



the VOTER

League of Women Voters of Northwest Riverside County

Spring 2009

We are the
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS,
 an organization of
 WOMEN AND MEN
 who want to
 MAKE A DIFFERENCE
 in the political future
 of our country.
 We are a
 DIVERSE, NON-PARTISAN
 POLITICAL GROUP
 with a longstanding tradition of
 EDUCATING VOTERS.

LEAGUE FORUMS PLANNED FOR LOCAL CITY COUNCIL RACES

It's that time of year again when the League offers City Council forums for the public, and league members, to attend and become informed. Here are the dates and locations:

Ward 2: April 22, 7:00pm, Downtown Library

Incumbent: Andy Melendrez
 Challenger: Ruben Rasso
 Challenger: Ahmad R. Smith

Ward 4: April 29, 7:00pm, Villegas Community Center

Incumbent: Frank Schiavone
 Challenger: Paul Davis

Ward 6: May 4, 7:00pm, La Sierra Library

Incumbent: Nancy Hart
 Challenger: Bill Scherer
 Challenger: Ann Alfaro

LEAGUE 2009 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(Action and Programs)

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Sherri Gomez (Member-at-Large)

Katie Greene (Member-at-Large)

Harry Hood (Member-at-Large)

Remember, forums are free and open to the public. League members are encouraged to attend to become informed on the issues and to support the League.

For further information, please call Ruth Wilson at (951) 681-1115.

LEAGUE SPONSORS FORUM TARGETING RIVERSIDE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ISSUES

By Joan Donahue

On January 15, 2009 the League of Women Voters of Northwest Riverside County, in partnership with The Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance (DANA), sponsored a public forum on the state of Riverside's public transportation system at the Riverside Women's Club.

LWVWVNC and DANA were joined by The Group, Latino Network, Northside Improvement Association, Lincoln Park/Eastside Neighborhood Committee, American Association of University Women and NAACP as co-sponsors.

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NEWS FROM NATIONAL LEAGUE WEBSITE

[League Urges Support for Developing Countries in Climate Change Legislation](#)

The League and partner organizations recently urged the leaders of the House Energy and Commerce Committee to develop comprehensive climate legislation that includes substantial investments in developing countries to support adaptation to climate change impacts and the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions.

[ACTION ALERT: Health Care and Climate at Risk — Support the President's Budget](#)

President Obama has proposed a 2010 federal budget that articulates America's most urgent priorities. The proposal contains essential funding for health care reform and for curbing global warming, while making other changes aimed at putting America on a path for economic recovery.

[Women's History Month](#)

In celebration of Women's History Month 2009, the League of Women Voters commemorates the past achievements of women and highlights the successes of women today, making a difference from coast to coast. From the suffragists who founded our organization 89 years ago to the incredible women who work today to improve our communities and our country as elected officials and as volunteers, the League's women are making a profound civic impact. 

LWV CALENDAR



RIVERSIDE CITY COUNCIL

Our League will be holding Candidate forums throughout Riverside for the City Council races.

Ward 2: April 22, 7:00pm, Downtown Library

Ward 4: April 29, 7:00pm, Villegas Center

Ward 6: May 4, 7:00pm, La Sierra Library

Forums are free and open to the public. League members are encouraged to attend to become informed of these local issues as well as to support the League.

For further information, please call Ruth Wilson at (951) 681-1115.


LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING

The League's Annual luncheon meeting will be held on Saturday, June 13, venue TBD. For the first time, we will offer raffle prizes as a fundraiser for the League. If you have any items that you wish to donate to the auction, they will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Theresa Birkett at 712-6301 to let her know what you will be donating. We also encourage board members to ask merchants that they know to also donate items.

Board elections will take place at this time.

LEAGUE CONVENTION - LONG BEACH

The 2009 Convention will be begin on Friday, May 15 and continue through Sunday, May 17. It will take place at the Long Beach Marriott, 4700 Airport Plaza Drive, Long Beach 90815.

You may visit the State's [convention blog](#) from their website for more information, to see photos, meet other attendees, find a roommate or carpool, and ask other questions. 




LEAGUE CELEBRATES ITS 89TH BIRTHDAY

Washington, DC—The League of Women Voters celebrated its 89th birthday on February 14. We celebrate this year with a strong commitment to build on the civic energy generated during the 2008 election season by continuing our 89-year history of fostering meaningful citizen participation in our government processes and vigorous public dialogue about public policy issues.

