



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 10 -
LWVUS Convention

June 17-
LWVLA
Annual Meeting
Please RSVP and
bring your meeting
kit

July 1- Annual
Membership -
Renewal for all

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE... "Decisions, Decisions, Decisions"

It is time for local, county, state and national Leagues to gather members into conclaves where they will consider issues for study, voters service and action agendas, consider how money will be spent, and decide who will lead for the next year or two. As always, it is the local Leagues that must pay attention to all levels of conference and discourse for very important reasons.

- Local Leagues pay a portion of each local membership fee to support their county, state and national counterparts. This money flows up not down. Out of each membership LWVLA pays \$1.50 to LWV/LAC; \$21 to LWVC and \$23.80 to LWVUS.

Therefore local Leagues CARE about budget decisions and particularly if the budget of another level of League will be balanced as a result of increasing the share we locals must send up.

- Local Leagues are affected by positions taken at higher levels. A local League cannot adopt a position or take action in a way that opposes the position of a broader level of League. We must be part of the decision about positions at all levels because we must live by them.

(continued on next page)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont.)

- Local Leagues are asked to put feet to the ground, pen to the paper, and resources to create events for education and action on issues selected by national, state and county levels of League. Occasionally there is grant support for program events that higher levels of League ask of locals but not often. We need to know what is coming and how to fit it into our budget and our local year of activity.
- Local Leagues are where most members are recruited, where members learn League, where members start up the leadership ladder. Our leaders at each level reflect who League is and what League can accomplish. We care about who gets elected to all levels of the League.

In the next two months, LWVLA delegates will attend three conclaves. LWVC Leadership Council (May 6 & 7) will be in Sacramento giving us the opportunity to pass a budget for LWVC and consider our state legislative priorities as well as participate in workshops. We look forward to participating on a panel that will share knowledge about how our system of creating local Pros and Cons can be shared with other local Leagues. We will also learn the specifics of laws which govern elections for non-public entities so that LWVLA can position itself to be a more informed third-party election arbiter for such groups in the future.

Seven LWVLA members will attend LWVUS National Convention, "*Meeting in the Middle*" (June 9-13) in Minneapolis. There are many issues at stake including a proposed increase in our share of fees sent to National from each of our member's dues as well as the election of a new National League President. Look for more information about the issues at stake in this VOTER. If you have something to add to the knowledge and point of view that our delegates will take to convention on an issue, please add your voice by contacting me at president@LWVLosangeles.org

Finally, our LWVLA members will gather on June 17 for our own Annual Meeting in the morning, followed by a lunch with energetic, informed panelists. This is the opportunity for each member to be heard on issues to be considered for next year's agenda, our budget, and the election of our leaders. Your leaders are working very hard to know and then place the concerns of LWVLA within the larger League context. They are making decisions, decisions with your input and on your behalf. Annual Meeting is the time for us to come together and recognize where those decisions have taken us and where they will lead us next year.

-Liza White, President

REVOLVING DOOR II

Back by popular demand, and in another spectacular venue, LWVLA will be presenting a symposium of those intimately involved in the incarceration and subsequent probation/parole of inmates in our community. With a background of "*Fire!: Photographs from LA County Probation Camp Louis Routh*" exhibition, we will examine what is happening to those temporarily housed in the jails, juvenile camps, or prison. A deputy from a camp, as well as a previous occupant, will be involved in the forum. What happens when the incarcerated face release from their sentences? Representatives from the system, from the Probation Department, organizations trying to help the transition of the releasees, and judges involved in sentencing will be speaking.

