



League of Women Voters
North Orange
County
www.lwvnoc.org

VOTER

Nov.-Dec. 2005

714-254-7440
P.O. Box 3073
Fullerton, CA 92834

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to men and women of voting age.

Get with the Energy

Study Meetings November and December

Come to the study meetings to learn more about the ways in which the electricity system in California functions, with its weaknesses and strengths, and the ways in

which it is governed. At the meeting on November 9, Florence Cavileer, Mary Fuhrman and Monika Broome will report on the impact of power

plants on global climate change, the impact of term limits on energy issues and the role of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on electricity, natural gas, and hydro-power and market oversight.

At the December 7 meeting, Eileen Olmsted will report on natural gas and LNG, our dependence on natural gas, where it comes from, who is using it and what it is going to cost. We'll learn about natural gas infrastructure requirements, safety concerns and the politics and policy of natural gas and LNG in California.

Leagues throughout the state are conducting study meetings to prepare for consensus early in 2006 on Energy and the Electricity System. As noted on page 5 in *Vote with the League*, LWVC remained neutral on Proposition 80 because our current energy position does not cover the issues in the proposition. Hopefully, after we develop a statewide consensus on energy issues, we'll be prepared to take a stand on future energy proposals.

Energy Study Meetings
Wednesday, November 9
Wednesday, December 7
10:00AM-Noon
Placentia Library
411 East Chapman Ave.

Gillian M. Sorensen
Tuesday, November 15, 7PM
Chapman University,
Beckman Hall Room 404
One University Drive
Orange

The United Nations Foundation invites League members to a Reception & Presentation "**The US and the UN in the 21st Century**", featuring **Gillian M. Sorensen** *Senior advisor and national advocate for UNF*. Ms Sorensen is a Former Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations on appointment by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Special Advisor for Public Policy to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.
RSVP and Additional Information Contact:
United Nations Association Orange County Chapter
Mr. Shami Toolie (714) 542-9743

From our President Mission Accomplished Voters Service Action This Election

As we cast our votes in November's special election we can be proud of the many Voter Service activities that our League has provided for the public. Shirley Bloom, Monica Broome, Mary Fuhrman and Arline Burgmeier gave more than sixteen Pro Con presentations to audiences ranging in size from two to 116 persons.

With the aid of a \$1,000 California League pass-through grant from the Hewlett Foundation and a very able

been distributed to community centers, libraries, churches, clinics and other places where would be voters congregate. Finally, your president made a brief televised appearance on Comcast to publicize voter service efforts and urge the public to vote on this very important election.

Our League has also participated in advocacy efforts in support of the unprecedented number of propositions on which the California League has taken positions. Again your President did a

five minute appearance on Comcast to publicize the League's recommendations, advertisements were placed in various newspapers urging a "Vote with the League" and a very well-attended Lunch with League had knowledgeable League members making presentations on why the League has chosen to urge no votes on six of the propositions and yes



California's Complex School Funding, Proposition 76 Forum panelists. Rick Pratt, California School Boards Association, Marilyn Buchi, LWVNOG Committee, Mike Spence, Governor's Coalition to Reform California, and Louise Adler, Ph.D, Chair, Educational Leadership Department, CSUF.

committee, a Forum on Proposition 76 was held at CSUF that was televised and shown on both Comcast and Adelphia. It is also available at www.lwvnoc.org for anyone who prefers watching it on their computer screens.

In La Habra, a debate on a city ballot measure was moderated by Shirley Bloom and aired in that city on Adelphia television. Two thousand Pros and Cons and many Easy Voters in English, Spanish and Korean have

on only one. See this Voter, page 5, for a brief analysis of each of the propositions.

The League was not happy about this special election, but when we are needed by the general public to make some sense of a series of very difficult and important initiatives we always come through.

**BY EILEEN OLMSTEAD
LWVNOG PRESIDENT**

Membership News

Learning about League from the Pros

League 101

Linda Rogers recently attended the Regional Workshop for Southern California Leagues hosted by LWV Northwest Riverside County. She had an opportunity to meet LWV California officers, including President Jackie Jacobberger and Legislation Director Jack Sullivan.

“I had a great lunch with the various San Diego representatives and a representative from the new Coachella Valley (Palm Springs) branch. Everyone agreed in informal conversation that attracting new members, especially younger members, was a high priority,” she said.

Linda said Jackie Jacobberger gave a lively and informative talk on “League 101.” After an introduction about the history of LWV and the differences in function between national, state, ILO and local organizations, she mentioned that she is particularly sensitive to charges that the League is partisan. In addition to the common sense fairness issues – having all candidates represented at forums, presenting speakers on both sides of an issue – she asked us to be careful in our regular communication.

It is especially important to avoid partisan comments in articles published in local League newsletters, on local League websites, or in other electronic communications such as listserve postings and e-mails. The president and Voter editor should review articles to ensure that they adhere to the League’s standards for nonpartisanship.

Jackie asked that we not slam politicians in meetings, so that people with other views do not feel uncomfortable.

