



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

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LWV / LACounty Board of Directors 2009

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Nominations
Amy Bishop Dunbar

Calendar 2009

October 7	Board Meeting at Pasadena Area League Office
October 10	LWVC Regional Workshop in Covina (see flyer inside)
November 4	Board Meeting
December 2	Board Meeting and Holiday Lunch
Save The Date!	
January 23, 2010	Winter League Day at Buena Vista Library in Burbank

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From the President's Desk...

November is just around the corner and that means elections. County Leagues are gearing up for their local elections – which always mean lots of candidates forums. Please encourage candidates for local election to put their information on Smart Voter.

Over the next few months, the County League Board will devote a portion of every board meeting to the County Jail Study. The small, but dedicated committee has visited the Twin Towers jail and produced a first draft of materials. Anyone interested in participating in the discussion and research is welcome to join the board on the first Wednesday of each month. The Jail Study discussion will usually begin about 11:30 a.m.

We are facing many public issues of interest and concern to LWV – health care reform, water, redistricting, the movement to convene a state constitutional convention, to name a few. The public needs reliable information on these issues, and the League can provide it. This means a lot of program work in addition to our voter service responsibilities. The LWVCA and LWVUS websites have useful resources for use in developing public education/civic engagement programs.

County League Nominating Committee Chair Amy Bishop Dunbar will soon be working on a slate of nominees for the LWV/LACounty Board of Directors Please think about possible candidates and give your recommendations (or volunteer) to Amy (310-600-2479).

Nancy

SHERIFF BACA SPEAKS ABOUT THE JAILS

by **Betsey Coffman**

On Saturday, July 25th, Sheriff Lee Baca spoke to County League members at our summer luncheon and workshops meeting, “Popovers in Pasadena”. Scattered among bits of wisdom and philosophy, he gave us the following facts and figures about the Los Angeles County Jail System:

- The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) has a budget of \$2.5 billion per year, of which the jails’ share is \$700 million.
- There are eight jails in the County System, spread from Lynwood to Bauchet Street in downtown L.A., to Castaic and Mira Loma in the north County.
- The average amount spent per inmate per year is \$32,000.
- The average inmate cost is \$60 - \$70 per day, but for some inmates with medical problems, the cost can be \$600 - \$700 per day.
- 2,000 inmates are mentally ill.
- The Jail employs more than 1,200 nurses, a group described by the Sheriff as “phenomenal”.
- 4,000 of Jail inmates are gang members and 4,000 of Jail inmates are illegal immigrants.
- The average pretrial time spent in the Jail is over one year per inmate.
- Five percent of felons go to trial. The other 95% are convicted and sentenced through plea-bargaining.
- 700 persons accused of murder are awaiting trial.
- Hundreds of persons accused of drug dealing are awaiting trial.
- 2,000 men and 500 women inmates in the Jails are homeless.
- The recidivism rate for the County Jails is 70 %.

Sheriff Baca spoke about educational programs in the Jail, but noted that the System has the authority to provide such programs only to those who have been sentenced. The Hacienda-La Puente School District runs the Jail school program, which includes opportunities to earn a GED [Graduate Equivalency Diploma]. The Inmate Welfare Fund, which includes monies collected from food sales, helps to support the cost of educational programs.

Other jail programs provide help for inmates with their personal problems. IMPACT involves former addicts helping with the rehabilitation of inmate addicts. A similar program for inmates guilty of domestic violence is offered. There are also over 300 members of the clergy who work with inmates.

Sheriff Baca said it is a fallacy that time in jail rehabilitates. More education is needed – the day that someone comes to jail, is the day his or her educational program should begin. He cited the work of a cancer-stricken Lieutenant in the System who asked in his last year to start a program for inmates, which included teaching a new way of looking at words. The inmates’ words and attitudes were negative – the Lieutenant emphasized the positive, both in words and relationships. According to the Sheriff, learning is about trust. Students must learn to trust their teacher, and then the teacher can teach substantive material, which the learner can accept, and use.

We are hopeful that the Sheriff’s message will inspire members in our local Leagues to become interested in our County League Jail Study.

Viola Iungerich and Betsey Coffman, Co-Chairs, continue working and plan to get study packets out to our Leagues at the County Convention in March 2010.

LWV/LACounty Program Planning
Looking Forward – And Back
By Katherine Dunlap

Broken record or golden opportunity? Take your pick. We once again come to the point where we must look back at our positions and look forward toward adopting a new study for the next two years, or readopting an ongoing study.

LWV/LACounty chooses new studies, or “no new study”, and reopts its positions in even numbered years, at the LWV/LACounty convention in March. But now is your opportunity to think of issues of importance to League, submit your ideas to the board so that all ideas can be circulated to all the Leagues of L.A. County and all members can share in deciding what subject should be tackled next.

