



# San Diego VOTER

Vol. 72 No. 4

April 2008

## **April Unit Meetings: PRIVATIZATION...OUTSOURCING...MANAGED COMPETITION**

Both the April Units and the April Luncheon will concentrate on "managed competition," the Mayor's plan to put (still unspecified) city services and city departments out for bid to the private sector. What does this mean? What is involved in doing it? What precautions should the city take? How will the city oversee the work? Will fair wages and fair employment practices be incorporated into the contracts? There are many questions which we will tackle.

Most departments have completed the BPR (Business Process Re-engineering) process, which attempts to streamline existing departments to make them competitive with private industry and prepare them to participate in the bidding process. Since almost all internal auditing of city departments has apparently ceased, there is no certainty about service efficiency or standards.

Our speakers for the luncheon are familiar with how managed competition has worked in other situations and how San Diego is progressing (slower than predicted).

We made repeated attempts to get a managed competition staff member to participate on our panel but, unfortunately, the Mayor's office declined our requests for official input.

The book we are discussing at Units delves into the economics of managed competition and some of the complexities and complications with it. It will bring you back to your college days – solid reading, but fairly short.

Please try to locate a copy of **"You Don't Always Get What You Pay For: The Economics of Privatization"** by Elliott Sclar. There are about four copies floating around the League or you can pick one up second-hand from Amazon.com for a few dollars. The city library only has one copy. We also handed out a summary of the book at the March Units, so that's the easy way out.

Be sure you are familiar with the book before you come to your Unit meeting in April. We will play a game and discuss the book in preparation for the Luncheon. Sclar is a critic of privatization but he is relatively unbiased and his work is based on serious original research. He shows that while privatization has a place in public management, it has overwhelming deficiencies.

Join us in learning more about this critical issue of privatization/outsourcing/managed competition, which our city is about to implement.

See the enclosed flyer for information on the panelists, etc. and your tear-off reservation form.

### **Mark Your Calendar for Events Coming Up!**

#### **April 20 "Earth Day"**

19th annual free environmental fair at Balboa Park.  
*See Info. in this Voter.*

#### **April 24 "Lunch with League" -**

"Privatization of City Services"---  
What's in Store for San Diego?  
*See inserted flyer in this Voter.*

#### **May 31 Annual Meeting,**

Mission Valley Library, 10 am to 1 pm

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**Letter from the President**

Picking up on last month's opening question: How does the LWV go about promoting good government? **WE ADVOCATE! WE EDUCATE! WE REFORM! WE EMPOWER!**

Not a month goes by without concrete action by the San Diego League to advocate, educate, reform (or try to) and empower our citizens. I've heard more comments this year than ever before about how important we are to the San Diego community. Why? Because there is a vacuum in our city, a critical scarcity of strong and organized voices that are not afraid to speak out about the need for improvement and also for fundamental change in the way our local government does business. It's become increasingly obvious that the LWVSD is one of the few civic groups willing to stay informed, do the hard work, and resist being intimidated by powerful political players with a vested interest in maintaining control.

By the time you read this, many of you will have met California's Secretary of State Debra Bowen at our March Luncheon. Her brave defense of the integrity of California's electoral system is an inspiring example of strong leadership in the public interest and a reminder that doing the right thing in the public realm is rarely an easy process. Despite angry criticism and legal challenges, Secretary Bowen is persevering. We congratulate her.

Our April 24<sup>th</sup> Luncheon will also tackle a controversial issue. We're calling it "Privatization/ Outsourcing/ Managed Competition: What's in Store for San Diego?" It's a heads-up about the mayor's planned shift of major city services out of public control and into private hands. The program committee worked hard to convince the mayor's office to participate on our panel and provide us with first-hand information about what's in store for San Diego citizens, but to no avail. You won't want to miss this important opportunity. Send in your reservations early.

Last but not least, our big May fundraising event is just around the corner. This year we are planning a public Town Hall Meeting on another hot item, the city's economic crisis. It's planned as a civic symposium followed by a meet-the-candidates reception. The name of the event: San Diego's Ship of State: Shipshape or Mayday? Once again we are stepping into the gap by confronting a crucial issue that has failed to get the analysis and attention it deserves.

