



League of Women Voters North Orange County

February 2010

VOTER

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

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages Informed and active participation 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.

Thursday, February 4, 9:AM-1:30PM

League Celebrates 90 Years Birthday Party and Planning Meeting

North Orange County and Central Orange County League members will celebrate the 90th Birthday of the League of Women Voters at a combined Planning Meeting and Luncheon to be held in the Board Room of the Fullerton Union Joint School District on Bastanchury Road in Fullerton. Members will review League positions in the areas of Government, Natural Resources and Social Policy as a first step to League adoption of program positions at LWVUS biennial convention in Atlanta, June 11-15, 2010.

Two exciting luncheon speakers will present the past, current and future status of aspiring women presidential candidates. Jennifer Searfoss, is one of the 35 essayists featured in the book *She's Out There!*. Jennifer earned her law degree from the University of Maryland and currently lives in California. She is serving as Vice-President of External Provider Relations for

United Health Network and is President of the League of Women Voters, Central County.

Our second speaker, Dr. Stephen Stambough, serves as graduate advisor in the Political Science Department and Faculty Director of the Washington D. C. Internship Program at Cal State University, Fullerton. His expertise is in areas of direct democracy, congressional elections, gubernatorial elections and gender issues in campaigns. We will spotlight the book *She's Out There!*, a collection of essays from 35 women who aspire to become the leader of the free world. The Planning Meeting starts at 9:00AM. A delicious lunch and birthday cake will be served by directors at 11:30 followed by the presentation on aspiring women presidential candidates.

The Fullerton District Office is located at 1051 W. Bastanchury, Fullerton, 92635.

Lunch with League February 25, 12:30PM

"Rocco the Vote" A Must See Documentary

Who is Steve Rocco and how did he become a board member of the Orange Unified School District? How are such public offices filled? Why is it so important to be an informed voter? Dr. Fred Smoller, professor of Political Science at Chapman University, will answer these questions in "Rocco the Vote," a KOCE Documentary which will be shown and discussed at February Lunch with League

Take advantage of this opportunity to view the documentary and be part of the discussion. Lunch is from 12:30-2:00PM at the SIZZLER Restaurant, 1401 N Harbor Boulevard, Fullerton 92835. Cost is \$12. Choice of chicken, steak or salad bar. Reservations by February 22. Contact 714-254-7440 or bfhf1951@aol.com.

Please join us and bring a friend. The public is invited to League events.

President's Message

Dear Leaguers,
This year is the 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. When the League started in 1920 it was to Win the Right to Vote. Ten years ago in 2000, the Orange County Inter League Organization (ILO) had a celebration led by Co-Presidents Joan Cohen and Beverly Toy. They honored Jean Askham, a long time LWVNOC member who originated the campaign for "50/50 by 2020." Her goal was to achieve 50% women in all elective and public positions by 2020, the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution by which women won the vote. She called the campaign the final wave of the suffrage movement.

What are we as a League doing to make this quest a reality? It took 72 years for women to gain the right to vote, how long will it take 50/50 by 2020 to be a reality? The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We never support a political party or candidate and we never mix citizen education with advocacy.

What can each of us do to make it happen?

1. Be aware of why candidates are running for office? Encourage smart and courageous women to run for offices. We cannot support them as a League, but each of us can support them as individuals.

2. Increase awareness of the disproportionate ratio of men and women in public offices. Men and women are different. This difference is apparent in governing styles as well as in personal lives. What would our government be if there was a 50/50 ratio?

3. Wear the pins that Jean designed years ago. They will be distributed at the Birthday Celebration on February 4th from 9-2 at the Fullerton Joint Union High School District Board Room. That address is 1051 West Bastanchury, Fullerton. We will also have the pins available at Lunch with League.

4. Know your city council, school board, and county officers. Encourage and support qualified women to run for these offices.

Lastly, our 90th League Celebration is a time to honor all the suffragettes in the last century who worked for so many years for women's right to vote.

League members continue to work to increase citizen education and participation by registering voters, defending our voting rights, monitoring government activities from city councils and school boards to state legislatures and the U.S. Congress. We teach citizens about their rights and responsibilities and sponsor candidate debates and public issue forums. We inform citizens through in-depth and balanced issue analyses. The Advocacy/Public Policy arm of the League takes stands on issues based on grass roots study and consensus, and then takes action, lobbies, testifies, and advocates for implementation of our policy positions on issues.

As we celebrate this 90th birthday, you are an important part of what makes the League recognized often as a most trusted organization for providing fair and accurate information to voters.

