



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ANGELES

Members meet in units: Crenshaw • Culver City • Las Virgenes • Los Feliz/Silverlake • Pacific Palisades • S.F. North Valley • S.F. West Valley • Sherman Oaks • Sunland/Tujunga • University/Westside

SEPTEMBER 2007

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 4,**
Program, PROM & Board Meeting
- Sept. 8**
Russian Delegation Welcome
- Sept. 9 - 15**
Russian Delegation Workshops
- Sept 17**
Constitution Day
- Sept 29**
How to Run a Candidates Forum

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The year ahead has already been shaped by the 2007-2009 Program adopted at the Annual Meeting in June and by the goals and leadership set in place at the Board retreat in July. Fall Initiatives are well under way.

August 20, Revolving Door III will bring together a distinguished panel to discuss rehabilitation and re-entry problems of inmates and releasees. This three year regional League interest in issues related to incarceration have motivated other Leagues to consider if LWVC should study this issue towards creating a position.

September 8 to 16: LWVLA will host four Russian de70legates through the sponsorship of LWVUS/Open World project. They are interested in how health care and social services are provided through government and private resources. LWVLA will host them and arrange many opportunities for these guests to interact with academic, commercial and government ideas.

The **Verizon-sponsored Running and Winning** project will connect high school students with elected officials to model experience in becoming government leaders. We intend this pilot to become a signature, annual event.

Unit meetings this fall will be devoted to one issue: **Immigration**. The LWVUS study on immigration calls on all League members to

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understand the issues and to prepare to voice your informed point of view through consensus by December. Unit meetings throughout the city on this complex but vital issue will be held in September, October and November.

A **new evening unit** is being organized in West Los Angeles.

Election Integrity is the organizing principal for our newest committee. Just in time! It will be assessing the repercussions of **Secretary of State' Bowen's decertification ruling** on many Direct Recoding Electronic devices and advising on our continued interaction with the City Council and City Clerk's office on **a number of election procedure reforms**.

New Members: Beverly Hills League voted to merge with LWVLA and LWVLA is welcoming their more than 100 members with a future reception. University-Westside unit's proximity has motivated a personal invitation to former Beverly Hills members so they can take up action and program at U-W's new, convenient public location.

The **Education Fund** board is planning our signature Leadership Awards Dinner, February 28, 2008. In addition when you support LWVLA at the Civic Society level you can enjoy the additional benefit of personal evenings with noted Angelenos. This fall the Civic Society will host an evening with James Q. Wilson.

Choosing one or many of these LWVLA initiatives to help mobilize or attend will make your membership in League more interesting and the League stronger.

Go to www.lwvlosangeles.org or call the office at (213) 368-1616 for how to link up with a League member as your guide to more involvement.

Be a League of Women Voter so that your hands-on work will safeguard democracy and lead to civic improvement. Words to live by as we head into another exciting year.

Liza White, President

AUG. 20 REVOLVING DOOR FORUM ON REHABILITATION AND RE-ENTRY OF PRISONERS AND PAROLEES

On Monday, August 20, from 10:30 – 2:00, we will be presenting the third annual “*Revolving Door*” community forum to be held at LA Trade Tech Community College, 400 West Washington Blvd. Trade Tech has a well-known, large vocational program for parolees and is very much involved in this year's focus on rehabilitation and re-entry of prisoners.

The “*Revolving Door*” Series began with a cooperative program to assist inmates and newly released folks to understand their voting rights, providing materials and education to all concerned. Several local Leagues of Women Voters and various other governmental and nonprofit organizations worked together to begin the program. We held local educational discussion meetings with our members and then our first community forum with experts in their field providing insight into the incarceration system, process and sentencing situations.

The second forum focused on the realities of the process of incarceration as seen by those affected from the arrest, through incarceration and release. In the process we have been acquiring a great deal of knowledge about our criminal justice system.

We all know the prisons and jails are holding nearly twice as many prisoners as they were designed for. Therefore the system has been forced to release inmates earlier than their complete sentence in order to keep the more violent criminals incarcerated. With 650,000 released nationwide each year, are they ready to assume their place in society—are we ready for them??

Congressman Adam Schiff will speak on The Second Chance Act, legislation he is co-sponsoring to address rehabilitation and re-entry preparations for release back into the community--to hopefully avoid the “*Revolving Door*” syndrome.

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Brian Center has been the guiding spirit behind the Re-entry Advisory Council. He will discuss what the Sheriff's Department is doing to assist the releasees with their re-entry into society and avoid the horrendous recidivism we are now experiencing.

Kimberly Wong, Legislative/Criminal Justice Advisor in the Public Defenders Office will give us an update on the Women's Re-entry Court initiated in the office to assist that population to regain their lives and re-enter society.