“For nearly nine decades, the League has worked to ensure our democracy is transparent, effective, and truly representative,” said national League president Mary G. Wilson. “Those challenges are as real today as they were for our suffragist foremothers who struggled for their right to vote so many years ago.

“On the eve of our 89th birthday, the League’s trusted legacy and grassroots strength remains as vital to a healthy and transparent government as it did in our infancy.

“Now is the time for Americans to come together and tackle the tough challenges we all face. We are so proud that in over 850 communities nationwide, the League of Women Voters remains THE trusted place for citizens to discuss the issues, ask the difficult questions and demand accountability from their government.

“We take seriously our legacy of providing trustworthy and balanced resources to citizens and lawmakers. During the first 89 years, the League of Women Voters truly has left its footprint on American history, and our democracy is stronger because of it. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our representative democracy over the next 89 years.” 

THE LEAGUE WANTS YOU!




Has your membership lapsed, or do you know someone who would make a great member of the league?

We are actively pursuing memberships for our League chapter. With the surge of new voters who participated in this past presidential election, there is a crop of citizens who have shown a renewed interest in our country’s leadership, as well as in local politics.

NOW is the time to get involved and get active!! You can make a difference and

the experience of participating in your League is unparalleled.

If you haven’t renewed your membership, now is the time. Annual dues are just \$55 with associate memberships only \$35 (family members at the members’ same address qualify as associate members). Please contact Theresa Hanley at (951) 683-4064 to renew your membership or to have an application mailed to a friend, family member or colleague. 

**THE LEAGUE WEBSITE
IS ON ITS WAY!!**

Transportation Forum (continued)

The panel included Riverside County Supervisor Bob Buster, Riverside City Council Members Andy Melendrez and Mike Gardner, RPD Lt. Vic Williams, Greyhound Bus Line's attorney Peter Flanderka, Larry Rubio of the Riverside Transit Authority (RTA), Anne Mayer, Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), Laurie Flynn, State Department of Rehabilitation, and Marisa Valdez-Yeager representing the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Council Member Melendrez began the evening with remarks that would provide a common thread throughout the discussion. Chiefly, that the city of Riverside does not have a formal public transportation plan. Supervisor Buster expanded on this point, noting that there is "stratification" among transportation entities and "isolation" that limits communication.

Supervisor Buster recommended that the City of Riverside, RTA, RCTC and his office convene to develop a plan that would focus on a location for a multi-modal center; one that is efficient and accessible and supports all of our existing transportation modes. This type of center had been planned at the current MetroLink Station location, but attendees were told by Council Member Melendrez that the cost of property surrounding the MetroLink Center had become unaffordable.


Peter Flanderka, representative for Greyhound, stated that Greyhound was never invited to be a tenant at a local transit center. He insisted that Greyhound wants to stay in Riverside, but the "process has become too cumbersome." Greyhound has become "guarded" dealing with the City. He said the company spent \$100,000 complying with studies for a recommended site on La Cadena, only to have the site rejected by the City's Planning Commission.

RPD Lt. Vic Williams reported that last year there were over 500 calls for service at the current Greyhound/RTA site on University. Complaints included loitering, drug dealing, drunkenness, assault and robbery. As he stated at the forum, the North Policing Center has relocated to the section of the Greyhound station that was occupied by Riverside's Fire Department.

Larry Rubio stated that RTA's plans are to stay at the current site on University Ave. 3.5 million dollars are on hand to expand and improve the location. Also, since RTA has added its own security force, public safety has improved greatly.

The majority of questions from the audience concerned the status of Greyhound service in Riverside. Council Member Gardner has since finalized his stated intention to extend Greyhound's lease at its current site with certain conditions. The lease has been extended to early June 2009, with the conditions that Greyhound improves security and sanitation surrounding the station and keep the station staffed throughout arrivals and departures. Gardner stated that the City will continue to work with Greyhound to find a new site and recommended getting local community input on a proposed site very early on in the process.

Marisa Yeager brought the forum to a close, appealing to panelist to improve their working relationships by coming together in one room to address long term transportation strategies. She suggested that further discussion of a local multi-modal center would encourage discussion of their benefits; including reducing pollution and traffic congestion and improving local commerce. She added that Multi-modal centers, by their nature, become easily accessible community centers that provide long term benefits and can greatly improve a community's quality of life.

A meeting is planned for April 2009 with City and County transportation and elected officials to discuss the 2025 General Plan and its goal in relation to a regional public transportation system. 



QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"Those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account -- to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day -- because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government."

*President Barack Obama
Inaugural Address*