(continued on page 3)

*The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization dedicated to informed and active public participation in government policy and decision-making. The League engages in education and advocacy on behalf of the public interest and welcomes full participation in its activities by all members of the public.*

## President's Message

(continued from page 2)

The LWVSD has a choice: we can stay safe and sound by sticking to non-controversial issues and actions. Or we can confront the crucial issues of the day and risk inevitable disapproval for not being "League-like." But when you remember our roots, the choice becomes clear. The LWV was born out of the suffragist battleground and went on to fight fierce battles over radical issues like federal aid for maternal and child care, collective bargaining, the minimum wage, compulsory education, and rejection of government corruption. Worried about criticism? We should be worried if we never get any.

--- Norma Damashek, President  
[ndamashek@ucsd.edu](mailto:ndamashek@ucsd.edu) / 858 459-8751

## Great Opportunity!!

The Speakers' Bureau needs ..... YOU!! LWVSD would like to have a small stable of speakers available to talk on some other subjects, besides the propositions on the ballot. We would list these topics on our web site. The person or persons would need to do a little research (or have already done this), and then keep up with new developments. Much material is available at the different levels of LWV.

Some of the subjects could be: the Story of LWV, Redistricting, the Equal Rights Amendment, Health Care, Importance of Voting, Water Issues, Education Topics, Women's' Issues, the Strong Mayor, a particular environmental issue, any topic which League has studied in which you are interested. Check out the [www.lwvncsd.org](http://www.lwvncsd.org) website to get the idea.

This is a great way to spread the message of the League of Women Voters to the community. And you'll enjoy being a member of this team!

---Margaret Stevenson,  
 Speakers Bureau Chair 619-299-0036

## Membership

Please welcome these new members!  
 Currently the LWVSD has 511 members!

NAME	ZIP
Mitz Lee	92103
Ronald Lee	92064
Gwendolyn Hanley-Pamplin	92114
Estelle Shabetai	92037
Susan Sheldon	92064
Bernice Stephens	92109
La Virgia Bryant Wright	92114

## Earth Day!

Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, Balboa Park

This is the 19th annual free environmental fair which attracts about 60,000 visitors each year. Once again, the League will be hosting a booth, where we will be handing out information about the League, registering voters and handing out some "green" friendly samples.

**We would appreciate your support by volunteering for a two-hour shift: (8-10 am, 10-12, 12-2 pm & 2-4). Please email [jill@jillelsner.com](mailto:jill@jillelsner.com) to volunteer or have any thoughts for the League booth. Please call me W 858-695-6660 or H 858-695-6660.**

There will be more than 200 exhibitors, special theme areas, a Food Pavilion, a special Kids' Activity Area, five entertainment venues, and the Children's Earth Parade, starting at 10:30 am. Exhibitors will include conservation organizations, wildlife preservation groups, organic gardening information, alternative energy vehicles, ecotourism, alternative and traditional health care products, pet adoption, clean air and water products, etc., etc.

There will be goods to buy, crafts, games, face painting, storytelling, and hands-on activities for children of all ages. The Children's Stage features youth-oriented performances throughout the day. The Sun Stage (behind the Federal Building), and Moon Stage (at Park and Presidents' Way) will feature a variety of contemporary music by local artists. There will also be a Folk Music Stage (by the U.N. building). The eHome exhibit area will showcase products and technologies that can make your home more environmentally sustainable. Learn about energy efficient appliances and low-E windows, and more.

