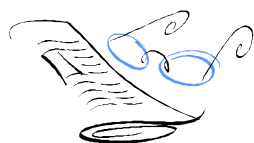




GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT AVAILABLE!

Following the Runoff Election in City of Los Angeles' Council District 2, a new supply of the LWVLA Education Fund's 'Guide to Government' has been printed. Call Robyn A. Ybarra at the LWVLA Office (213-368-1616) to request copies in English, Spanish, or Chinese.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello All,

As I write this on December 7, it's finally raining in L.A. So I'm thinking, what's raining on LWVLA? Quite a bit, perhaps a little more than forecast: The Census. Redistricting. Fiscal Peril. Police. Gangs. Prisons. Schools. Colleges. Special Elections. Voting Machines. Election Methods. Campaign Finance. Government Ethics. A State Constitutional Convention? Such raindrops!

If these issues and challenges of the day are rain, the membership of the League is earth and roots, rich in knowledge and support. Let's gather the raindrops this winter, and as 2010 begins, let's resolve to help our communities flower.

The worst thing about the weather right now is that I'm scheduled to be a pollworker in an open garage tomorrow! (Tuesday, December 8; L.A. City Council District 2 Special Election Runoff.) This will be my first time as a pollworker, and I'll let you know how it feels. Meanwhile, in a totally unrelated development, the L.A. City Council is considering making some if not all elections entirely vote-by-mail (VBM). Please email me directly (prez@lwwlosangeles.org) if you have thoughts to share on that issue.

Dear readers, thank you all for your membership and support of LWVLA. I wish you happy holidays and a rewarding New Year!

-- David

THE INTERNS' PERSPECTIVES

A few weeks after some of the interns began working with the LWVLA, Raquel asked some of them to share their thoughts on what work they were doing and their general insights on the internship program.

Mallory Siegel-Elliott. I am a senior at Cal State University, Northridge. I am participating in service learning for my community service class in school for the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles. Some of the projects I have been involved with include membership renewal, updating information, such as providing what each commission is about within the Observer Corps for the League, which will be used to keep the public well informed on what they can

... continued on page 2

Table with 2 columns: In This Issue, Page. Includes Letter from the President, Interns' Perspective, Building Strength with Interns, Census 2010, League Lines, Annual Dinner, Hannah Redmond, Hard to Keep Up, Off-Year Elections, Nima Long: A League Hero, Contributions & Memberships.

Shop at Ralphs and contribute to the League. You need to re-register your Ralphs card number on their website so that you continue to contribute to the League with every purchase. Just go to www.ralphs.com. After you re-register, click on 'Community Contributions' and then click on 'Participant'. Type in NPO number 84931. They will send you an email confirmation. This will ensure your yearlong gift to the League.

*Interns' Perspectives continued from page 1...*

participate in. And to offer the best information to the public is something that is very important as well as crucial to continue the active participation in government that the LWVLA strives to maintain. I have also assisted the executive director in preparing and organizing materials for an orientation for new board members and interns. My overall experience has been full of learning, particularly about how the League members govern themselves. I feel that this will be a stepping-stone towards my career goals, which include, working with kids and women, particularly those from lower income families.

Hello. My name is Thomas Kulinski and I am a student intern at the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles. I have chosen to work for LWV, because of the opportunity to learn more about the organization and my own interest in the law enforcement, since the league is conducting research about the Los Angeles Police Department. I work with very kind and professional personnel that help me in shaping my communication skills. I am looking forward to making the best out of this internship.

I am Robyn Ybarra. I am with Public Allies, a nonprofit organization that works to build leadership in their surrounding communities. My internship with the League will last until the beginning of July 2010 and I will be program coordinator for Voter Service. Since I've started with LWVLA, I have already worked on the Guide to Government and a few candidate forums. I look forward to working on voter registration, ballot measure education, voter education via phone, and also getting better education on the basic html coding to help out with smartvoter.org. There hasn't been a dull moment since I've started. Raquel and Loretta have made me feel right at home. Although this is all new to me, I feel that I am receiving tremendous support on all sides.

