

THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

August 2010 Volume 38 Number 1

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MEETINGS, COUNCILS, AND CONVENTIONS

For Leagues the months of May and June are full of meetings that take care of the business of the League in setting the agenda for the next year. This issue of the VOTER is devoted to reports of these meetings. On this page you will see a report of our local League's Annual Meeting. The League of Women Voters of California's Leadership Council is on page 3 and the League of Women Voters' National Convention is reported on pages 4 and 5.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE ANNUAL MEETING

Electing a board of directors, adopting Program, adopting a budget, and making bylaws changes are the nuts and bolts of a local League Annual Meeting. This business was accomplished efficiently by 25 members of our League under the leadership of Elaine Manley, president.

Members adopted the budget presented by Budget Chair Sharon Jenks. The budget provides for support of other levels of League for services such as lobbying, training, and insurance; the VOTER, our newsletter, costs for which have been reduced by almost half since we started using email for distribution; delegates to convention, which have been reduced to one; a contribution to Smart Voter; member recruitment; and administration. To pay for these expenses, most of the revenue comes from member dues. A community appeal fund raiser and member donations cover the rest of the expenses.

All program items were approved with no changes.

The following Officers and Directors were elected: President, Susan Hough; Secretary, Louise Levy; Treasurer, Roberta Hollimon, Directors, Suzanne Ford, Marilyn Howard, Russell Howard, Bruce Kendell, Jason Spiller, Barbara Sullivan and Katherine Turner.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday October 9, 2010 2:00 - 4:00 PM Sunnyvale Heritage Museum

Help celebrate the League's 90th Birthday at an Afternoon Tea.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The summer continues to loaf along. The kids are out of school, and either rattling around the house or at camp. The teachers are getting a rest, and refurbishing their classrooms. Even the League took a deep breath after our lovely annual meeting. But the League never rests for long. There's an election coming in November, with ten or so (depending on the fate of the water bond) propositions and a host of candidates we'd like to know more about. There are plans to celebrate the League's 90th year in the fall, with a party we'll remember for another 90 years. And to get us started off on the right foot, your new board took a morning to learn to be a better board. We are fortunate to have three new board members this year-new faces, new ways of thinking, new ways of looking at things. Bruce Kendall has become our Webmaster, Barbara Sullivan has taken on Membership, and Kathi Turner was out of town for the meeting so we volunteered her for all the other jobs that were open (just kidding Kathi -- you can come out of hiding now). It is good for us as individuals and as a League when we have more people pitching in. One, the work's lighter and two, everybody gets a chance to play! So, next time someone from the board calls to recruit you, whether it's to register voters or dress up as a suffragette or help write the script for Pro-Con presentations, think about how much better it'll be with your help.

Susan

COMMUNITY APPEAL

Every year the League reaches out to members and the community for donations to support our work to "encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government." This year the response resulted in income of \$1,975.

Thanks to the following donors for your generous contributions:

Kristine Kelly Harry Bettencourt Glenis Koehne Sharon Blaine Peter Botsford Jo Lucey

Harold Brown Norma and Jim Medlin Delores Carson Barbara Nunes

Dolly Sandoval Joan Coston Jean Schwab Linda Davis and Serge Rudaz Edith Seidenstein Gail George Dianne Snow Andrea Harris Laurel Stell Mark and Carol Hildebrand Barbara Sullivan Marshall and Roberta Hollimon

Gail George Charles and Leanne Unulis Anita Herrmann

Rose-Marie Twu

Wilma Wool Marilyn Howard

THANKS TO POLL WORKERS AND **ELECTION NIGHT WORKERS**

The Registrar of Voters' Election Office Program invites poll workers to donate their payment to an organization of their choice. Thanks to Bev Olsen for making this donation to our League. Also thanks to Susan Hough and Roberta Hollimon for working at the Registrar's office on election night and donating their pay to the League. If others would like to like to participate in these programs, notify Roberta Hollimon at lwvcseditor@comcast.net.

Board Briefs

In July the board held a retreat which included a mini board meeting at which the board appointed Russ Howard to the position of Vice President. The board also approved new banking arrangements.

The board will resume regular monthly meetings in August.

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Nancy Burnett, Marshall and Roberta Hollimon, and Joan Schulze.

Thank you for including a donation with your dues: Russ Howard, Joyce Just, and Louise Levy.