Jackie also spoke about the distinction between LWV’s education arm and its advocacy arm. For tax reasons, the income and expenditures are kept strictly separate, and there are even separate boards at the state and national level. For example, the Energy Study guides are paid for from the Education Fund, but the leaders’ guides for the Study are paid for from the general fund. The educational activities fall under 501(c)(3) regulations, but advocacy and general membership activities are covered by 501(c)(4) rules.

Jack Sullivan, a LWVC director of legislation gave a presentation on “How to Take Effective Action.” He emphasized the importance of LWV speaking with one voice, and some of the strategies for doing that. A coherent message is key in dealing with legislators, so the state board asks that all communications with public officials be passed through the LWVC

board first, in case a local issue may conflict with a state position. In return, Jack promised to keep local branches informed when LWVC is lobbying state legislators.

Linda felt the day was worth the trip to Riverside, and appreciated the efforts of the Northwest Riverside LWV in putting the seminar together.



Linda Rogers LWVNOC new member, served on the Orange County Grand Jury last year with membership co-director Wanda Shaffer.

Orange County Board of Supervisors

Slow Times

As this is written in mid-October, the Board has met only twice in the last month; an election day and Columbus Day were the reasons for the dark days.

When they did meet, 9/20 was a relatively short meeting, enlivened by a group of veterans who spoke during Public Comment time and who came to ask for their own **Veterans Affairs** department back again. It used to be that way, but Veterans Affairs has been taken into Housing and Community Development for administrative efficiencies; the veterans say housing people don't have the necessary experience to deal with the federal bureaucracy and properly help the veterans get their rightful benefits.

On the agenda itself was an item to approve the county's response to the 04/05 **Grand Jury Report on Pensions, Health Care and Other Benefits**. The Grand Jury report is critical of what the board has done to enhance employee pensions during the last year and is very concerned about the large liabilities that have surfaced as a result of the enhanced benefits. Both the Grand Jury report and its recommendations, and the county's response to these recommendations, can be found on the county web site.

Mr. Norby said he had some concerns about some of the responses and voted no; everyone

else voted yes. There are considerations for action going on at the CEO level, with recommendations for actions to come, but apparently one thing is clear: there is no going back on the enhancements. So the burden to the county general fund that so concerned the Grand Jury will remain.

The 9/27 meeting began with **Sheriff Corona** speaking for almost an hour in quasi-military jargon to describe county disaster preparedness.

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He used phrases such as "activations", "tabletops" (planning exercises), "lego way of thinking" (building up an infrastructure of organizations and lots and lots of terms such as SEMS, UASY, ARCA, etc, etc, to describe a network of committees, subcommittees, interagency groups, state management agencies, and so on that is presumably in place and will function if needed. Mr. Norby declared himself against acronyms early on and insisted that they be spelled out, but what help is it to know that ARCA is an "area requiring corrective action"?

Mr. Wilson's initiative to help **libraries in the hurricane disaster areas** is moving along. It has been decided to find one library to help; contact has been made with an administrator in Jefferson Parish and the effort will focus on restoring a children's library there.

Even though the supervisors may not meet every week, the work of the county government goes on. And a fair amount is now directed by women. The Health Care Agency and the Social Services agency are both headed by women. The Public Defender, the head of Probation, and several assistant sheriffs are women. The head of Housing and Community Development is a woman; so is one of four assistant CEO's and the Clerk of the Board. Now a woman is needed on the board itself. **Perhaps a woman will run for a seat in 2006**, when two seats will be available, as Mr. Wilson and Mr. Silva are termed out. Of course, they will have to compete with termed out legislators from Sacramento looking for another perch. Or with someone who doesn't grab the gold ring on the elections merry-go-round set in motion by Congressman Cox of Irvine being named to head the SEC and leaving an open seat up for grabs! Ah, politics.

BY TRISH HARRIGAN, OBSERVER
OC BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETINGS

November 8, 2005 Special Election

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RECOMMENDS...**NO ON [PROPOSITION 73](#)-- *Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy***

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.

**NO ON [PROPOSITION 74](#)--*Public School Teachers. Waiting Period for Permanent Status. Dismissal.***

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.

**NO ON [PROPOSITION 75](#)--*Public Employee Union Dues. Restrictions on Political Contributions. Employee Consent Requirement.***

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.

**NO ON [PROPOSITION 76](#)--*State Spending and School Funding Limits.***

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!

**NO ON [PROPOSITION 77](#)--*Redistricting.***

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.

**NO ON [PROPOSITION 78](#)--*Discounts on Prescription Drugs.***

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.

**YES ON [PROPOSITION 79](#)--*Prescription Drug Discounts. State-Negotiated Rebates.***

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.