Many of the local assistive organizations will be there to explain how they are trying to solve the critical rehabilitation and re-entry needs both prior to release and immediately thereafter.

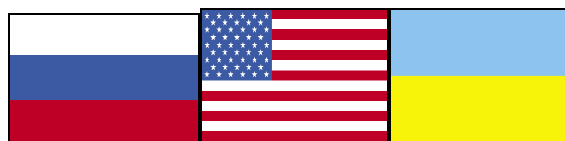
When over 500 people are processed each day through the Sheriff's Inmate Reception Center (which serves 28 county jail facilities), and an estimated 70 percent of these men and women can be expected to return within three years, we must look for solutions other than building more prisons.

Through re-entry programs some organizations are spending between \$4,500 and \$6,000 per person to provide job training, life skills, mentoring and educational programs. To incarcerate these same people costs between \$43,000 per year up to nearly \$200,000 for ill, elderly or juveniles.

With the medical portion of the prison system already in federal receivership, and imminent threats to cap the prison population and a complete takeover of the system, we need to look for more appropriate solutions to the overpopulation in prisons and jails.

*Jean Thomson, Chair
Revolving Door Project*

LWVLA AWARDED GRANT TO HOST RUSSIAN DELEGATION



LWVLA members know through our website, *What's New?* and last month's VOTER article that the Russians are coming September 8 through 16. This is a project supported by Open World Program and LWVUS Ed Fund. Project Manager, Lynn Crandall, with Program Committee Co-Chairs, Lynn Lowry and Jean Thomson are collaborating to make this a rich experience for all.

The LWVLA serves as lead agent to inform, engage, and empower our members and partners and through them, the constituents they serve, in presenting our city's health and social service systems to our Russian visitors. Our LWVLA Health Consultant, Doris Nelson, is creating the health care context for this project.

There has been a swirl of activity in contacting organizations to host and present workshops. Each organization was informed of the goals and objectives of the project. Their resources were brought to the table so our teaming agreements could be defined. Simultaneously, Health Consultant Doris Nelson fine tuned League positions on Health Care with presentations by partnering organizations.

Further grant requirements include that LWVLA members host the delegates and provide meals, when not otherwise provided, and transportation to and from workshops. We're charged with providing an overview of how our public, private, nonprofit, academic and media leaders collaborate in the American democratic process to envision and implement a comprehensive, high quality health system to all Americans. We will provide cultural experiences designed to touch the hearts and souls of our visitors to sustain our relationships with them as we develop substantive exchanges in ideas, culture and free enterprise.

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The context of our project makes it even more meaningful. For example, this is the 200th anniversary year of Russian/U.S. diplomatic relations. Our LWVLA Welcome Dinner at Park La Brea is scheduled for the evening of September 11.

The art exhibit, *Remembering the Forgetting*, at the USC Institute for Genetic Medicine Art Gallery of which LWVLA is a sponsor, addresses comprehensive health service issues from care giving to insurance, from basic science in Alzheimer’s disease to lifespan collaborative strategies; KCET has taped an interview of the artist at the exhibit and will air that tape, crediting the LWVLA with sponsorship of the exhibit on September 21 (*National Alzheimer’s Day*) at 7:30 p.m. This tape will demonstrate to our guests how LWVLA promotes our mission-related activities to Greater Los Angeles.

Our City Council Members, County Supervisors, state and federal legislators are, as I write, being contacted by our LWVLA Program Committee and by our partners, to inform and engage them in this project.

There are many opportunities for League members to proud of how our mission is being met. Hosting the Russian delegates is a prime example. Members are encouraged to contact Nima @ 213-368-1616 or info@lwvlosangeles.org with your desire for participation in the Russian Delegation Project.

Lynn Crandall

LEAN MEAN VOTER MAILING TEAM INFORMATION

Tradition is about to be broken. The VOTER newsletter has always been processed and prepared for mailing by the Units. The assignment was rotated each month. In that way a Unit would have the job every three months. For various reasons this time honored system no longer fits the bill. The League thanks all the

loyal members that have helped to get the VOTER out to the people.

Our new answer is the VOTER Mailing Committee. It will be a permanent mailing committee. Members of the committee will come once a month to get the VOTER assembled, sorted and bagged for the mail. We have a wonderful team with which to get started. This system will begin for the September 20 mailing.

We would like to encourage more members to join in, especially new members. This is a great way to get acquainted with other members and view the office in action. If this sounds like a good fit for you call me at (310) 649-6726.