The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

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LEADERSHIP COUNCIL 2010

The Next Ninety" was the theme for LWVC Leadership Council 2010. The meeting, attended by 109 delegates and guests, had representatives from 49 local Leagues. Some highlights of the meeting appear below. Attendance at the 2010 Leadership Council was 35 percent higher than in 2008 and more than 20 percent higher than the average Council attendance. We were honored to have three past LWVC presidents in attendance: Anne Rudin (1967-69), Barbara Inatsugu (2001-03) and Jackie Jacobberger (2003-07) who served as our Parliamentarian.

The workshops at Council were well-attended, and there were stimulating "Table Top Discussions" on issues of interest at the Saturday lunch. Sunday's lunch program focused on prospects for government reform in California, with LWVC Senior Director for Program Trudy Schafer moderating a lively discussion with Capitol Weekly Managing Editor John Howard, Sacramento State Professor Kimberly Nalder, and political strategist Ray McNally.

Saturday night's banquet speaker was Zaida Arquedas, LWVUS Deputy Executive Director and Director of LWVUS Global Democracy Programs. She gave an informative and moving talk on democracy and women leaders around the world that drew a standing ovation from the attendees.

The plenary sessions included presentations on League program, member services, communications, voter service, League finances and the proposed budget. The delegates unanimously passed the 2010-11 LWVC budget. There was also a special presentation honoring our past LWVC presidents. Resources from Council are being posted online (you can also locate them by going to the members only home page, and under in the first section "Managing Your League" click on the "Council 2010" link).

LWVC Convention 2011 – "Grow the Future"

It may seem very early, but now is the time to mark your calendars for the weekend of May 13-16, 2011 for the LWVC Convention. The coalition of host Leagues (Ventura County, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria Valley and San Luis Obispo County) are planning some fun pre- and/or post-convention activities to enjoy around a weekend of serious League work. Our Ventura hotel sits right on the beach. The region features Hearst Castle, California missions, world-renowned wineries, uncrowded white sand beaches, acres and acres of farms, walking, hiking and biking trails, historic old towns and the "American Riviera." See pictures of the region in their "Grow The Future" presentation from Council 2010.

In 2011 we will recognize 100 years of the right to vote for California women and celebrate the LWVC's 90th year as part of the League of Women Voters.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Trudy Jarratt, Vice President vicepresident@lwvc.org

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA

EXCERPTS FROM SPEECH BY PRESIDENT JANIS HIROHAMA DELIVERED AT LWVC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL 2010 ON MAY 15, 2010

Good morning. I am very happy to see all of you here today. Holding a Council is required by our bylaws, but it is also an important opportunity for League leaders – and future leaders – from across the state to come together to learn, share their knowledge, network, and gain inspiration. We recognize that our local leadership consists of more than League presidents, and also that enhancing skills and developing new and future leaders is a wise investment in the future of our organization. To paraphrase Ralph Nader: "The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." That is why, some years ago, the name of this meeting was changed from Presidents' Council to Leadership Council.

In the past year, we saw great possibilities in what seemed to be a groundswell of public interest in reforming government in California, which raised hopes that, finally, there would be enough support to make real changes. But now the major reform campaigns seem to have faltered for lack of funding and public support, leaving us to ask whether real reform is a mirage that will always elude us.

In a state with a seemingly intractable budget problem, how do we educate our fellow Californians about the realities of the budget process and the fact that the public services we feel we are entitled to must be paid for, by us? With an initiative system that puts crucial budget and policy decisions in the hands of voters, how do we adequately inform them about the important choices they are making? How do we provide the public with the facts about issues and candidates when we are competing with a culture that encourages ideological polarization, sound bites, and media spin?

Ninety years after the founding of our organization, it is obvious that our mission is as relevant as ever, and the need for our work as great as it was back in 1920. Ninety years later, the League of Women Voters continues to be there, advocating on the issues and educating the public.

The way in which we accomplish our work may – and must – change now, in the 21st Century. Our mentoring and training might take place online instead of in-person, such as the "League Marketing 101" webinar we held a few months ago, or our upcoming webinar on "Writing for the Web." Our voter service information is increasingly provided electronically, so that soon a voter will be more likely to get her election information from SmartVoter.org on her iPhone than in a hard copy publication.

But while the means by which we communicate, collaborate, educate, and advocate may change, we must remain true to the fundamentals of the League of Women Voters – our mission, our values, and our rich heritage, which constitute the heart and soul of who we are and what we do.

Janis R. Hirohama, President jhirohama@lwvc.org

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NATIONAL CONVENTION

"Let's take action" seemed to be the watchword of 604 voting delegates from 45 states and Washington DC to the national convention held in Atlanta in June 2010. Delegates adopted two studies, three concurrences and six resolutions. (See Convention Action Report on page 5).