Kay Bruce

CALIFORNIA *Fair* ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

The California Fair Elections Act on the June 2010 ballot implements a pilot project to make voluntary public financing available to the Secretary of State candidates in 2014 and 2018. It is patterned after successful Clean Money systems now working in Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut. It would allow candidates to qualify for public financing, if they agree to strict prohibitions on campaign spending, and show they have a broad base of support by raising a large number of \$5 contributions from Californians. The participating candidates would be banned from raising money from lobbyists and their clients. It is based on the simple notion that elected officials should be accountable to the voters, not donors. The funding received would be enough to run competitive campaigns.

The funding could be used for legitimate campaign expenses only. Candidates would be prohibited from raising or spending additional money. Candidates who violate the restrictions would be subject to fines, possible jail time, and may be prohibited from running for office in the future.

No tax dollars will be used for funding. Currently, lobbyists in California pay an annual registration fee of \$12.50. The registra-

tion fee would be increased to \$350. That amount plus the \$5 contributions and voluntary contributions on state tax returns should raise about \$8 million within four years, enough to cover the cost of the program.

The California Fair Elections Act (AB 483) was passed by the state legislature and signed by Governor Schwarzenegger. A 2009 statewide survey conducted by leading national research firm, Lake Research Partners, showed that voters support the California Fair Elections Act by nearly three-to-one margin. According to this survey, 65% of Democrats, 65% of Independents, and 59% of Republicans support the June 2010 ballot measure.

According to Janis Hirohama, President of the League of Women Voters of California,

"The California Fair Elections Act represents the kind of change our state needs and voters want. It is an important first step toward breaking the toxic tie between campaign cash and public policy." The California Fair Elections initiative on the June 2010 ballot has been endorsed by the California League of Women Voters, the Orange County ILO, and the League of Women Voters of North Orange County. For more specific information, go to

www.YesFairElections.org.

Campaign Kick-off!

Fair Elections That Money Can't Buy

Assemblymember Hector De La Torre

Trent Lange, Chair, Californians for Fair Elections

And other local leaders who support fair elections

Saturday, January 30, 1:00-3:00PM

Walter D. Ehlers Community Recreation Center

Veterans Hall 8150 Knott Ave. Buena Park

RSVP: www.YesFairElections.org/events or 310-397-0200

Get informed and get passionate about how Fair Elections will take politicians out of the fundraising game so they focus on our priorities.

John Chiang Discusses California Budget Crisis

California's crippled state budget, already slashed by severe budget cuts during the past several years, will face an even bigger problem in 2012, when the state will have a \$35 billion deficit. That year the state will have to repay its debts to local governments, federal funding will decrease and previously approved tax increases will expire, said California State Controller John Chiang (pronounced "Chung").

Speaking before an audience of almost 100 League members and guests at the UCI University Club, Chiang said that it is important to find solutions as quickly as possible. "We have to monetize time," he said.

"The solution will have more value if you implement it sooner rather than later."

Chiang said he would recommend eliminating tax loopholes. "There are so many tax credits," he said. "The big corporations benefit from these, while the small businesses suffer."

He said the state should eliminate programs that are not working and challenge government agencies, such as the Public Utilities Commission, to collect their debts. "I would tell the agency: 'If you find it and collect it, you get to keep it,'" he said.

In explaining his job as state controller, Chiang said he looks at three things: the current economic condition, the budgetary status and the state's checkbook. He issues cash reports on the 10th of each month, and said this often results in political battles with the governor and legislature, who contest his numbers. He has publicly criticized the governor for presenting budget figures that are not accurate, sometimes being based on revenue projections from years past, rather than reflecting the current situation.

California's three largest sources of tax revenues are personal income tax, sales tax and property tax. Of the revenue collected by the state, 75% is returned to local governments, including public schools. Chiang said the state's three biggest expenditures, representing 93% of the budget, are education, health and social services, and corrections. The state's largest payroll expenditure is for corrections.

The current financial crisis has resulted in 12.3% unemployment statewide, with over a million jobs lost, Chiang said. Businesses have become insolvent and the state is collecting less sales tax. Car sales generally represent about 9.5 % of state revenues, but fewer people are buying cars.

Chiang explained that as controller it is a felony for him to write a check that bounces. A state may not file

for bankruptcy, but it can default on its loans. "It's my responsibility to make sure the state doesn't collapse by defaulting on its debt obligation," he said. If California went into default, he explained, the state would come to a standstill. UC campuses would shut down, seniors and disabled people would be out on the street, and prisoners would be released. UCI Professor Linda Cohen, who introduced him, would be out of a job.