Come join us and find out what happens to a large group of our population, what works and what does not. What happens to those convicted of a felony but serving a probationary sentence in jail -- what is their status? Can they vote? Have they lost their rights? Call the LWVLA office at 213 368 1616 for a reservation to this free symposium: **July 15 10:00 a.m. to Noon, USC Institute for Genetic Medicine Art Gallery, 2250 Alcazar Street, 2nd Floor Los Angeles, CA 90033-9075**

TIME FOR MEMBER'S INPUT: Delegates Go Informed To Minneapolis

The life of a local League member can be so hectic and rewarding that we don't give much thought to the business of the National League. But with the June National convention, *Meeting in the Middle*, it is very much on some of our minds. It is at convention that membership determines future study topics, the rules that govern the League and that perennial favorite – PMP (per member payment). From the buzz on the convention list-serve we will be learning and sharing so much more.

The range of caucus topics reflects the broad interests of the people who join the League: from health care reform to the wetlands after Katrina, and from preserving our civil liberties to internet neutrality. Our seven delegates will be kept busy with the thirty plus caucuses that are planned.

From a total of 73 topics (agricultural policy to weapon systems) suggested for study, the one receiving the most requests– immigration policy – was selected as a recommended item by the Board for the next national study. The Board has strongly suggested that we undertake only one study due to the cost of conducting studies. Some members have questioned why studies are costing so much. Shouldn't we be using member expertise to research and develop our studies? There will be a caucus devoted to alternative ways to conduct studies including greater use of new (internet/teleconferencing) and old (good old member expertise and energy) technologies. What do you think?

The Illinois League has asked delegates to adopt by concurrence a new national position: *The League of Women Voters of the United States supports the abolition of the death penalty*. In their arguments for concurrence they note that after study eleven other Leagues have arrived at the same decision. With the cost and time consideration of a study in mind...should LWVLA support the concurrence?

Two Leagues have proposed bylaw amendments that could have a significant effect on the National League. One is called the sunshine amendment: it calls for roll call voting on all main motions and making electronic transcripts of the board meetings available to any member who requests them, at cost. (Confession: I have yet to be able to figure out where a member can see the National Board minutes currently.) The other is referred to as the grassroots democracy amendment: it calls for allowing all members to vote for the National Board and for the nominating committee to offer more candidates than there are seats on the board so that members actually get a choice and more points of view can be heard. What do you think?

At the 2004 convention the delegates passed a resolution regarding electronic voting that came to be known as SARA:

*In order to ensure integrity and voter confidence in elections, the LWVUS supports the implementation of voting systems and procedures that are **secure, accurate, re-countable, and accessible.***

Members from Leagues throughout the country have felt that the National Board's interpretation of SARA has tied their hands in dealing with their state and county election officials to the detriment of both our democracy and the League's reputation. A new resolution with more specific language is likely to be introduced. What do you think? For more information go to <http://www.lwvmosaic.org/> and <http://www.grassrootsteam.com/>

Your delegates are Liza White, Frances Talbott-White, Jean Thomson, Maryilyn Johnson, Margie Engel, Thea Brodtkin and Helaine Blatt.

Please let us know your thoughts addressed to president@lwvlosangeles.org

-Margie Engel, Member

ADVOCATES MOBILIZE TO MOVE SB 840 TO GOVERNOR'S DESK

Years of pushing forward through health care studies and prior single-payer legislation have led to SB 840 (Kuehl) that provides for universal health insurance for Californians. Initiated by Health Care for All-California (HCA), this bill, with 39 coauthors, has passed the Senate and the Assembly Health Committee, and now is poised to pass in the Assembly. The issue of universal single-payer health care is in the public view and is a top priority for the people of California. Throughout this longtime effort, the League of Women Voters of California has supported HCA's efforts including every legislative attempt to achieve universal, single-payer health care.

Now is the time to escalate this effort and build support by creating a massive grassroots movement. The LWVC has endorsed HCA's OneCareNow Campaign for passage of SB 840 and urges Leagues to increase their effort to help pass the bill. The Campaign defines, in simple terms, a unique California vision for single-payer health care. "OneCareNow" means one plan, now. It means one standard of high quality care for all. It means everyone will be in one risk pool and covered by one insurance fund.