For the first time in this delegate's memory, the convention adopted a PMP (Per Member Payment) that was greater than that recommended by the budget committee. Delegates wanted to help pay for the second study which had not been anticipated and had not been included in the budget.

One of the important actions taken at convention is the adoption of the Program for the next two years. This is the culmination of months of Program planning by state and local Leagues and Inter-League Organizations (ILOs). Members discuss League Program and then submit their recommendations to the LWVUS. This year 77 of the 273 participating local Leagues chose no study, while the rest chose review, study or concurrence. The proposal for a study of the Federal Role in Public Education received overwhelming support from from 71 Leagues. (See related article on this page). Of the 32 other proposed studies, Campaign Finance received recommendation from 20 Leagues, Environmental Protection and Pollution Control 15. and Financial Industry 10. The remainder received support from fewer than 10 Leagues. The national board recommended the Federal Role in Education as a study for the next biennium.

At the convention, delegates can move consideration of non-recommended program items for study. Three were presented for consideration and only one, Privatization, passed. The vote for the study of the Federal Role in Education passed unanimously by a voice vote. There was not a single no. The vote for the study of Privatization was very close. The voice vote followed by a standing vote were inconclusive so a card vote was taken. The motion passed Yes 308 - No 274.

It was a pleasure to hear eight former national presidents discuss what occurred during their presidencies. Luci Wilson Benson, 1968-1974 (president when I joined the League), Ruth Hinerfeld, 1978-1982, Dot Ridings, 1982-1986, Nancy Newman, 1986-1990, Susan Lederman, 1990-1992, Becky Cain Coperley, 1992-1998, Carolyn Jerfferson-Jenkins, 1998-2002, Kay Maxwell, 2002-2006, Mary Wilson, 2006-2010.

Other highlights of convention were the keynote speech by Representative John Lewis, 5th Congressional District of Georgia in which he told a story of his childhood on a farm and how he learned the way to make change was to "git in the way." He urged the League to do what League does best, "Continue to make trouble." The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, U.S, Secretary of Health and Human Services, talking about the need to refine the Health Care Reform Act, said, "Just being a woman is a pre-existing condition."

THE FEDERAL ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION STUDY

How did this project become a reality? At Program Planning in January 2008 a discussion about No Child Left Behind (NCLB) prompted Geri Stewart to suggest that we really needed a study as we had no national positions on education allowing us to participate as a League in the national debate.

At the convention in Portland that year we had a very encouraging turn-out and discussion at our education caucus-90 signed up to join an e-list to share information and to keep enthusiasm up until the next convention in two years. Helene Lecar from the Berkeley/Albany/ Emeryville (BAE) League was a big help in Portland, and a small committee was formed including Nancy Rogers and Ellen Wheeler (Los Altos/Mt. View and chair of the education committee for the LWVs of SCC).

Our committee grew-Joanne Leavitt and Barbara Inatsugu from L WV Santa Monica helped draft the study proposal; and the five Leagues of Santa Clara County gathered the education positions from all of the state Leagues and summarized the salient points from each.

Roberta Hollimon created a vast spreadsheet from all of this information. The committee also did the mailing of our proposal to all 835 Leagues in the nation.

From November until the following March we waited! We waited to hear the results from Program Planning—enough Leagues voted in favor of our study proposal to make it a board recommended study.

Peggy Hill, from the LWVUS board, will chair the study.

A committee of League members from around the country will develop the scope, the consensus questions and prepare resource materials-all to be published on www.lwv.org.

Thank you to all who made this a reality.

Submitted by Doris Petersen LWV Palo Alto

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Newly elected president Elisabeth MacNamara closed the convention with a stirring acceptance speech highlighting the League's major accomplishments over the last 90 years -- and sent a clear message that our work is not done. She finished by saying, "The League and its 150,000 grassroots supporters will continue to raise our voices in the fight for climate change reform, campaign finance reform, voter education and election reform. Let's go out there and 'get in the way'."

Roberta Hollimon, delegate

CONVENTION ACTION

Convention adopted:

A study of the federal role in public education. The study will focus on the role of the federal government in education policymaking, with possible consideration of funding, common standards and/or governance relationships among all levels of the government. The scope will be dependent on available resources, including committee and LWVUS staff time.

A study on privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector.

Convention also adopted the following positions by concurrence on the convention floor:

An updated Arms Control Position.

An addition to the LWVUS position on selection of the president: "We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished.

