ignore three million new Californians, and it requires a cumbersome, wasteful ratification of every set of plans by the people.

**X PROP 78 *Discounts on Prescription Drugs.* OPPOSE**

There are two prescription drug initiatives on this ballot. Drug companies have contributed over \$50 million to support Proposition 78, an inferior program that depends on their voluntary participation.

**X PROP 79 *Prescription Drug Discounts. State-Negotiated Rebates.* SUPPORT**

Proposition 79 offers deeper drug discounts to nearly twice as many Californians as Proposition 78. It has an enforcement mechanism to hold drug companies accountable for providing discounts.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in **PROP 80, *Electric Service Providers. Regulation,*** the LWVC is remaining neutral on this initiative. 9/13/2005



**November 19<sup>th</sup> County League Day - Various Views and Visions of Development in the Unincorporated Areas of Los Angeles County**

Mark your calendar for a special County League Day which will be held on **Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM at the new Buena Vista Library Community Room, 300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank** related to development in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. This League Day is designed to give League members throughout the County more background and practical information to use in participating in the LA County Land Use study consensus which is due to Lola Ungar by January 25, 2006.

Well-known participants with various views and visions have been invited to attend. Thus far, we have received acceptances from **Jan de Leeuw**, Distinguished Professor and Chair, UCLA Department of Statistics and representative of the Condor Group of the Sierra Club and **Claire Schlotterbeck**, Executive Director, Hills for Everyone, Chino-Puente Hills. We are also awaiting confirmations from a planner with Los Angeles County Regional Planning and a developer from the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. 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.

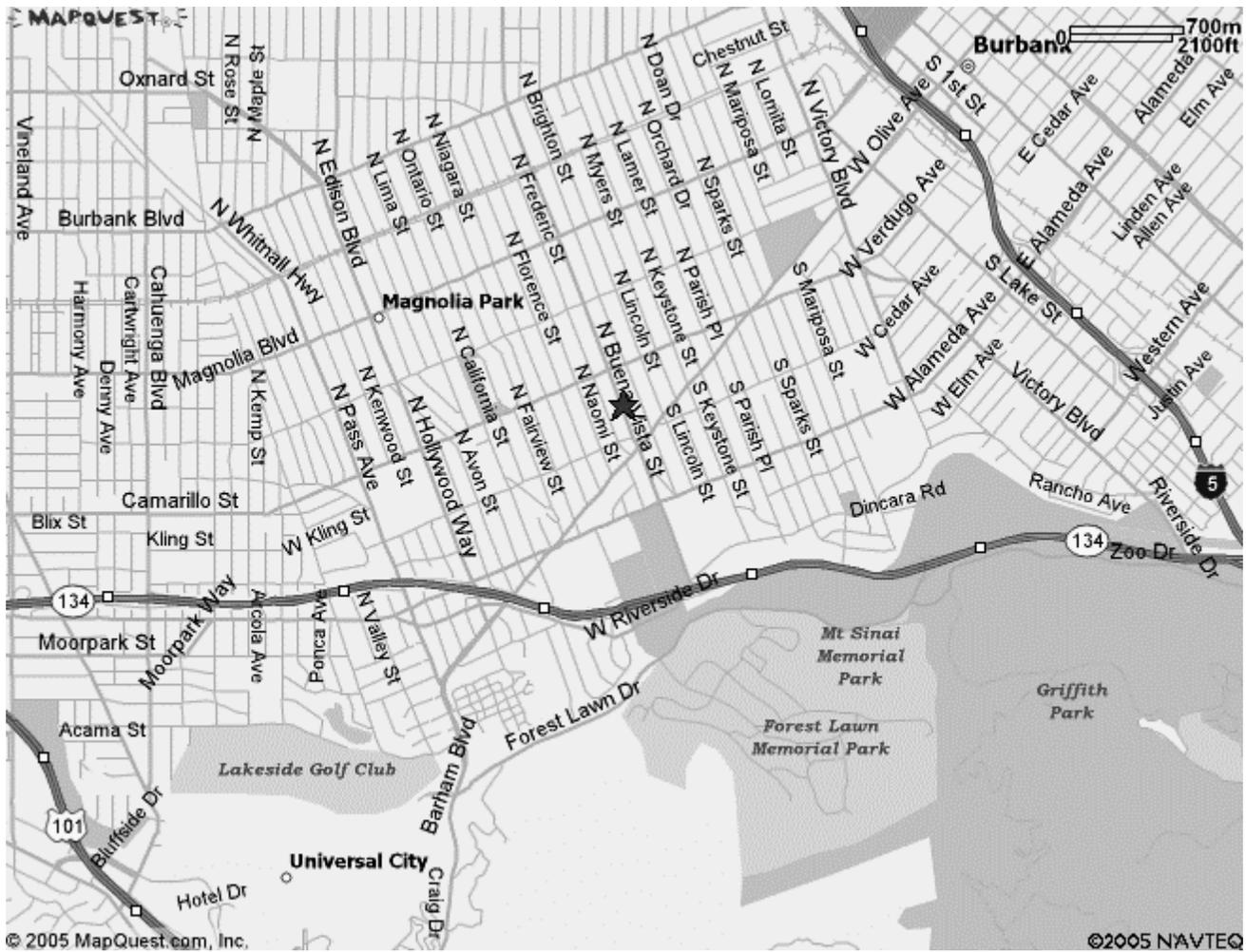
The Land Use/Smart Growth committee of the LWV/LAC has produced a wonderful Study Guide that addresses all the aspects of why you need to care, become aware and get involved with what is happening in Land Use in your area as well as in the unincorporated areas of the County. As more development is approved in outlying areas of the County, more of tax dollars will be needed to provide for the infrastructure and public services needed for those developing communities. Land Use committee members and others will benefit from reading the Study Kit material before attending this League Day.