The Campaign's organizational framework for building the movement into a major political force is the statewide petition drive and 365-city campaign. The petition drive is spreading across the state and can be accessed at **OneCareNow.org**. Its growth will accelerate quickly as advocates and petition signers spread the word about this viable solution to the health care crisis.

The central idea of the 365-city campaign is simple. Starting August 12, there will be an activity held every day for a year in a different town or city that will focus on education and advocacy for universal health care insurance. Activists will reach out to local governments, schools, officials, officeholders and others to grow the support. These activities will begin in small towns and culminate 365 days later in the

largest city, Los Angeles, on August 12, 2007. A week later, on August 19, 2007, people from these 365 cities and throughout the state will hold a huge rally in Sacramento to call for universal health insurance.

Other organizations also are gearing up to work for SB 840. The California Nurses Association is now a sponsoring organization. Others, such as the California Physicians Alliance, California Teachers Association, California School Employees Association, Latino Issues Forum and the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, California, have indicated that passing SB 840 is a top priority. Others will join and involve their members in the campaign.

The Campaign, and at this time especially the petition drive, is critical to building the momentum to get SB 840 to the governor's desk this year. SB 840 will require a simple majority to pass. Intense support from constituents will move the Assembly to pass the bill. The LWVC urges Leagues to participate in the campaign at the highest level possible for their members.

Passage of SB 840 will pave the way for final enactment of universal health insurance. The Campaign will continue to work for passage of SB 1784 (Kuehl), a companion bill for SB 840 introduced this year to provide the funding mechanism for the state's new universal insurance fund. Senator Kuehl and other legislators are working to define the complex details that must be added before this bill can move forward. SB 1784 will require a two-thirds majority to pass.

Working closely with HCA, the LWVC's eight health care committee members are well informed on the issues. Each member has been assigned as a resource person for about nine Leagues. All League presidents will soon receive more information to provide to interested members.

-Barbara Storey, LWVC Program Director for Health Care, bs_lwv004@cox.net.

HOMELAND SECURITY : "How Is It Working at Home? - Emergency Preparedness in the Los Angeles Area" PART I

During the past six months LWVLA and other Leagues, from surrounding communities, have been participating in a National League initiative which asked questions about our public policies, practices and resources being used to achieve emergency preparedness. LWVLA's project included interviews with over sixty officials from local cities and LA County, first responder agencies, representatives of the Los Angeles World Airport, the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, research institutes, schools, businesses, and hospitals. Additionally, Los Angeles City College collected surveys from more than 250 residents. Key findings from these efforts will be outlined in the next VOTER. A report will be presented to Mayor Villaraigosa's office and the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Homeland Security.

On April 22 LWVLA hosted a community education forum, *"Homeland Security, How Is It Working at Home?-Emergency Preparedness in the Los Angeles Area"*, held at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Headquarters Building. The forum included a presentation of the findings from interviews and presentations by local leaders who have responsibility for planning or implementing emergency response.

Rather than speaking generally we asked our panel of speakers to address two emergency scenarios in their presentations. The first scenario envisioned a major earthquake occurring at 2:30 pm, on a weekday in downtown Los Angeles. The second scenario involved unknown persons shooting and critically injuring dozens of students and faculty at a Los Angeles area high school.

Our panel of speakers included: Chief Sandra Hutchens of the Los Angeles County Sheriff-Office of Homeland Security; Kay Fruhwirth, Assistant Director of Emergency Medical Services Agency- Los Angeles County

Department of Health; Ellis Stanley, Manager of the Emergency Preparedness Department of the City of Los Angeles; Assistant Chief Michael Fulmis of the Los Angeles Fire Department; Bob Spears, Director of Emergency Services- Los Angeles Unified School District; Scott Drury, Emergency Services Manager for the Southern California Gas Company; and Nick Samaniego of the Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles.