*Marilyn Albertson
Volunteer Coordinator*

USE YOUR IRA TO MAKE A TAX-FREE GIFT

If you are 70 ½ years or older, the IRS has given you a one-time only opportunity to make a tax-free gift up to \$100,000 from your IRA to the LWVLA Education Fund. For those of you who have IRA accounts you can now give the Education Fund a donation from your IRA without including the withdrawal as income for income tax purposes. You can also list the donation as a charitable contribution on your 2007 tax return. The opportunity is for 2007 only. It requires the institution handling your account to send the check directly to the LWVLA Education Fund. You cannot send the check yourself. I hope many League members will take advantage of this opportunity to help the Education Fund and its important activities. Please contact Gerald Sallus through the League office at (213) 368-1616 for further information.

Gerald Sallus

ACCORDING TO A NEW ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT BY THE SUSTAINABILITY/GLOBAL WARMING COMMITTEE

On April 29, 2007, Nima Long helped Sandra Trutt and Helene Terris conduct an Environmental Audit of the LWVLA Office. Based on their findings, LWVLA is to be commended for the following energy-saving and conservation practices:

- Fluorescent lighting in the office and meeting rooms
- Durable dishes and cutlery
- A faucet aerator in kitchen sink
- Cloth towels
- 30% and 10% recycled content copy paper
- A timer in some rooms to turn off the lights
- Turning off the copier and computers when not in use
- Turning off the coffee maker when not in use
- Using unbleached coffee filters
- Using both sides of a piece of paper for copying and printing
- Promoting car pooling to meetings and events

HERE'S MORE WE CAN DO

In our office –

- By setting up a recycling system for cans, bottles, and paper in the kitchen and office areas
- * By requesting that maintenance personnel take waste materials and trash down to the first floor dock area for recycling pick up
- By using recycled paper to the degree in which it is tolerated by our office machines for all our paper needs, including colored paper

In our kitchen –

- By eliminating disposable cups, plates, silverware and serving dishes, and purchasing 100% recyclable paper towels and napkins for kitchen use
- By replacing all unbleached coffee filters when current supply runs out

- By using environmentally-friendly cleaning products
- By purchasing, when existing supply runs out, phosphate-free dishwashing detergent, hand soaps and cleaning agents.

Helene Terris & Sandra Trutt



IMMIGRATION POLICY CONSENSUS MEETINGS - FALL 2007

LWVUS has been conducting a two-year study on immigration. The scope of this study has included exploring underlying values and principles regarding immigration, reasons for immigration, current federal immigration policy, and the impact of immigration in American society. Other topics that were covered included: business and economic effects and impact, diversity, effects of global interdependence on migration, motivation of refugees, asylees and other immigrants.

The LWVUS study committee has developed consensus questions and all local Leagues will be conducting the consensus process this fall.

The LWVUS immigration study committee members have written several papers on various topics related to immigration policy. The papers have been posted on the LWVUS website and can be found under Immigration Study. Take a few minutes to read these background papers.

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In the last several months local Leagues including LWVLA have worked together to develop educational material that looks at the impact of immigration on the Los Angeles area or California. This material was presented at the LWV Los Angeles County annual summer League day.

The topic for the September, October and November unit meetings will be immigration policy. The September unit meeting will be an education meeting. The LWVLA immigration committee will present background information derived from the LWVUS study and the materials developed by the local Leagues. This unit discussion will frame the types of immigration issues that are being debated and what will be covered in the consensus questions.

The October and November unit meetings will be used to work through the consensus questions. The unit meetings will be open to the public, but only League members can provide input to the consensus process.

The responses from our members will be then be sent to LWVUS as input to the national consensus process, which will result in a LWVUS position in Spring 2008.

For those members who cannot participate in the consensus process by attending the unit meetings, we will have a meeting on Saturday November 10 at the League office. More details on this meeting will be announced in the coming months.

Please plan to attend these important meetings.

*Lynn Lowry
Immigration Committee Chair*

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

Donzaleigh Abernathy
Larisa Pilinsky
Aviva Rosenthal

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Rhona E. Bader
Jean F. Cohen
Estella Mysels

CIVIC SOCIETY

Renee Chanon
Matilda Rummage
Kimberly F. Yang (associate)

ED FUND CONTRIBUTION

Jane Goichman
Ellie Morris
Florence Verger

DONATIONS TO LWV

Mr. and Mrs. George Polinger

TRIBUTES

To the Cohen Family, in memory of
Malgert H. Cohen, from Hermalee & Dick
Schmidt

To Ruth Horgan, congratulations on your
50th League Anniversary, from Betty Marsh

SEPTEMBER 2007

**League of Women Voters of Los Angeles
LEADERSHIP ROSTER**

NOTE: Please call the LWVLA office at (213) 368-1616 to contact individuals listed below.

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Barbara Braunstein, Chair

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Jean Thomson, Co-Chair

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Fran Lapidés, Co-Chair

Zhita Rea, Co-Chair

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Anne Reisinger

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