**For complete information on bus and trolley service, visit [sdcommute.com](http://sdcommute.com).**

## April Unit Meetings: PRIVATIZATION...OUTSOURCING...MANAGED COMPETITION

Monday, Apr. 7 5:30 – 7:30 PM	Mission Valley	Mission Valley Library 2123 Fenton Parkway San Diego, CA 92108 (near IKEA & Costco)	Debra Blum (619) 225-0353 Karen Beeson (619) 475-8236
Tuesday, Apr. 8 9:30 - 11:30 AM	La Jolla	La Jolla Public Library 7555 Draper Avenue La Jolla, CA 92037	Alice McCauley (858) 642-1856
Tuesday, Apr. 8 1:00 – 3:00 PM	University City	North University City Community Library, off Nobel at Judicial Drive	Margaret Stevenson (619) 299-0036
Wednesday, Apr. 9 9:30 – 11:30 AM	North Shores/ Point Loma	LWVSD Office 4901 Morena Blvd. Bldg. 100 Ste. 104 San Diego, CA 92117	Betty Carlson (619) 276-3223 Nancy Witt (619) 222-7230
Wednesday, Apr. 9 1:00 – 3:00 PM	Tierrasanta	Villa Monterey Club House 5275 Rimpark/Apple Tree Dr. San Diego, CA 92124	Carole Porter (858) 279-5474
Thursday, Apr. 10 9:30 – 11:30 AM	East San Diego	College - Rolando Library 6600 Montezuma Road San Diego, CA 92115	Barbara Evje (619)-462-4772
Friday, Apr. 12 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>Note New Unit!</b> SouthEast Unit	Malcolm X Library Market & Euclid San Diego, CA 91945	Vergie Wright (619) 264-6735
Monday, Apr. 14 9:30 -11:30 AM <b>Note Change!</b>	Rancho Bernardo and Scripps Ranch	San Diego National Bank Community Rm. 2nd Fl. 16789 Bernardo Ctr. Drive San Diego, CA 92128	Betty Weinberger (858) 674-0909 Irene Dunny (858) 613-0335

### LWVSD Calendar — April

April			
4/1	Tue.	6:00p.m.	Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
4/3	Thurs.	9:30 a.m.	Unit Council, LWVSD Office
4/4	Fri.	10:30 a.m.	County League Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
4/7– 14			<b>UNITS - Privatization/Outsourcing/Managed Competition</b>
4/16	Wed.	10.00 a.m.	Membership Committee Meeting, LWVSD Office
4/16	Wed.	12:30pm	Education Committee Meeting, LWVSD Office
4/20	Sun		Passover (begins Saturday night)
4/24	Thur.	11:30 a.m.	<b>“Lunch with League”</b> : Privatization, Tom Ham’s Lighthouse
4/25	Fri.	9:30 a.m.	Public Policy Meeting, LWVSD Office
4/25	Fri.	12:00 noon	Program Committee Meeting, LWVSD Office
<b>Early May</b>			<b>“Shipshape or Mayday?”</b> Forum & Candidate Mixer      Watch for details!

## **Debra Bowen Wows Luncheon Crowd**

California Secretary of State Debra Bowen got several standing ovations at the March "Lunch with League." An outstanding speaker with eight years in the California Assembly and six in the State Senate, she amazed us with her ability to answer the multitude of questions the audience threw at her, sometimes with a simple "yes" or "no" and not a bit of "politician-speak."

She regaled us with the story of her surprise phone call from Caroline Kennedy advising her that she was going to be recognized with a "John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage" award. The recognition was for her courage in restricting the use of electronic voting systems, after UC computer scientists concluded they could be hacked. The awards are presented to public servants who have made decisions of conscience without regard for the personal or professional consequences.

We are so proud of her!

***Watch for an important announcement on an  
Early May fundraising event!***

***"San Diego's Ship of State --  
Shipshape or Mayday?"  
A Reality Check!***

***Early May***

The League of Women Voters of San Diego will present a no-holds-barred Civic Symposium followed by a Candidates Mixer.

Get the unbiased facts about  
City services & the Mayor's budget!

**MEET THE CANDIDATES!**

**HEAR THE EXPERTS!**

**GET INFORMED!**

***WATCH FOR COMPLETE DETAILS!***



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### LWVSD Diversity Policy

The LWVSD, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there should be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League of Women Voters on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. LWVSD recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. LWVSD subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. LWVSD affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its Board, staff and programs.

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### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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