The speakers answered questions about their planning, training, their organizational structure, roles and responsibilities and what they would expect of residents in each of these scenarios.

The LWVLA committee will continue working on this project and will be preparing DVDs of the forum originally taped by Channel 36. League speakers will be going out to community organizations with edited DVDs to bring this important information out to a broader audience. If you would like to participate in this ongoing effort as a speaker, contact the Los Angeles League office.

-Lynn Lowry, Project Coordinator

POLLWORKERS 'R US?

It's a hard job, with long hours and low pay, but someone has to do it.

The County of Los Angeles urgently needs pollworkers for the June 6 Primary Election. You can apply by calling the Office of the County Registrar of Voters, (800) OPTION7 (815-2666). There is paid training prior to serving.

It's hard to think of an opportunity that is more in concert with the mission of the League of Women Voters. There is ongoing controversy over voting methods, but there should be no doubt that the integrity of our electoral process depends heavily on the integrity and competence of the people who run the elections, the pollworkers – consider being one of them.

-Elizabeth Ralston, Member

WHAT ACTION ARE WE TAKING?

Term Limits

Discussion with representatives of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce considering a campaign for either eliminating or extending term limits within the City is ongoing. Cindy O'Connor is leading this effort.

Clean Money Town Hall Meetings

Clean Money Campaign, California Common Cause, the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, along with Council Members Eric Garcetti, Wendy Greuel, and Bill Rosendahl, are co-sponsoring a series of Town Hall meetings that began May 9, 2006. The first one was held in Colfax Elementary School, 11724 Addison Street, Valley Village. Another meeting was held at Venice High School, in Mar Vista, on May 30, 2006. The series of discussions aims to raise public awareness and understanding of full public financing of campaigns. Panelists were Bill Boyarsky, Vice Chair, Los Angeles City Ethics Commission; Susan Lerner, Executive Director of California Clean Money Campaign; Bob Stern, President, Center for Governmental Studies; and Cary Davidson, Partner, Reed & Davidson, LLP. Patt Morrison, *Los Angeles Times* columnist and host of "Talk of the City" on KPCC, will serve as moderator.

Health Care Committee

LWVC has Health Care as an issue of action for 2005-2007. LWVLA is forming a Health Care Committee in order to participate vigorously in this action. Health Care for All-California (HCA) is the umbrella organization for those organizations, like the League, which support universal health care in California. HCA is promoting the *OneCareNow* Campaign for passage of SB 840. The Campaign defines in simple terms, a unique California vision for single-payer health care. "OneCareNow" means one plan, now. The Campaign's organizational framework for building the movement into a major political force is a statewide petition drive and 365-city campaign. The 365-city campaign will begin on August 12, 2006, with an event in a small town; promote an event each day thereafter in different cities, and then culminate

with a major event in Los Angeles on August 12, 2007. The Health Care Committee will be working on keeping track of our efforts for the statewide petition drive and in planning for the Los Angeles event on August 12, 2007. For more information, please see the article on pg. 4 by Barbara Storey, LWVC Program Director for Health Care. If interested or need more information, please contact Cecilia Schlesinger at 213/368-1616 or action@lwvlosangeles.org

-Cecilia Schlesinger, Action Chair

JULY 1 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Remember, we are simplifying our local renewal process and conforming to National League's membership calendar, by changing to **one** annual renewal date for all members effective **July 1, 2006**. You will be getting a renewal envelope in June asking you to send in your annual dues by July 1 for the fiscal year 2006-2007. Although this is a plus for some and a minus for others, depending on your current renewal date, we know you will understand that once this is done, everyone will have the same renewal date. Our ability to process membership effectively will be greatly enhanced and we thank you for your cooperation.