An addition to the LWVUS Equality of Opportunity position: "The League of Women Voters of the United States supports equal rights for all under state and federal law. The LWVUS supports legislation to equalize the legal rights, obligations, and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples. LWVUS supports legislation to permit same-gender couples to marry under civil law. The League believes that the civil status of marriage is already clearly distinguished from the religious institution of marriage and that religious rights will be preserved.

Convention also supported the following resolutions:

To support lifting the travel restrictions for Americans going to Cuba.

To call upon the Board to use the resources of the League to support and lobby for significant strengthening of appropriate regulation, oversight, inspection, and penalties associated with the development of fossil fuel resources. This strengthening should include elimination from national legislation of the exemptions for drilling and mining, as well as additional legislation requiring the federal agencies to regulate drilling and mining in a manner consistent with the preservation of a healthy environment. We also call on the Board to communicate with the President and the Congress putting them on notice that Leagues across the country are deeply concerned about this issue.

To call upon the Senate to change its rules to limit the use of the filibuster.

To add the principle of TRANSPARENCY to the SARA Resolution, as adopted by the LWVUS Convention 0f 2005. Revised to include the following Principles: Security; Accuracy; Recountability; Accessibility; and Transparency.

To call upon the LWVUS Board to advocate strongly for bills that legislate for improved Medicare for all.

To call upon the LWVUS to highlight the need for those responsible for the oil spill to be held accountable. Further, the LWVUS demands that our government hold those responsible for the environmental disaster accountable for the clean-up. The LWVUS further urges the legislative and executive branches of the federal government to immediately take all necessary steps to maximize to the extent practicable the ability and efforts of all relevant federal agencies and departments to take action, and to work with the U.S. coastal states and communities most directly and immediately affected, to respond creatively, efficiently and effectively to the environmental, health and economic crisis created by the oil flowing from the out of control BP oil well in the Gulf of Mexico and by the efforts to contain and disperse it.

Bylaws

Article III, Sec. 2 A (3), Membership, was amended by striking out the word HONORARY before the words life members. The bylaw will then read "those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues. (Note: All Leagues must conform their bylaws to this change.)

Article IX, Sec. 4, Convention Powers, Article X, Sec. 4, Council, Powers, Article XIII, Sec. 3 and 4, Financial Administration were amended to provide that a biennial budget would be adopted at Convention, starting in 2012. (See updated bylaws at this link.)

Article X, Sec. 1. Place, Date and Call of Council was amended to provide that council shall be held at a time and place or in a manner determined by the national board.

Budget

The proposed PMP rate of \$29.60 was increased to \$29.70 for 2010-2011 by a motion on the convention floor. The PMP rate of \$30.00 for 2011-2012 was adopted as proposed.

Observing the State Academic Content Standards Commission

By Ellen Wheeler, LWVC Social Policy Director; LWV SCC Education Chair; LWVLA-MV Ed. Committee member

When respected California education expert Scott Hill said to me: "It's important that you're here," that was all the reward I needed. I was taking time during a sunny summer day to observe, on behalf of the League of Women Voters of California, the final day of deliberation of the State Academic Content Standards Commission at the Sacramento County Office of Education, and I was one of only a few audience members observing this critical work.

This Commission was tasked, like similar commissions around the United States, to come to an agreement on "Common Core Standards" for math and English Language Arts for kindergarteners through high schoolers. What SPECIFICALLY should be taught in first grade so those students will be ready for the next grade, and the next . . . ? What skills do students need under their belts so they will be ready to tackle the all-important subject of Algebra I? Would California's renowned rigorous standards need to be "watered down" to standards that would be common to all students throughout the country?

21 representative education experts were selected from around the state who volunteered their time to attend a series of six meetings chock full of written academic standards. They compared these proposed Common Core Standards to their own experience and to each other's ideas. They began their work in mid-June 2010 and were required to complete it by midnight on Thursday, July 15th. Missing plane flights and working through meals, these Commission members barely completed their discussion and agreement by midnight of that last day. Their, and our, reward was formal approval of the Standards by the Commission.

WHAT WAS I LOOKING FOR AS A LEAGUE OBSERVER? I was looking for two things:

1. Was the Bagley-Keene Act followed? This "open meeting law" requires that meeting agendas be posted in advance so that persons interested in the topic of that meeting have a chance to attend it, if they so desire. The Act also requires that the governmental body give time during that meeting for public comment on the topic at hand. Importantly, this Act also requires that the business of the group be conducted in public, without predetermined private agreements.