## **LWVLA INTERNS: BUILDING THEIR STRENGTHS AND OURS**

Why do we need interns? What is their value to LWVLA? These are the questions with which we initiated the intern program, and they are the ones that still resonate with us. Interns represent youth engaged. Their engagement should be mutually beneficial—to

each intern and to our organization. We apply these criteria when we design each internship. How does an internship happen?

**The Search:** Today's interns typically find us by searching online. They are not looking for the League of Women Voters; they are searching for "internships" or "public policy" and, because the intern program is now posted on our website, they find us. (In fact, they often say that the League position popped up at the top of their search response list.) In responding to an email inquiry, we ask for a resume and a brief statement of why the applicant is interested in working with our organization. The next step is a face-to-face interview during which the intern adds to our knowledge of his/her skills, experiences and interests. In exchange, we give them an overview of our organization and identify current projects with which we need help. And then the creative design for their roles begins.

**The Mentors and the Projects:** The key to an effective internship is the mentor for each intern project. These are the study chairs or the staff members who define the tasks, monitor the progress, and coach individual interns. Effective mentors encourage interns themselves to suggest how they might contribute to their LWV projects. Fran Lapides, Education Study chair, and Jean Thomson, LAPD study chair, have included many interns in their projects over the last several years. They report that interns have provided valuable contributions to these studies, and the interns express appreciation for their experiences. The Running and Winning program uses interns as facilitators for groups of high school students as they interview elected officials about "running and winning", and then develop a mock campaign team of their own. The overwhelming applause of the high school students in acknowledging the intern facilitators at the end of the day was proof that the interns were key to our achieving our goals for this project.

Margie Engel and Gail Maiorana have paved the way for interns to perform Observer Corps functions. Both have provided material for an Observer Corps handbook for interns. Guided by the appropriate League member, an intern will first review the background of the government commission or body to be observed, then attend its public meetings and report back to his or her Observer Corps mentor. There is great potential for this function to grow with interested interns and mentors. For the past year, Raquel Beltrán, LWVLA Executive

Director, and Loretta Adikhai, Administrative Assistant, have found ways to use interns so that the League benefits greatly and the interns have invaluable experiences. What might seem like basic clerical tasks become meaningful when they are presented in the context of their importance to the organization. The office staff is also in key positions to know the overall needs of the organization, its projects, portfolio chairs and board members. This year, with input from Sandra Trutt, Membership chair, and Frances Talbott-White, Voter Service chair, the office staff created a media internship. Dustin Thordarsen, an intern who will be available for this year, has initiated this role, researching media sources, creating media templates, and submitting announcements to the appropriate local news sources. Recently, I had an opportunity to hear testimony presented by current interns to the LWVLA Board. The statements of these extraordinary young people confirmed that our program is working as we had hoped. It is a win for them and for us.

**How Can You Use Interns?** If you are working on a League project, whether a study, a committee, an event, unit administration, or any other, think creatively about how you and an intern might benefit from an intern's involvement. Then contact us to help you figure out how best to create an internship opportunity.

-- Zhita Rea  
Intern Co- Coordinator

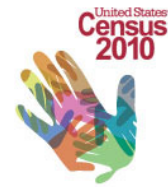
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Las Virgenes	Los Feliz/Silverlake
Pacific Palisades	Valley
Sunland-Tujunga	University-Westside
Westside Evening	

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IT'S IN OUR HANDS

## CENSUS 2010

You will be seeing this logo announcing the 2010 Census all over the city by next spring. The media will be blanketing the airways and signs will be everywhere, but we need to become involved in ensuring that everyone--all residents, whether legal residents or not, and that the count includes all ages and all ethnicities.

It is very important that everyone be counted since the count determines our representation in Congress. Los Angeles could lose at least one representative if there is an undercount. The \$300-\$400 million that is distributed from the federal government to the state and local governments is based upon the count in the census. Important local planning is determined by the count in the census.

