



the VOTER

League of Women Voters of Northwest Riverside County

Summer 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 CONDUCTS 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

League members, guests and distinguished elected officials attend event at Riverside's Cask and Cleaver on June 13

The event was both functional and fun.

Before the 'official' business began, members and guests mingled and engaged in a light-hearted competition of who-wins-what at the Chinese raffle which netted the League just over \$200. Raffle prizes -- from wine to paintings, hotel stays to ipods -- were donated by members themselves.



Outgoing President Ann Kasper called the meeting to order and shared the chapter's accomplishments in the past year, followed by the Treasurer's Report by Barbara Purvis.



Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge joined the group along with Riverside City Councilmember Paul Davis.

LEAGUE 2009-10 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Joan Donahue

1st Vice President Elect
Theresa Birkett

2nd Vice President/Voter Services
Helen Norman

Secretary/Treasurer/Membership
Barbara Purvis

"Voter" Editor
Sherri Gomez

Directors
Theresa Hanley
Muriel Schwartz
Ann Kasper
Jo Turner
Katie Greene
Harry Hood



Luncheon guest speaker was Grey Frandsen, who was a candidate for Assembly District 66 in the November 2008 election, and gave a spirited report on what it means to run a grassroots campaign.

*Incoming President
Joan Donahue
addresses the group*



Theresa Birkett reported on the recent State Convention in Long Beach



WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As we look forward to another productive year in League, be assured that the current LWV NRC Board is pleased and anxious to have the opportunity to advance voter education and promote League positions on public policy issues.

When citizens are asked in public opinion polls, "what organizations do you most trust," the League of Women Voters repeatedly ranks at the top. Our reputation as one of the most effective and influential political organizations is due to our grassroots structure, our dedication to organization and study, and the willingness of our member to take action on issues that effect their communities on a national, state and local level.

With an emphasis on these tried and true League objectives, here are some of the things our League has planned for the coming year.

We have a new website up and running at RiversideLeague.com. Keep an eye on our site for upcoming events, League action on issues and election information.

We have a committee in place to update our bylaws. Our 'internal rules' are in need of revision and Barbara Purvis, our Secretary/Treasurer, will chair the committee.

We have a committee of four members who will observe Riverside City Council meetings. Observers are essential to our League's effectiveness. They do not speak for the League, but take note of what occurs and report pertinent information for study or action. Without observers many opportunities for action would be missed.

We have a committee in place to study of the Riverside City Council's decision to withdraw funding for the Community Police Review Commission's investigations of officer involved shootings and deaths. The League of Women Voters believes that transparency in government is one of the cornerstones of good government and we feel sure this study is well worth our efforts.

We have candidate forums planned for the November 3rd General Municipal Election. Please see our forum flyer inside this issue for dates and locations for our school board candidate forum for Riverside United School District.

As we launch our new committees and prepare for our forums, we are better prepared and motivated due to our recent training workshop held on Saturday, August 29th. Please consider joining us in these efforts by coming to our monthly Board Meetings, observing a government meeting or serving on a committee.

Participation in League is not a full-time job, however, serving short-term on a committee or observing a government meeting is an effective and rewarding way to improve the health and vitality of our community.

I welcome your comments and suggestions. And please, join us as we increase our efforts to make democracy work!

*Joan Donahue, President
League of Women Voters Northwest Riverside County*



LWV TO HOLD SCHOOL BOARD FORUM

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES' FORUM

**Wednesday,
September 30
7:00pm - 8:30pm
Gage Middle School
6400 Lincoln Avenue,
Riverside 92506**

Incumbents:

Chuck Beaty and Kathy Allavie

Challengers:

Mark Swartz and
Christopher Lorenz

PLEASE JOIN US!

For more information please
visit:

www.riversideseague.com
www.pickriverside.org

Special Note:
**You may see a video of this
forum at our website:**
www.riversideseague.com

*Co-Sponsored by the
League of Women Voters of
Northwest Riverside County,
American Association of
University Women and
The Pick Group*



President Joan Asks...

SHOULD RIVERSIDE LEAGUE CHAPTER FORM A 'SPEAKERS BUREAU'?