The meeting will take place in the morning after which members can enjoy lunch at various nearby League-member-recommended restaurants. The date again is **Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM at the new Buena Vista Library Community Room, 300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank.**

There will be a \$5.00 registration fee 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.**

*Lola Ungar, Land Use*

Map Directions to Buena Vista Library, Burbank 300 North Buena Vista St., Burbank



September 19, 2005

Sara Conrath 202-263-1332

[sconrath@lww.org](mailto:sconrath@lww.org)

## LWVUS “Disappointed” in Carter-Baker Election Recommendations

**Washington, D.C.** – The League of Women Voters of the United States today expressed “disappointment” in the recommendations of the private Commission on Federal Election Reform released this morning in Washington, D.C. “We had hoped for better,” said Kay J. Maxwell, League President. “Instead of a set of well-reasoned, progressive ideas, the recommendations are a grab bag of recycled proposals.”

The Commission on Federal Election Reform was chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James Baker, and included many distinguished citizens. “While it is a good commission,” said Maxwell, “the recommendations miss the mark. We need to focus on the real needs in election reform,” Maxwell said.

“We need better elections management,” according to Maxwell, “and that means we need to build better institutional arrangements. We need to professionalize management. We need to instill a service focus into elections. We need to ramp up research and development on voting technologies and processes. And we need more federal and state resources and steady funding for elections in this country,” stated Maxwell.

“We don’t need another long list of 87 detailed changes just when election officials are working hard to comply with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA),” Maxwell said. “We need stricter enforcement of existing election laws, not a hodge-podge of old proposals. We certainly don’t need proposals that will make it harder for eligible citizens to vote,” concluded Maxwell.



# League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles County League is an inter-League organization with participants from the following Leagues: Beach Cities, 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**

### Panelists

**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

**Planner**, Los Angeles County Regional Planning

**Developer**, Unincorporated Area of Los Angeles County

\$5.00 Reservation Fee

Refreshments by Glendale/Burbank League



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**  
October 2005

**Margo Reeg, President**  
**Liz Allen, Editor**  
[allenlwv@aol.com](mailto:allenlwv@aol.com)

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

**Internet Election Resources For November 8, 2005**

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|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Smart Voter</b><br>Statewide propositions plus local candidates & issues on your ballot, with extensive background materials and media links—from LWV California Ed Fund     | <a href="http://www.smartvoter.org">www.smartvoter.org</a> | <b>CA Voter Foundation</b><br>Data on campaign contributions to candidates and measures  | <a href="http://www.calvoter.org">www.calvoter.org</a>         |
| <b>L.A. County Registrar-Recorder</b><br>Election calendar, polling place look-up, absentee voting info, multi-lingual voting materials, locations for Touchscreen early voting | <a href="http://www.lavote.net">www.lavote.net</a>         | <b>CA Budget Project</b><br>Analyses the fiscal effects of statewide ballot measures   | <a href="http://www.cbp.org">www.cbp.org</a>                   |
| <b>Easy Voter Guide</b><br>Concise facts on statewide propositions; Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese, and English   | <a href="http://www.easyvoter.org">www.easyvoter.org</a>   | <b>EdSource</b><br>Organization founded by LWV, PTA, & AAUW that publishes research on education funding and accountability issues | <a href="http://www.edsource.org">www.edsource.org</a>         |
| <b>Secretary of State</b><br>Official text of ballot measures; state ballot pamphlet  | <a href="http://www.ss.ca.gov">www.ss.ca.gov</a>           | <b>I&amp;R Institute</b><br>USC's Initiative & Referendum Institute that studies ballot measures nationwide                        | <a href="http://www.iandrinstute.org">www.iandrinstute.org</a> |
| <b>CA Legislative Analyst</b><br>Analyses of all ballot measures  | <a href="http://www.lao.ca.gov">www.lao.ca.gov</a>         | <b>IGS</b><br>UC Berkeley's Institute for Governmental Studies   | <a href="http://www.igs.berkeley.edu">www.igs.berkeley.edu</a> |

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