For the first time, everyone will receive an especially simple short form comprised of only 10 questions. These will be mailed to all households by the middle of March. The long forms will be sent annually to only a small percentage of the population through the American Community Survey system.

LWVUS, LWVC, and LWVLA have become partners of the U.S. Census Bureau, and we will be preparing materials and presentations to our members, but also to the hard-to-count folks we have all met at one time or another.

In addition to our Partnership Agreement, we have volunteered to be a Questionnaire Assistance Center. We will be assisting anyone who needs help in filling out their forms or have additional questions to be answered. I am sure you will be welcomed as a volunteer during the last two weeks of the campaign!

More details will be forthcoming, as we get closer to the deadline.

## LEAGUE LINES

*In this space we offer information, brief or more in depth, about what is happening in other levels of the League of which the LWVLA is a member. Here we discuss in depth the League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) ad hoc committee on reforming state government, headed by former LWVLA President, Xandra Kayden.*

### State (LWVC)

#### Improving State Governance

If the League of Women Voters is known for anything – beyond debates – it is our commitment to improving government. We have studied it for years. Particular issues come and go, but government reform has been a constant since our founding. Most of our positions currently in play come from the latter half of the last century, including a call for “systematic efforts to revise the Constitution,” adopted in 1957, revised in 1973, and then again in 1976. The position in brief reads: Support measures to secure an orderly and simplified State Constitution: provisions that enable the legislature to deal with state problems efficiently, flexibly and with responsibility clearly fixed; and constitutional guarantee of equal representation of all citizens in the state legislature.”

There are three serious efforts underway in the wake of the very unsatisfactory budget season last spring and summer:

- Repair California (a new organization created by the Bay Area Council after an op-ed piece their president wrote that started a constitutional reform movement);
- California Forward (also a relatively new organization formed by several California foundations to find a better way for the state to operate than the current system);
- Committee in the legislature representing both the Assembly and Senate looking at constitutional reform

LWVC has been encouraging our members to take the opportunity to learn as much as they can about issues from these three groups while we develop our own program in education and advocacy. We are in contact with all three groups. In November 2009, Janis Hirohama, LWVC President, testified against the two-thirds vote requirement on the budget and for raising taxes before the Senate and Assembly Select Committee on Improving State Government. Check the state website [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org) for her statement.

As much as some of us see the critical need for changing the way we govern ourselves, there is a fear among many voters about trying something else. Polls show that most Californians have a low opinion of state government in everything, but the initiative. To the League, the initiative is part of the problem and as much in need of change as anything else.

There will be measures on the November ballots in 2010 and 2012, at the very least. Whether they pass will depend on how much California voters will come to believe in the need for change. Before then, LWVC hopes to undertake a major campaign to engage our communities in small group discussions that consider what’s right and what’s wrong with the current system. If we can, we should reach out to those who don’t instinctively share our views because, in the end, a majority of voters will have to approve whatever we do.

In the meantime, we will continue to advocate our positions on the budget, the initiative, streamlining of government, and the host of other topics we have studied and gained consensus over the years. I chair an ad hoc group of League members (including LWVLA’s Evon Gotlieb) to help us develop the program we will need to engage our communities. There will be more to come.

Xandra Kayden  
LWVC Vice President for Advocacy and Program

### Los Angeles County (LWV/LAC)

#### GANGS OF LOS ANGELES

What do we know about the gangs in Los Angeles County? The LWVLA and the Los Angeles County ILO have been studying several facets of local law

enforcement over the past few years. Because gangs are an issue throughout Los Angeles County, the two League organizations determined it is important to review just what has been going on with gangs throughout the County, an issue which draws much attention— some negative, some more positive. They will present a joint Community Forum on the gangs in our area on January 30, 2010. Law enforcement officials, as well as representatives from various community organizations who specialize in the sentencing, treatment, and rehabilitation of gang members will participate in a forum discussion of what has been going on and where we seem to be headed.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Saturday, January 30, 2010. Don't miss this special event in the auditorium of the LWVLA's new office building. We will keep you posted on the details, but be sure to plan on attending and bring your friends!