Power to the People

Unlocking Government for the Public and Press & *the blogs*

10th Annual Open Government Assembly Held at CSUF, October 14-15

How more up-to-the-minute news wise can a Leaguer be? On Saturday, I was present to watch journalist Judith Miller present the **California First Amendment Coalition's** special award honoring Mark Felt (aka "Deep Throat") to his grandson, Nick Jones, at which time Nick remarked, "My grandfather defied the greatest power on earth to protect freedom." Then the following morning, I watched the panel on *This Week with George Stephanopoulos* analyze the fall-out over the 85 day incarceration of this same Judith Miller for refusing to break her confidentiality pledge to her source in the White House, I.L. "Scooter" Libby.

The workshop "Fundamentals of California Access Law" covered mainly the **Brown Act**, which Leaguers know very well, the **CA Public Records Act** and the access to court actions. These very important avenues of access protect citizens' "right to know".

Next, "Does your community need a "Sunshine Ordinance?" panel members described the ordinances of San Francisco and Oakland and Riverside County's charter amendment. (LWV Riverside was very actively involved here.) All contain closed session rules, ease public access to public records, and provide an ombudsman to counsel citizens in implementing their rights.

The address by Dan Gillmor, an expert regarding grassroots media journalism, was over my head. However, those of you, who regard your computer as a friendly force, not the menacing one I do, check out grassroots@gillmor.com or bayosphere.com/blog/dangillmor I'm sure it will be an edifying experience.

One panelist emphasized that shield laws protect reporters but it's equally important to protect the process.

Another panel discussion, "Protecting confidential sources" considered the natural tension between reporters and prosecutors. Both sides have democratic appeal and a moral mission. One panelist emphasized that shield laws protect reporters but it's equally important to protect the process. Many feel the Freedom of Information Act is being eroded by the homeland security exemption.

The awards bestowed during the CFAC Awards Ceremony speak for themselves. Leading off was the special award to Mark Felt.

Seven Beacon Awards recognize those who exemplify the spirit of *First Amendment freedoms*:

Roger Diamond, an attorney representing the Blue Zebra strip club, for forcing the L.A. City Council to behave. (His video showed the members being supremely inattentive.)

Stephen James, a freelance reporter, for winning the first court case using Proposition 59 to obtain government records.

David Goldstein, a KCAL/KCBS reporter, for dogged pursuit of driving records of MTA bus drivers. (Several had DWIs)

Karlene Gollier, counsel to the L.A. Times, for being the consummate "reporter's lawyer."

HEAL THE BAY and its founder, Dorothy Green, for use of public records to force the cleanup of Santa Monica Bay.

Three San Mateo County public officials for their efforts to limit secrecy surrounding juvenile dependency hearings.

The Press-Enterprise for its strong and articulate editorial voice in favor of government openness.

The Darkness Award, bestowed on those who show a blatant disdain for the principles of open government, to the **California Department of Corrections**, and its director, for the agency's long-standing and near-impenetrable culture of secrecy.

BY BETTE FRAZIER
LWVNOC OBSERVER
LAHABRA CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Vote No on Redistricting Prop 77

Here are the ways in which Proposition 77 falls short of LWVC standards:

Proposition 77 would give the responsibility for redistricting to a panel of three retired judges. Such a panel would almost certainly be lacking in diversity of experiences and ethnicities. Our position calls for an independent commission reflective of California's population, composed of citizens at large as well as representatives of public interest and minority groups.

If passed on November 8, Proposition 77 would require that a new redistricting plan be drawn up immediately. There would be less than two months between the special election and the filing deadlines for candidates from the newly drawn districts. Our position calls for maximum opportunity for public scrutiny when a redistricting plan is being developed. In the rush to draw districts under Proposition 77, opportunity for public input may be severely compromised.

Because Proposition 77 would require that we draw new political lines immediately instead of waiting until new census data becomes available in 2011, an estimated three million Californians would be ignored by the process. That's because the old census data to be used does not take into account the people

who have become Californians since 2000.

Proposition 77 would require that every redistricting plan proposed by the panel of judges be voted on by the people of California. Thus, when voters go to the polls in November 2006, they would be asked to approve a redistricting plan at the same time that they elect representatives from those new districts. If the plan is rejected, the entire redistricting process must be repeated, including a vote on the new plan at the next general election. LWVC believes that Proposition 77 represents a costly and cumbersome process that would confuse voters and interfere with efficient, effective government.

Finally, Proposition 77 does not provide sufficient safeguards for protecting communities that share cultural, demographic or economic interests. It may divide ethnic, language or racial groups into several districts, thus diluting their voting strength and reducing their opportunity to elect representatives who truly understand their needs.

We hope the work of the LWVCA in opposing the initiative will be enough, but no matter what happens on November 8, our campaign for a better redistricting process will continue on November 9.

**JILL KAISER NEWCOM,
LWVC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

CALENDAR

**Vote With the League
November 8, 2005
Special Election
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS RECOMMENDS**
See Page 5

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Role of the Legislature
FERC*
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See page 1

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Yes, I want to renew.

Enclosed is my check for \$55.00 payable to LWVNOC.

Name
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone
Email

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**Vote with the League on November 8
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Current and past issues of
the Voter are available on
line and in color at:
www.lwvnoc.org

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