At its September meeting, the board voted to recommend a continuation of the study of the Los Angeles County Jail System, which was adopted as a two-year study in 2008. The study committee, headed by Betsey Coffman and Vi Iungerich, has made an impressive start on this large and complex subject. However, the committee needs to be enlarged and needs more time to complete the work started.

It will be up to the members at convention to decide whether to continue the study or not, or if some other subject needs our work. So we are now asking member and Local Leagues to submit ideas for new study, as well as areas in our positions that may need strengthening or restudy, or even deletion.

Keep in mind that a county study needs to focus on something that is within Los Angeles County (as opposed to within an individual city in the county), preferably that has a governmental component and is something where League can make a difference. Remember, without study and membership consensus leading to new or updated positions, League cannot act. It all starts with suggestions for new study made by members.

Please email (Katherine.dunlap@att.net) or send your suggestions and comments about our positions by November 15, 2009, to:

Katherine Dunlap
LWV/LACounty Program Development Director
2105 Ames Street
Los Angeles, CA 90027

All suggestions will be compiled and sent to all Local Leagues so that Leagues can respond by January 2010 with choices for new study.

Our current positions can be found at the bottom of the following web page:

<http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org/about.html>.

Note: the positions file still shows the date of 2006-2008 because there have been no changes in positions since it was published.

This is the time to seize the opportunity to make your voice heard in League and help keep the grassroots growing in this unique organization.

LWVC REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The East San Gabriel Valley League invites you to learn what the League does and how it does it!

Date & Time: Saturday October 10 - Registration 9:30 am
Workshop ends at 2:30 pm

Location: Covina Woman’s Club
128 S. San Jose Avenue
Covina CA 91723
Just off Badillo St., between S. Citrus and S. Barranca Avenues

Price: \$30 / person; (\$15 if you bring own lunch)

Topics: “Constitutional Reform: What’s Happening and What You Can Do to Make It Happen”

“Political, YES; Partisan, NO!
Walking the Fine Line”

“Tools You Can Use: A Guided Tour
of the League’s Members’ Only Web Page”

“The Welcoming League: Engaging and Retaining
Your Members”

**Write checks payable to LWVC & mail with form to:
LWV East San Gabriel Valley, P.O. Box 4242, Covina CA 91723**
Questions? Email Rosie Fabian rfabian2000@msn.com
or Caroline deLlamas cdellamas@cs.com

Name _____ **League** _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

SEAL THE HOUSE, SAVE SOME ENERGY

by John Sullivan & LWV Claremont Area Sustainability Committee

It is quite clear that we must all participate in efforts to make our lifestyles more sustainable. The effect of increasing demand and impending drought conditions on our limited water supply cannot be ignored. Neither can the reality of climate change and the need to reduce our dependence on carbon-based fuels which generate greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. In the area of water, the City of Claremont and Golden State Water have each adopted strategies that will lead to a reduction in our water consumption. In the area of energy, the State of California has embarked on an ambitious program to reduce global warming gases in California. In addition, the marketplace is responding to increasing concern about global warming by offering more fuel-efficient autos and more hybrid autos, along with increasing generation of electricity from alternate energy sources such as wind and the sun.

At the household level, we can all do much to increase water conservation and decrease our energy consumption. Paying attention to outdoor use of water by not over-watering, and to indoor use by turning off taps when the water is not really needed (i.e., while brushing teeth) can collectively save a great deal of water. With respect to energy, retrofitting homes is likely to produce the greatest and most immediate increase in our efficient use of energy. For example, sealing the building shell, fixing leaky and un-insulated ducts, making sure there is enough attic insulation and that it is installed correctly, weather stripping door and windows, etc, can all contribute to dramatic increases in energy efficiency at the household level. One way to approach the problem of how best to decrease energy use is for homeowners to have energy audits done on their homes. Southern California Edison will arrange for a person to visit and do a free walk-through audit, but such audits usually leave one wondering what it is best to do next and how to do it.

There are also more sophisticated audits that can be done. These typically involve a cost to the homeowner. These audits use state-of-the-art monitoring techniques, such as heat-sensing photography for poor insulation and pressure testing for air leaks. These techniques can alert you to areas where you are wasting energy, and make it possible to create a house-specific plan which lists possible measures in order of their cost-effectiveness. National standards are now available for use by trained and qualified contractors. Rebates and incentives, which are increasingly available, along with the money saved by decreased usage, can offset retrofit costs. Substantial further cost reductions are possible if a group of homeowners contract together for audits and retrofits.

All residents of L. A. County are encouraged to implement at least some of the items listed above, and perhaps consider a high-tech audit and energy-saving improvements for their homes. The ultimate goal should be to retrofit each home as appropriate, reduce energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and, the icing on the cake, save money as a result.

You can find additional information at the following sites:

<http://www.builditgreen.org/home-energy-retrofit-programs-local-government>

<http://www.green.ca.gov/EnergyPrograms/Rebates.htm>

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.

SUBSCRIBE to the VOTER

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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