Did this Commission meeting follow those requirements? Happily, I can say "yes." The State of California website had the agendas of these meetings, citing location, time, and content of the meetings. The meetings were televised and available live on the web. Public comment was agendized, and even allowed informally during the meeting itself. And, as far as I could tell, the business of the meeting was being conducted in public, without predetermined side agreements.

2. Was there meaningful and respectful discussion and interaction among the commissioners? Again, happily, I can say "yes." As you can imagine, putting 21 committed experts in a room to try to get agreement on what should be taught, and when it should be taught, was a challenge. Following discussion, votes were taken for each subject standard for each grade, with sometimes exquisite disagreement among the commissioners. Some votes were close; others were unanimous. What I believe I observed was experts who sometimes disagreed, respectfully listened to each other explain their points, and then respectfully voted and moved on.

WHAT'S NEXT?

These Standards recommendations now move to the State Board of Education to be examined, and hopefully approved, at their August 2nd meeting. They must be adopted as a whole piece. If approved, California would join the other 28 states which have adopted the Common Core Standards so far. This 20-year effort begun by our nation's governors would result in school children around the country learning the same thing at the same time from the same books and being tested via the same tests. Mobile students in our "flat" world should be advantaged by this new system of high standards and explicit instruction for all. I believe we owe these Commissioners a big "thank you" for getting through all this work on behalf of the school children and teachers in California.

LEAGUE NEWS

National – Following is an excerpt from a letter from the League of Women Voters to Members of the U.S. Senate.

"The League of Women Voters strongly supports the DISCLOSE Act, which would restore transparency to U.S. elections by requiring disclosure of corporate and union spending in candidate elections. We urge you to support cloture and vote for this essential reform legislation when it is considered by the full Senate. In its ruling in *Citizens United v*. Federal Election Commission, the Supreme Court opened the floodgates for big-money special interests in our elections. Corporations and unions can now make unlimited secret expenditures seeking to elect or defeat candidates. This is unacceptable in a democracy."

State – The state League has formed an Observer Corps and Media Watch group to keep the public informed about the implementation of the Citizens Redistricting Commission, starting with the applicant Review Panel (ARP) meetings.

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

June 11, 2010

I send greetings to all those celebrating the 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters of the United States at the 2010 Biennial Convention.

Ninety years ago, the first League leaders recognized that the 19th amendment was not an end to the journey of perfecting our union, but rather a step along the way. Our efforts to take on discrimination and open our democracy continue today, and remind us of the role each American can play in improving the world we inherit.

Built on proud legacies of daring, tenacious women who challenged our nation to reach higher, organizations like the League of Women Voters empower countless citizens to participate in and strengthen our Government. America is stronger because of their dedication to our founding ideals, and our children's future is brighter because of their commitment to equality for all.

As you mark this milestone, I wish you all the best for the future.

But to

Join the League of Women Voters

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to LWVCS to LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale, P.O. Box 2923, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

\$60 Individual member	Name(s):	
\$90 Two members in a household	Address:	
\$30 Student	City:	ZIP:
Contribution \$		
Phone(s):	Email(s):	

Membership checks are made out to LWVCS and are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWVCS Education Fund.

CALENDAR		WHO REPRESENTS YOU			
			August	UNITED STATES President Barack Obama	202-456-1414
Mon	9	7:00 PM	Board Meeting Hollimon's 11155 La Paloma Drive, Cupertino	comments@whitehouse.gov Senator Barbara Boxer senator@boxer.senate.gov Senator Dianne Feinstein senator@feinstein.senate.gov Rep. Anna Eshoo	415-403-0100 415-393-0707 650-323-2984
			September	annagram@mail.house.gov Rep. Mike Honda	408-558-8075
Sat	25	9:15 AM to 12:30 PM	Understanding the California State Budget Crisis Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library MLK Room 225/229 150 E San Fernando, San Jose 95112	CALIFORNIA Gov. Schwarzenegger governor@governor.ca.gov Senator Elaine Alquist senator.alquist@senate.ca.gov	916-445-2841
Sat	9	2 - 4 PM	October 90th Birthday Celebration	Senator Joe Simitian senator.simitian@senate.ca.gov Assemblyman Paul Fong assemblyman.fong@assembly.ca.gov	650-688-6384 gov
Sat		Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum, 2nd Floor 570 E Remington Drive, Sunnyvale 94087	SANTA CLARA COUNTY Supervisor Dave Cortese dave.cortese@bos.sccgov.org Supervisor Liz Kniss liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org	408-299-5030 650-965-8737	

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters of Cupertino-Sunnyvale P.O. Box 2923 Sunnyvale, CA 94087

FIRST CLASS