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The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles is a nonpartisan organization open to all citizens, men and women, of voting age. The League's purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

STATEWIDE VOTER REGISTRATION DATABASE PROBLEMS

While much of the recent election reform discussion has focused on voting systems – electronic machines versus paper ballots -- current problems in California have shifted some of the focus to another major election change: the federally-mandated statewide voter registration database. This state voter list, called CalVoter, is mandated by The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) and is raising concerns that the way it is being implemented in California could potentially disenfranchise large numbers of voters.

HAVA requires each state to implement “a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive statewide voter registration list” by January 1, 2006. Since the State of California could not have such a database in place by this deadline, the U.S. Department of Justice and the California Secretary of State entered into an agreement to update and use the existing system for HAVA compliance. Emergency regulations were adopted by the Secretary of State to implement that agreement.

Everyone who registers to vote, whether new or re-registering, after January 1, 2006, must provide their drivers’ licenses or last four digits of their social security number. This is to allow the Secretary of State’s office to compare the information on the voter registration form with other state databases to verify that voters are who they say they are.

Using the new state rules, nearly 25% of voter registration forms submitted for verification in the state have been rejected since January 1. In Los Angeles County, 43% of voter registrations were rejected. Many of the rejections occurred because California required an exact match with DMV records.

LWVC, along with several others, quickly petitioned the Secretary of State to change its procedures to guard against inappropriate elimination of legitimate voters from the database. The League argued that it is not enough to allow voters to cast a provisional ballot. Being excluded from the registration list means they will not receive a sample ballot or a ballot-pamphlet, they will not be notified where to vote, and they will not be allowed to request an absentee ballot. The matching process required by HAVA was intended to ensure states have correct information for all voters, not to erect barriers to voter registration. There seems to be widespread disagreement on the interpretation of HAVA: “Is verification of an applicant’s data an eligibility requirement to vote?”

To date, several administrative changes have been made by the Secretary of State to allow election officials in the counties to accept registrations with a partial “match” with DMV records. Meanwhile, county election workers are trying to contact voters who provided a driver’s license or SSN that failed to match, those who failed to provide the required information, and voters with name/birth date discrepancies. Many voters do not provide telephone numbers on their forms and, therefore, have to be contacted by mail. Conny McCormack, LA County Registrar-Recorder, reported that her office has been able to resolve about half of the rejected registration problems. Of course, as the registration deadline (May 22) gets closer, it will be harder and harder to correct the rejected registrations.

From Conny McCormack to the League: “It has been good working with you on this project – we made a difference! The voters will benefit.” Although progress has been made, the issues with the state’s registration database are not completely resolved. We do not know what percentage of voters may still fall through the cracks. Keep tuned!

-Thea Brodtkin, Voters Service Chair

LWVLA MEETS KOREAN TELEVISION

An opportunity to learn and teach about municipal voting systems throughout the world came our way when Robbie Davis, LWVC Education Fund Chair, suggested that Mia Lee from the Korean Broadcasting System which is headquartered in Seoul, Korea, visited LWVLA's offices for an interview. LWVUS Board Member Xandra Kayden and LWVLA President Liza White spoke with Ms. Lee and her crew for several hours on March 14. Ms. Lee explained that KBS-TV is a nonprofit broadcasting corporation dedicated to public education in Korea, and because local Korean elections were coming up very soon, KBS-TV was visiting a number of municipalities around the world to gather information about how other local electorates learn about their candidates.

Ms. Lee explained that there is a poor voter turn-out for municipal elections in Korea for a variety of reasons. There is the perception that locally elected officials have no actual decision-making power. Voters do not expect candidates to keep their campaign pledges. It is almost immaterial who the actual candidate is because the parties are so strong and their regional platforms are not affected by a particular candidacy. The election system requires that a voter must have paid a fee to be a member of a party at least six months prior to the election to be eligible to vote in the primary. And it is alleged that if a poor person cannot afford the fee, then a candidate from a party will pay and require a vote for that party in exchange.

The issue of particular interest, during the interviews at LWVLA, were voting rights and voting information available to Los Angeles voters. Voter access to SmartVoter for personal ballot/polling and candidate information as well as the wealth of information LWVLA provides through its multi-lingual *Citizens Guide to Government, Pros and Cons* and Hot Line impressed the interviewers.

After the office interview and filming was complete, we suggested that Ms. Lee would be able to learn more about how people can assess candidates and ballot measures by interviewing other League members.

On April 21, Ms. Lee and her photographer visited the home of member Nancy Arnheim, and interviewed Nancy as well as members Barbara Braunstein, Lillian Laskin, Florence Verger and Lynn Crandall from the University/Westside Unit. They discussed how League members approach viewing candidates, particularly their background, experience, record and approach to specific items of interest as well as the financing of their campaigns. That candidate forums were of help in getting a feeling of the personality of the candidate was of interest to Ms. Lee because the fact that voters can actually meet candidates was a surprise.

In addition to learning how citizens can make decisions on whom to support and how to vote for candidates, Ms. Lee and her crew captured video of Nancy's home, complete with images of discussion material about homeland security, the stub from her completed ballot showing that she had voted, and her "VOTE" t-shirt. No one in Korea would have such items.


Although it would be great if we could see the finished program, it will be shown in Korea only. The hope of KBS-TV is that their series of shows will prompt more people to come out and vote in the coming primary election.

-Nancy Arnheim, Member

Parking at the League Office

Meter parking is available from 8am – 6 pm for 2 hours.
 Parking in the building is \$12.50 max.
 Parking behind the building is \$5 max.
 Public lot on Vermont & Wilshire is \$3.50 max.
 Public lot on New Hampshire & Wilshire is \$7.50 max.
 Metro Stop - Vermont & Wilshire
 Several bus lines with stops at Vermont & Wilshire

ANNUAL MEETING – JUNE 17

<p>OH, SAY..... Have you ever wanted to see the <i>Daily Planet</i> and pretend to be Superman (or Superwoman), or go back in time to visit the mausoleum at Halicarnassus (one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient World)? Then join us for the Annual Meeting on June 17 and enjoy the spectacular view of Los Angeles from the top of our City Hall.</p>		<p>.....CAN YOU SEE After deliberating on the very vital and important strategies of the Los Angeles League of Women Voters, and electing the directors to carry out those strategies, you will enjoy a lovely buffet lunch, the fantastic view of the city, and a stimulating panel discussion of upcoming legislation affecting us today—with State Senator Alan Lowenthal and Kathay Feng, California Common Cause</p>
<p>9:00 – 11:30 a.m. Annual Meeting-Please bring your meeting kit</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Keynote Speakers</p>
<p>Enter from Los Angeles St. by car; enter from Main St if walking.</p>	<p>\$35</p>	<p>RSVP LWVLA office Information Required—car make/color/model)</p>

MEMBER GOLD: DEE ULRICH, 50-Year Member

In 1955 Dee was invited to her neighbor’s home in Inglewood to attend a meeting which fortuitously turned out to be a League unit meeting. The knowledge and information regarding international relations was handled with such intelligence that it left Dee with a very positive impression, and so she joined the League in 1956.

Dee initially served on the League’s Los Angeles Board and then the newly formed County Board when she moved to Hollywood. Dee also observed the Board of Supervisors, interviewed candidates and worked on information to be distributed to potential voters.

Beyond the League, Dee worked as a Register at the Southwest Museum, collecting and authorizing items, and as a seamstress at Paramount Studios.

Dee feels that League broadened and empowered her thinking making life far more interesting.

-Caroline Cooperman, Member

NEW MEMBER

Francine Sanders

DONATION

Franki Kessler

TRIBUTES

In honor of Carryl Carter’s birthday
by Marcia Edelman

In memory of a dear friend-Bob Mason
by Hermalee & Warren Schmidt

In memory of our dear cousin-Rodney Metzler by Hermalee & Warren Schmidt

EDUCATION FUND

Helen Katz