#### United States (LWVUS)

#### League Geeks Available to Aid Members

The League Geeks are League members who have volunteered to help other members with technical computer problems. Such problems might be: (1) registering or logging into [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), (2) locating information on [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), or (3) subscribing, unsubscribing or receiving LWVUS discussion list email. You may now contact the League Geeks by sending an email to [Geeks@lwv.org](mailto:Geeks@lwv.org). You may also use the "Contact Us" link in the top line of every page of [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). A volunteer will email or call you back within a day or so.

Please contact Board Member Norman Turrill at [lwvturrill@mac.com](mailto:lwvturrill@mac.com) with additional questions.



### Gala 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrating Leadership Awards Dinner Set

Make your plans now to be part of the League's gala 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary "Celebrating Leadership Awards Dinner" on Wednesday, March 10, 2010 at the Omni Hotel!

We are proud to announce the honorees who will receive the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Carrie Chapman Catt Leadership Awards:

The **90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Corporate Leadership Award** will go to **AT&T**;

The **90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Civic Service Leadership Award** will be presented to **Andy Lipkis**, founder of **TreePeople**;

The **90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Women's Achievement Leadership Award** will go to Carla Christofferson and Kathy Goodman, co-owners of the **Women's National Basketball Association's (WNBA) Los Angeles Sparks**, and

We are especially pleased and proud that our own **Joy Picus** will receive the League's 90<sup>th</sup> **Anniversary Founders' Award**.

#### NOW WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We want the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration to be the best ever and we need you, our loyal members, to help in the following ways:

- Solicit dinner sponsors (those individuals and/or businesses that would like to purchase a table);
- Provide us with an invitation list of friends, relatives and associates;
- Solicit ads for the Tribute Book;
- **Buy at least one ticket to the event. Take advantage of our early-bird offer and buy a ticket for only \$195. Regular members' tickets are \$225 and non-member tickets are \$300. Deadline for purchasing early-bird tickets is January 31, 2010. Please call the office to reserve your ticket.**

We need to reach our financial goal for this 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fundraising event so we can continue to provide the services the community has come to expect from the League. *Please see website for sponsorship and ad forms.*

For further information about the event, sponsorship and ad forms, and how else you can assist us, please contact the League's event coordinator, Melissa Richardson Banks, (213) 972-0884) or Renee Chanon at the League office (213) 368-1616.

-Renee Chanon  
Chair, 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner



## HARD TO KEEP UP??

In this fast-changing world, more and more information is being sent via the internet. Because of the increase in mailing costs, the need to simplify our communication, it sometimes seems as though we are not being kept up-to-date as we once were.

Many people have said they don't know what the League is doing...they don't know what action is being taken in our name...what contacts are being made, etc. Here's a simple way to find out!

See the full 'Hard to Keep up' two-part article on the LWVLA website, [www.lwvlosangeles.org](http://www.lwvlosangeles.org)  
<http://www.lwvlosangeles.org/voter.html>

## HANNAH REDMOND— HER DEVOTION TO THE LEAGUE LIVES ON

As reported in the September-October 2009 *VOTER*, Hannah M. Redmond, a long-serving member of LWVLA's Palisades unit, passed away in June. In the article describing her many contributions to the League over the years, we noted that in 2008 she had made a sizeable bequest to the LWVLA Education Fund through the Rod Redmond Trust.

In November 2009, her son and daughter notified the LWVLA office that she had left them instructions to make an unrestricted \$5,000 contribution to the League

from her trust estate. A check in that amount was enclosed.