The state borrowed \$88 billion at the beginning of the year, primarily to pay for education. Standard and Poor recently lowered California's credit rating from A to A minus. If the state goes below a BBB rating, it will be much more expensive to borrow money. However, Standard and Poor also noted that a positive factor for the state of California

(Continued on page 5)



John Chiang, Democrat, was elected as California State Controller in 2007. He previously served as Chair of the California Board of Equalization and represented the Fourth District, primarily serving southern Los Angeles.

Citizens United DECISION Sets Off Revolution in Campaign Finance Reform Statement By Mary G. Wilson, President LWVUS Supreme Court Erred

Decision Undermines Basic Pillar of American Democracy

Washington, DC –The following is a statement by Mary G. Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters on the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*. The League filed an amicus brief in this case:

"The Supreme Court has made a tragic mistake. Their decision announced today in *Citizens United v. FEC* is constitutionally irresponsible and will surely bring about an anti-democratic revolution in how we finance elections in this country. Today, basic pillars of American democracy have been undermined – that elections should not be corrupted by vast corporate wealth and that the voters should be at the center of our democratic system.

"Justice Stevens had it right when he said, in his dissent, 'The Court's ruling threatens to undermine the integrity of elected institutions across the Nation. The path it has taken to reach its outcome will, I fear, do damage to this institution.'

"In creating a new constitutional right for corporations to spend unlimited amounts of their shareholder's money to determine the outcome in candidate elections, the Court has unleashed into our elections tremendous sums of money from for-profit corporations that cannot possibly be matched in quantity by contributions from ordinary citizens. The only possible outcome of this is that big money and special interests will have an even tighter grip on our democracy.

"Congress and the President enacted campaign finance laws over a series of decades for a reason – to protect our democracy from the perverse influence of big money in our elections. In making this decision, the Court has ignored the best interests of the American public and our representative form of government."

John Chiang

(Continued from page 4)

was the financial management of John Chiang. Chiang said he would resolve the crisis through structural changes, such as dropping the 2/3 vote requirement to pass the state budget.

Everyone in California has to make sacrifices, he said, but he believes the governor should have worked out a solution with state employees, rather than simply mandating furloughs. In fact, resolving the crisis is the responsibility of the governor and the legislature

Regarding the sale of public property, such as the Orange County Fairgrounds, Chiang said the state should identify the use of the property and the public trust, but in any event should not sell property at the bottom of the market. Also, he said that some groups are not paying their fair share, including those who buy items over the Internet and fail to

pay taxes. This results in an annual estimated revenue loss of \$2.5 billion.

Asked about pension costs for public employees, Chiang pointed out that most employees receive modest retirement benefits, in the range of \$38,000 a year. Because a few receive much higher benefits, the averages are skewed, he said. However, he said the state should start prefunding the future costs for the retirement system.

Finally, Chiang reported that his office is holding \$50 million worth of unclaimed IOUs that were issued during last summer's cash crisis.

Mr. Chiang concluded by reading a list of names of people in the audience who have unclaimed property in his office. His agency has thousands of items of unclaimed property that citizens can locate and request on the state controller's website, www.sco.ca.gov.

BY GIESLA MIEIER SECRETARY, CENTRAL ORANGE COUNTY LWV

Orange County

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETINGS

December 8 and 15, 2009

Much *discussion ensued about the Public Administrator/Public Guardian*. This has occurred because of unprecedented two Grand Jury reports in one year. (These 2009 reports can be read in full online by going to ocgov.com and choosing the Grand Jury site.) These reports raised significant concerns about personnel classifications, management growth, financial accountability and difficulties with the replacement Internet Technology system. The elected Public Administrator protects the assets and manages the affairs of deceased OC residents who, at time of death left no known heirs, no will, no named executor or an ineligible executor, and those estates that have no person willing to serve as executor. The Public Guardian responds to referrals from the courts and others to assist persons who are unable to properly provide or care for themselves. In May 2007, the BOS made the elected Public Administrator automatically the *ex officio* Public Guardian, establishing one salary for PA/PG position. The recommended action would again give the BOS the discretion to make the appointment of the Public Guardian. One of the problems is determining the salary of the Public Guardian position if it stands alone. Until 2007, when the positions were combined, the PA/PG was budgeted separately at a split of 25% for the elected Public Administrator and 75% for the appointed Public Guardian. This topic will be considered again at the Jan. 12 BOS meeting. Nick Bernardino, union representative, urged an immediate division of the Guardian/Administrator office. He called it a "Renegade Department" with "Egregious

In May 2007, the Board of Supervisors made the elected Public Administrator automatically the *ex officio* Public Guardian, establishing one salary for the combined Public Administrator-Public Guardian position.

mismanagement". Supervisor Bates stated remedies are in process and they will review PA/PG John Williams during the budget review in May. She stated he is now on notice to improve items mentioned in the Grand Jury reports and that he should make regular reports on management issues, etc. The vote to accept CEO Tom Mauk's recommendation was 2 to 3, Campbell and Moorlach voted for it and Norby, Nguyen, and Bates opposed.