I got a timely email from Thea Brodtkin, our State League Voter Service Chair. At our recent Board Training Retreat we were talking about forming a local Speaker's Bureau that would be available to local groups for discussion of the pros and cons of ballot measures. It is such a valuable service for the community and really fun once you get all the information under your belt. Plus, the groups that invite us are always appreciative, interested and engaged (and we can charge a small fee for our services).

In the past LWVC posted a document, *In Depth*, six weeks before the election. It contained detailed background information and the pros and cons from every angle about a ballot measure's content. But, that final product was the only source for educating and training League speakers.

Here is what Thea plans to do -

"I am planning to set up a new communication tool to be used by researchers / ballot measure speakers for the June Primary Election. Stacy Shepherd of the Santa Barbara League is working on a "WIKI" to be placed on the LWVC members-only website that will allow us to update the In Depths as new information is gathered and to correct the inevitable errors. As the ballot measure campaigns progress, often there are new pro and con arguments uncovered and we will be able to add them to the In Depths.

In addition, the WIKI will allow League speakers to post articles from their local media and to ask questions. I believe it is imperative that ballot measure speakers have a way to communicate information and have questions answered. We hope to improve the training of ballot measure speakers by having a method of updating material and exchanging information."

Thea has asked for email addresses for those of us who want to participate. I will sign up Helen and me – who would like to join us?

As our initiative process seems to get more corrupt every year by big money and special interests, concerned citizens are really grateful to have the language of the measures explained (as you know, sometimes 'no' means 'yes' and vice versa) and get a clear understanding of the purpose and various ramifications of the measures.

This really is a rewarding task – Let me know if you'd like to sign up.





LWVC SETS PRIORITIES FOR 2009

The LWVC Board has adopted the Legislative Priorities for 2009. The priority issues will be State and Local Finances/State Budget -- focusing on reform of the state budgeting process and support of equitable and adequate generation and distribution of tax revenues. As time and resources permit, we will take action on core government issues and ossibler ation in teh areas of Health Care, Water, and Climate Change.

Legislative priorities should not be confused with the issues for Education and ADvocay adopted by delegates to the LWVC Convention. Legislative prioriteis address key issues expected to be active in teh legislature during the current session, and are developed in consultation with LWVC off-board program directors, legislative consultants and legislation committee members.



NEWS FROM CALIFORNIA LEAGUE WEBSITE

[League Sends First Online Action Alert on Budget Reform](#)

The LWVC successfully sent its first online ACTION ALERT last month. We asked our subscribers to contact their legislators to demand they get back to work and support real reform through reduction of the two-thirds requirement to pass the budget or raise revenues.

Almost 400 individuals contacted their legislators up and down the state. You can still take action now by logging onto www.lwvc.org. Be sure to sign up to receive future ACTION ALERTS directly in your email box. For more information on the budget crisis, read our press release and visit our budget page.

[California Fair Elections Act](#)

The campaign to pass the California Fair Elections Act (AB 583 of 2008) is building steam. The measure will appear on the June 2010 ballot and would create a pilot project for voluntary public financing for candidates running for Secretary of State in 2014 and 2018. Read LWVC President Janis Hirohama's op-ed in the August 22 Sacramento Bee, linking the dysfunction in state government—evidenced by the budget deal passed in July—with the need for change in Sacramento. As Hirohama put it, “The CFEA is an important first step toward breaking the toxic tie between campaign cash and public policy.”

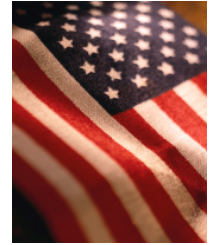
League members and local Leagues can get involved in the campaign, too! We will be adding information to our Government Reform Web page soon, so look for more information in the coming weeks.

[Redistricting News](#)

The draft regulations for formation of the Independent Redistricting Commission called for by last year's Proposition 11 are now posted on the Bureau of State Audits Web site. The League and its coalition partners are working to review the regulations and make comments to the State Auditor's office before the September 14 deadline.

The application period for membership on the commission will open on December 15, 2009 and continue to February 12, 2010. Are you going to apply? Do you know someone who would be a good candidate? Have you asked them yet? Materials will be up on the League's Web site link to redistricting implementation page, to assist you and other prospective candidates in deciding whether to apply.





NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL LEAGUE WEBSITE

Changes to the Members Section of the LWWUS Website

A few changes have been made to the Members section of www.lwv.org, and you will likely see other changes in the coming months. We are working to make the website more user-friendly and informative. The “Tools for Leaders” section has been renamed the “Leaders Section.” Also, in order to optimize the usefulness of the resources in "For Members" section of the website, we are asking for your input. Please take a moment to complete a survey and tell us how you use this section of the website and what type of information is most helpful to you.

For further information please log onto to www.lwv.org.

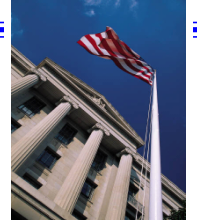
“Little Things” to Grow Your League: Tip 5

We regularly hear that the reason someone joined the League is because they were asked! It sounds so simple, but we often overlook sharing our passion for League with others. Encourage every board member to invite 2 or 3 non-members to your next League activity. Mingle with these attendees, share what League means to you, and don't forget to ask them to join!



P.O. Box 20785
Riverside, CA 92516

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.RIVERSIDELEAGUE.COM



UPDATES ON HEALTH REFORM

FROM THE NATIONAL LEAGUE WEBSITE

PUBLIC OPTION IS ESSENTIAL TO HEALTH REFORM

League Urges Congress and President to Continue Support for Public Option

Washington, DC – “The public option in health care reform may not be essential to bureaucrats or insurance companies but it absolutely is essential to the almost 47 million uninsured Americans who live day to day without health care coverage,” said League of Women Voters National President Mary G. Wilson. Calling on Congress and the President not to succumb to the bullying tactics being used by special interest groups, Wilson urged Congress and the President not to waver in their support of the public option included in H.R. 3200, America’s Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009, recently passed by three House committees.

America is facing a health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves millions of Americans without any coverage. “The current health care system is endangering our economy, our health, and our national security,” Wilson said. “Last fall, voters elected a Congress and President that promised to reform our health care system. Voters made it clear that they want a change in our health care system, a change that puts the brakes on the excesses created by a system dominated by large insurance companies,” she continued.

“It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system and a public option will make that possible for Americans who cannot obtain coverage through the traditional employer-sponsored plans,” noted Wilson. “We believe that health care reform legislation must guarantee access to comprehensive and essential benefits to all U.S. residents.”

“But the possibility of universal coverage is not the only advantage of the public option,” warned Wilson. “We must control costs and the public option is the best chance to bring costs into line with reality. As a nation, we are spending \$1 out of every \$6 we earn on health care. Over the last three decades, increases in the amount we spend on health care have consistently risen faster than wages and inflation. Health care reform must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care. Offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans is key to lowering costs.”

“The public option is critical to health care reform,” Wilson concluded. “Now is not the time for politicians to get cold feet just because a handful of special-interest-backed protesters spread lies and make noise at public forums. Congress and the President need to demonstrate real leadership and move forward with true health care reform.”

Health Care Reform: League Speaks Out in Support of Public Option

America faces a health care crisis that is endangering both our economy and our health, and business as usual is not an option. The League recently released a statement urging Congress and the President not to succumb to the bullying tactics of special interest groups, and continue supporting the public option included in H.R. 3200, America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009.

Article from the Los Angeles Times (August 2, 2009)

At a White House press conference recently, President Obama said, “I have great health insurance and so does every member of Congress.” It was a reminder that we hear quite a bit about the kind of coverage “lawmakers give themselves.” But what, exactly do lawmakers have in the way of insurance? The *LA Times* took a closer look at the taxpayer-subsidized coverage members of Congress have:

- Ten plan choices with access to doctors nationwide.
- HMOs that provide care in each state (in California, there are 11 options).
- Special treatment at Bethesda Naval Medical Center and Walter Reed Army Medical Center.
- For an extra \$300 (House) or \$600 (Senate) per month, access to a Capitol Hill team of doctors, nurses and other medical personnel.
- Three-quarters of premium cost paid by taxpayers.
- Coverage regardless of a preexisting condition.
- No waiting period.
- Under the Blue Cross Blue Shield plan favored by a majority of federal employees, a vast array of medical, dental and vision benefits with \$20 co-payments for doctor visits. Generic prescriptions are \$10 and immunizations are free.

Sources: U.S. Office of Personnel Management, National Taxpayers Union