Hannah's devotion to the League never waned. As we reported in September, we thought Hannah had been a member of the League for around 70 years since she had joined the League in Missouri before moving to Los Angeles. We could not confirm this at the time because the LWVUS records did not go back that far. However, some fine sleuths in the League of Women Voters of Missouri continued to try to track down her membership details and recently found the answer in the University of Missouri archives. She first joined in 1930 when she was a student there.

As we approach the League's 90th anniversary, the founding does not seem very long ago when we realize that our Hannah joined the League when it was only ten years old and remained fiercely devoted to helping achieve its goals for 79 years.

~~~~~Thank you Hannah ~~~~~

## “OFF-YEAR” ELECTIONS: A VOTER SERVICE PERSPECTIVE

Most people think of presidential election years as being THE election years. Important as these quadrennial events may be, however, LWV folks know they're not the whole story...

Odd-numbered years bring local elections to Los Angeles, LAUSD, and many smaller cities, school districts, and special districts, while the even-numbered years BETWEEN presidential elections bring California's gubernatorial elections with legislative contests at all levels as well as additional rounds of local elections. Meanwhile, special elections crop up all over the calendar and all over the map.

In what I then perceived as the 'Off-Year' Election of 1994, I was so appalled by low voter turnout that I joined the League of Women Voters (turning in a direction I'd wanted to take since moving next door to a wonderful League member in 1968).

So here we are preparing for Voter Service in another 'Off-Year' Election, and I'm realizing that we need to do something really creative if we're going to counteract the 'ho-hum factor.' We must appeal to a populace burned out by watching the excesses of so many political

campaigns per year while being asked to make decisions about a menu of unpalatable ballot measures that don't seem to make much difference as well as a long list of judicial candidates.

Besides the problem of voter burn-out, we face a very real possibility that support for Voter Service from LWV California will undergo drastic changes and serious cut-backs in 2010. Watch for more news after the January 2010 LWVC Board meeting.

So what is my creative solution? For the June 8, 2010 Primary, it's Candidate Fairs. Other local Leagues, notably Pasadena Area and East San Gabriel Valley, have done this with good results. I'm talking about an early May event in a casual venue such as a park, where ALL candidates are invited to meet voters and League makes resources (voter registration, how-to-vote demos, ballot measure info, etc.) available to a broader cross-section of the public than we usually manage to attract to our candidate forums and 'Pros & Cons' speaking engagements.

Given the size and complexity of our Voter Service area, I'd like to see us organize three Candidate Fairs: one in the Valley; one on the Westside; and one Downtown. I hope that YOU will want to be involved in the planning and implementation of this new project. Give me a call at 310/397-4970 or e-mail [talbwhite@yahoo.com](mailto:talbwhite@yahoo.com).

-- Frances Talbott-White,  
LWVLA Voter Service Director



**Nima Long receives Bank of America  
Local Heroes Award**

“Community leaders deserve more than just handshakes and homemade cookies for their tireless

contributions. That's why Bank of America created the Neighborhood Excellence Initiative®: to recognize and reward deserving leaders from local high schools, nonprofits and neighborhoods alike who've transformed their personal desire to improve lives into a viable ability to do so. Congratulations to this year's award winners.”

(Excerpt from *Los Angeles Times* article on the awards)

***Way to go Nima!***

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Civic Society Donors**

Barbara Archibald, Judith Hirshberg, Matilda Rummage, Lois Saffian, Liza C. White, Stuart C. White

**LWVLA Donors/Annual Holiday**

**Party**

Sydelle Freeman, David Holtzman, Fran Lapides, Carlos Medina, Bertha Sutton, Helene Terris

**Tributes**

In memory of Lilly Essen from Carryl Carter

In memory of Martin Hertzstein from Carryl Carter, Joy and Gerry Picus

In memory of Hannah Redmond from John M. Redmond and Jane R. Mueller

In memory of Jane Scanlan from Carryl Carter

**MEMBERSHIPS**

**New Members**

Linda Gertler, Ruth B. Marmelzat, Elizabeth H. Richardson