The BOS decision must be made prior to the filing of the June 2010 election. The declaration of candidacy begins February 15, 2010. Anyone seeking to run for Public Administrator will know that the Public Guardian will be appointed at the discretion of the BOS. The Registrar of Voters, Neal Kelley, reported on

the results of the November 17 72nd. State Assembly District Special Primary Election. Supervisor Norby won the seat vacated by Mike Duval. Only about 1/5 of eligible registered voters participated, and 76% of those did so by mail. When Norby is sworn in, the OC Supervisorial seat will be empty until an election in June. Then, because Norby would have termed out, the 4th. District voters must again choose a supervisor in the November ballot. November will also likely see Bates and Moorlach on the ballot for their districts.

CSU Fullerton will manage the County's Archaeological/Paleontological Collection. This is a raw collection of fossils dating back 13,000 years. Most have been unearthed during construction activities in the county. (All earth developments must have an archaeologist present to preserve any species

(Continued on page 7)

Read with League *REVISED*

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF LOCATION OF THE FEBRUARY 11 MEETING.

***The Forever War* by Dexter Filkins**

A definitive account of America's conflict with Islamic fundamentalism and a searing exploration of its human costs conveyed in a riveting narrative filled with unforgettable characters and astonishing scenes."

Hosted by Marguerite Lyon 562 431-0371

Book discussion meetings begin at 1:00 PM and last about two hours. It's best if you've read the book before the meeting, but you're welcome to attend even if you haven't read it.

BOS Report

(Continued from page 6)

found at that time.) The \$1,605,527 expenditure will include storing, displaying, preserving, and studying the fossils. A Museum on Wheels will travel throughout the county with kits.

Frank Kim and Bob Franz, from the finance department, presented the Strategic Financial Plan. All departments are asked to reduce costs by 5%. However the District Attorney and the Sheriff need to balance their budgets because of fewer monies received from Prop. 172 (sales taxes). About 80% of the General Purpose Revenue is derived from property taxes! Not all counties get equal amounts of secured property taxes. The statewide average is 17%, OC gets 8%, LA gets 21%.

The OC Development Agency was authorized to expend \$200,000 to conduct the 2010 Census Outreach targeted at identifying "Hard to Count" communities in OC. These communities include demographic factors such as poverty, unemployment, complex household arrangements, etc. that are correlated with low census responses. An April 2009 report of the Census Project ranked the 50 US counties with the highest number of people living in hard-to-count areas. **OC ranked 12th in the country** in *number of people*, with 647,478 classified as "Hard to Count". This is 22.7% of our county population. They represent missed opportunities for the development of affordable housing and a loss of state and federal funding. This expenditure will not come from the County General Fund. It is available in the Development Agency's budget.

BY LWV OBSERVER, WANDA SHAFFER

CALENDAR

Thursday February 4

9AM-1:30PM

League Celebrates 90 Years
Birthday Party/Planning Meeting

She's Out There!

Jennifer Searfoss

Dr. Stephen Stambough

FJUHSO

1051 W. Bastanchury,

Fullerton, 92635

Lunch provided by Directors

Read with League

Thursday, February 11

1:00-3:00PM

The Forever War

By Dexter Filkins

Hosted by Marguerite Lyon,

Call 562-431-0371

maryfuhman@pacbell.net

Lunch with League

Thursday, February 25

12:30PM-2:00PM

"Rocco the Vote"

A Must See Documentary
Professor Fred Smoller

Cost \$12

Choice of chicken, steak or
salad bar

SIZZLER Restaurant

1401 N Harbor Blvd.

Fullerton 92835

Reservations by February 23

Call 714-254-7440 or

bfff1951@aol.com.

LWVNOC Board of Directors

Thursday, February 18

Noon-2:00PM

FJUHSO

1051 W. Bastanchury

Fullerton, 92635

*Note: Meetings of the Board of
Directors are open to the mem-
bership. Members are encouraged
to attend.*



A History of Change A Future of Hope

**Local and State Leagues
Engaging the Community
in the League's
90th Anniversary Celebrations**



Atlanta, Georgia c. 1926
League members Sophia Horne and Elizabeth Hunnicutt with LWV fliers encouraging voting in the city primary.

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Voter Editor

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Current and past issues of
the Voter are available on
line and in color at:
www.lwvnoc.org

LWV: JOIN US IN MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK