



February Units: It's Time for Program Planning for the 2009-10 Year

Unit meetings this month will concentrate on the topics to emphasize for next year – either as an Issue for Emphasis (action or more information provided in meetings) or as a study. We will be doing it for the local (San Diego League area) and for State League. Once the Program Committee receives each Unit's ideas and recommendations, they tally them to form recommendations to both Boards. The Board then makes their recommendation to the membership who votes on local issues at the LWVSD Annual Meeting and state issues at the LWVC Convention. Every issue that is not recommended by the respective Board is listed as an item not recommended by the Board, so members can raise it if they want to override the Board recommendation. **No issue can be added to the list for the vote of the membership unless it has been mentioned and listed at these Program Planning meetings. Be sure your ideas are heard and recorded.** As a valued member of this grassroots organization, you have the opportunity and the responsibility to indicate the issues on which you believe the League should focus their time, talent, money and reputation. Consider where there is the most need, where we will be most effective, and what activities best serve our mission.

To prepare for this Unit meeting, please reread the positions-in-brief held by the local League and the state League. They can be found at the LWVSD website www.lwvsandiego.org under Positions. If you cannot access them there, you can look in last year's Membership Roster (local positions only) or call the League office, 858-483-8696 to have a copy mailed.

Here are some helpful definitions – please bring them to the Program Planning meeting:

Retain – Members decide to keep a position because it is still relevant.

Drop – The position is no longer useful in its present form or is not supported by most members. Action

on this position will end. Any further action will require a new study.

Study – Usually a 2-year process where a committee gathers data, does interviews, and gathers information with the aim of member discussion, consensus, and establishing a position.

Update – A study of limited scope to reevaluate an existing position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another League position. During an Update, action on the existing position continues. Ultimately, the position may be changed.

Fact Finding – Gathering of information on a specific topic for which there is a general position but need more details in order to act.

Legislative Priority – Issues selected each year by the State League Board for concerted action in the legislature. LWVSD does not do this. (don't confuse with Issue for Education and Advocacy)

Issue for Education and Advocacy – An issue geared action using existing positions and/or to educating the community with specific information. Adopted by the State Convention (for LWVC) or Annual Meeting (for LWVSD) by a vote of the delegates.

Adopt by Concurrence – A position held in another League which you recommend be adopted verbatim by a vote of the delegates at the LWVC Convention or LWVSD Annual Meeting. Background material would be sent in advance of the meeting.

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June 2008 - July 2009
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Letter from Co-President Norma Damashek

League members in our community show their support and appreciation for the unique services provided to the public by the League of Women Voters by faithfully sending in their annual dues and, whenever possible, supplementing the basic amount with additional contributions to the cause. We are often surprised and touched to hear from our quieter members about how much they appreciate what we're doing, or to find new names on the membership list of friends or acquaintances we hardly see, or to find an unsolicited gift check in the mail. Our broad base of loyal members (give or take 500) plays a reliable and reassuring role as a safety net, providing crucial backing for the cadre of members who work actively on League business and activities. There are different ways to keep the LWV strong and effective and we all do what we can toward that common purpose.

The VOTER has always been an important tool for us to keep in touch with our members and make sure we practice here at home what we preach to the public: full disclosure, education about issues, open access, accountability, etc. While we don't underestimate the growing role of the Internet as the primary provider of public communication in the 21st century (in fact, we'll be unveiling an exciting, captivating, and vastly improved San Diego League website one of these days), the value of a monthly newsletter you can hold in your hands, read over your morning coffee, and pin up on your bulletin board is undeniable. So what's the problem? We operate on a shoestring, are strapped for funds, and can barely keep up with postage and printing costs. The Board has been struggling to find a remedy, even considering substituting an emailed version of the VOTER for the printed edition. Happy to say, this problem is nothing that money can't solve. And that brings us to the subject of fund raising.

The members and workers of the LWV are dedicated, smart, compassionate, civic minded, and unselfish with their time and energy. But here's the problem -- as a group, we are terrible at fund raising. On top of that, our nonpartisan independence and commitment to political reform come at a real cost, namely, they keep us at arms distance from most big contributors and prosperous social circles. So here's the deal: the Board is happy to stay hard at work piecing together our annual budget, but we'd be thrilled to share the fun in the company of those of you who have more experience, know-how, and good ideas in the arena of fund raising. We know that the bottom has fallen out of our economy, but let's look at the bright side. Although the League mission is huge, our needs are modest. With a small group of League members willing to take responsibility for the job of fund raising and run with it, we'll be better able to cover ordinary expenses, forget about scrimping on the VOTER, and maybe do something useful about our sick office computer. I know there are angels on our membership list. Please email me and let me know who you are.

---Norma Damashek, Co-President

ndamashek@ucsd.edu

(Continued from page 1)

Suggestion:

At the state level, there is a movement afoot to do a study with consensus on prison reform. There is a group in the LA area working on developing/ narrowing the scope and finding funding for this study. They have proposed that it would examine the following questions:

- * Who is currently in California prisons, what are they there for, and for how long? Based on current sentencing practices, what are the projections for the prison population in the future? Is prison the appropriate place for the current population?
- * How have California sentencing policies, including mandatory minimum sentences and the "three-strikes" law contributed to the current crisis? How many are returned to prison for technical parole violations?
- * What are other states doing to address the problem of prison overcrowding and burgeoning costs?
- * Are building more prisons or transferring prisoners to other states solving the problem?
- * Are the current inmates being prepared to return to society as law-abiding citizens?
- * What changes are needed in sentencing law and policies to reduce current and future prison populations while still ensuring adequate public safety?

---Beryl Flom, Program Co-Chair
858-459-4406 or edflom@sbcglobal.net

Membership

Currently the LWVSD has 495 members!
Please welcome these new members.

NAME	ZIP
Gene Hartwell	92109
Evie Kosower	92105
Peggy Hayward	92131

Save the date!

March 6, 5 -7 PM
2nd Annual COMMON CAUSE Fundraiser
at the offices of
Coughlin, Stoia, Geller, Rudman and Robbins
655 West Broadway

Cost: \$50 per person
\$40 for members who bring a guest

San Diego Common Cause was busy this past year. We looked at Election Integrity, Voter ID's and the National Popular Vote Movement. With your help we were able to pass Proposition 11 because we all knew there was a better way to do redistricting in California.

So what should we be working on in 2009? Come help us decide as we learn more about Initiative Reform, Clean Elections, and Media Reform and then have open discussions with our speakers and fellow San Diegans. Bring your friends and let's all be part of the "change" that is on the way!

---Jeanne Brown, San Diego Organizer
California Common Cause
jbrown@commoncause.org
(619) 857-1807

National Popular Vote

There will be a national consensus on National Popular Vote (NPV) at the April Unit meetings.

This is a fairly straight-forward topic which has been researched and put together for presentation to League members by a national task force.

Locally, we need some people to be presenters for the April Unit meetings on NPV. If you could help us out, please contact me.

---Beryl Flom, Program Co-Chair
858-459-4406 or edflom@sbcglobal.net

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.

“Storybank”

This month we hear the story Ramona Salisbury Kiltz.

League’s Impact on the Women’s Movement!

I joined the Des Moines League of Women Voters in 1960. At that time, I enjoyed the roles of homemaker and the care of three small boys. I found the League an excellent vehicle to learn more about my new community and current governmental issues. We moved to Omaha, NE in the late 60’s when civil rights became a LWV priority. The Omaha League provided me the opportunity to serve as Human Resources Director and later as President.

During this crucial period, the League sponsored a series of forums on housing, education, and daycare. Omaha’s Mayor Eugene Leahy sat next to me at one of the panel presentations and related to me his desire to set up a staff position in his office on the status of women. Little did the Mayor fully understand the implications of his luncheon conversation. Two weeks later, I was assigned a desk and given a blank legal pad to begin this important task in the Mayor’s Office..

His idea blossomed into a 40 member Mayor’s Commission on the Status of Women with highly-recognized women from many organizations and walks of life. A year later we had made significant progress when a new Mayor was elected. There was uncertainty about the Commission’s tenure.

After Mayor Zorinsky took office, he requested resignation letters from all past staffers. I was filled with trepidation when called into his office and he sternly asked me what were the actual goals for this large group and what type of budget did this require? The Commission was very focused on how their resources and knowledge would be activated. I related this information to him, but in a somewhat guarded way, since I have found that the egos of men in high places are sometimes fragile.

Surprisingly, he asked me if we would be open to some recommendations. The new Mayor proceeded to state the Commission should have wider involvement of women and men in the community and could accomplish this through working committees. The leaders of these committees would be members of the Commission who are specifically qualified in their areas of expertise.

Of course, he continued, this expansion would require our own larger office and a full-time assistant. I was ready to say “Yes, yes, yes”, but (having already had League-like procedures drilled into my being), replied that I would discuss his suggestions with the Commission’s Executive Committee.

Needless so say, we accepted his offer. The result was a very successful program that educated the public on women’s issues and brought about major improvements and opportunity in employment, athletics, governmental appointments, and healthcare.

Although I’m certain the Reproductive Rights Committee’s recommendations gave the Mayor pause, he always extended the support necessary to accomplish our work. Later, he deserved the overwhelming support of woman voters when he successfully captured his U.S. Senate seat. My successor, when I moved on to be Planning Director of the Omaha Housing Authority, was another Board Member of the Local League.

When my husband Max and I visited Washington, D.C., Senator Zorinsky invited me to lunch in the Senate Dining Room. Now that’s a rewarding experience to say the least! But, what I hope you will remember from this story is that the training and skills acquired as a League Board member are not only valuable in solving community problems but also in your professional and personal lives.

---Ramona Salisbury Kiltz

What part has the League played in your life? Please share your reflections with us by sending your "Storybank" to the Voter editor at froese@mail.sdsu.edu. We'll be looking for it.

---Jeanne Brown, VP/Administration

February Unit Meetings: Program Planning!

Monday, Feb. 9 9:30 - 11:30 AM	Rancho Bernardo and Scripps Ranch	San Diego National Bank Community Rm. 2nd Fl. 16789 Bernardo Ctr. Drive San Diego, CA 92128	Bev Wilson (858) 592-9664 Irene Dunny (858) 613-0335
Monday, Feb. 9 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, Feb. 10 9:30 - 11:30 AM	La Jolla	La Jolla Library 7555 Draper Avenue La Jolla, CA 92037	Sherry Bloom 858-459-7598 619-200-0300 (cell)
Tuesday, Feb. 10 1:00 – 3:00 PM	University City	North University City Community Library 8820 Judicial Drive San Diego, CA 92122	Mariette Kobrak (858) 450-1521 Mary McDonald (619) 542-1438
Wednesday, Feb. 11 9:30 – 11:30 AM	North Shores/ Point Loma	LWV Office 4901 Morena Blvd. Ste. 104 San Diego, CA 92117	Betty Carlson (619) 276-3233 Gloria Christman (858) 273-0590
Wednesday, Feb. 11 1:00 – 3:00 PM	Tierrasanta	Monterey Villa Clubhouse 5275 Rimpark Dr./Apple Tree Lane San Diego, CA 92124	Carole Porter (858) 279-5474
Thursday, Feb. 12 9:30 – 11:30 AM	East San Diego	College Rolando Library 6600 Montezuma Road San Diego, CA 92115-2828	Barbara Evje (619) 462-4772
Saturday, Feb. 14 10:00 - 12:00 PM	Southeast Unit	Malcolm X Library 5138 Market Street San Diego, CA 92105	Vergie Wright (619) 264-6735 Gwen Pamplin (619) 263-1778
Tuesday, Feb. 17 2:00 - 4:00 PM	Coronado Unit New Unit!	Coronado Public Library 640 Orange Avenue (Community Room) Coronado, CA 92118	Nancy Cuddy (619) 437-4597

LWVSD Calendar — February

February			
2/3	Tues.	6:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
2/5	Thurs.	9:30 am	Unit Council, LWVSD Office
2/5	Thurs.	10:15 am	Training of Unit Discussion Leaders, LWVSD Office
2/6	Fri.	10:30 am	County League Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
Feb. 9-18			UNITS - Program Planning
2/16	Mon.		<i>President's Day</i>
2/16	Mon.	10:00 am	Membership Committee Meeting, LWVSD Office
2/18	Wed.	11:00 am	Education Committee Meeting, LWVSD Office
2/23	Mon.	11:30 am	"Lunch w/League": Dr. Terry Grier, Superintendent of Schools Tom Ham's Lighthouse Restaurant
2/27	Fri.	9:30 am	Public Policy Meeting, LWVSD Office
2/27	Fri.	Noon	Program Committee, LWVSD Office

Obituary --- Sue Williams

Sue (Reid) Williams died peacefully on Dec. 26, 2008. In June of '08, she celebrated her 95th birthday at a party given by her daughter in Arroyo Grande, CA. We who attended the party found Sue bright, alert and interested in politics and the world. In our three days there, we had some good card games and lots of good conversations. She kept interested in San Diego and clippings from the Union-Tribune. Sue joined the LWVSD in 1977 and left in 2005 when she moved from San Diego. While in the League, she was on the Board and put together the Election Extra in the days when the local candidates were sent letters asking how they would handle certain problems – their answers would go in the Election Extra. Sue was North Shore Unit Chair and later, Co-Chair. She was always involved: Pioneer Congregational Church, Allied Craftsmen, and Meals-On Wheels. She was instrumental in getting the service into areas north of Hwy. 8. To do this, she made presentations at church groups, clubs and other organizations to recruit the volunteers to carry out the program. She was always ready to be involved. . . . a good Leaguer, a good friend and a good American.

---- Betty Carlson

Save the Date!

March Lunch with League

“Media and Democracy in America Today”

Speakers:

Jon Bartholomew, Campaign Coordinator on Media and Democracy Issues, Common Cause

Bree Walker, Progressive Talk Show Host, legendary television news anchor

Thursday, March 19th

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Tom Ham's Lighthouse Restaurant

Cost:

\$25 LWV members; \$30 non-members



More from the City Government Update Committee

In March the Unit discussions will be exploring how a Strong-Mayor City Government can best serve the people.

How important is :

- * Direct public access to the Mayor now that the Mayor is no longer a member of the City Council so isn't available at Council meetings?
- * Prompt response by the Mayor's office to City Council requests for information?
- * A strong City Council role in government operations?
- * Knowing the range of authority a chief operating officer has in City Management and policy making under a Strong-Mayor?

These are just a few of the topics which you will have the opportunity to share your observations and opinions on. The discussion will lead to consensus on possible ways of advocating for practices that encourage responsibility and openness in governing by a Strong-Mayor/Council government.

The March **Voter** will include an Every Member Tool (EMT), the study guide for members for discussion to assist you in preparing for the discussion.

---- Mary Jean Word, Update Committee Chair

A Former LWV President Reminisces about the San Diego League in the 1940 and an Old Friend

From: MURIEL GOLDHAMMER

Rhov Moshe Sharett 10/6, Kfar Saba, ISRAEL 44458

I was in California in early November and tried to phone my good friend Marje Spear without success - then tried email when I returned home. Finally I checked the Internet for information and discovered that Marje had passed away on September 25.

I feel that part of my life died with her.

Marje and I go back to 1948 - when we were the Young Turks in the San Diego League of Women Voters. We joined an organization that we felt was important but stuck in the style of the '20's and '30's. In those post-war days we wanted something different in the League structure, giving more opportunity for member involvement in decision-making, and moving the League from a quiet study group to community activism. Fortunately for us, National was also encouraging restructuring at the same time. That's when Marje became president and I held the foreign policy chair.

There were five of us Young Turks. With the restructuring from study groups to unit discussion groups, many other young women joined the League. With Marje's death I am the only survivor, an "ex-pat" who cannot speak the language and so must watch rather than actively participate in the political scene in Israel..

You should understand the status of women in the '40's and '50's. Those of us who had jobs during the war were encouraged to stay home with our families at war's end, and give our jobs to the men who returned from the fighting. The newspapers had a strict segregation policy. Important news was men's news. The women had a four-page social section that included wedding announcements, reports of charity balls including detailed descriptions of the gowns worn by committee members, and announcements of meetings of AAUW and League of Women Voters. When our names were in the papers we were Mrs. Lawrence Spear and Mrs. Sidney Goldhammer. It was good advertising for our husbands but an insult to our status as thinking women. And yes, we wore hats to all public events.

Television and radio were different. Marje was interviewed on television at a time that many of us had yet

to purchase one for our homes. Still, one time we did make the headlines of the local papers. Those were the days that Communists were hiding in every civic organization. Marje and I frequently recalled the time we took on a far-right woman's organization that had attacked the public schools for teaching about the United Nations (a communist plot!). What started out to be a small workshop for organization leaders turned out to be a series of public forums, filled to capacity, that made the front pages of the Union-Tribune. We won. And so did the public schools.

But most important, we learned that there was a silent majority waiting for someone to provide information and to refuse to be cowed by name-calling. We empowered ourselves and many others in San Diego as well.

When Larry's job took him to Clairmont, Marje joined and later became President of the Clairmont League, went on to the State Board and served as President for two terms. The year that Marje was elected to the city council in Clairmont was a banner year for women in politics. Helen Cobb, a SD League member was elected to the San Diego City Council, and I believe that was the year that March Fong was elected in Oakland. It was a small but real beginning. Little by little women were elected to the State legislatures, then to Congress --- leading up to this year that Hillary Clinton could become a serious candidate for President of the United States. And the LWV trained many of these women.

Marje was my role model for leadership skills. I watched how she involved all her board members in decision making, and how she was able to develop workable consensus from conflicting views. Two things she said that linger in my memory:

About raising money for the League, "Money isn't the most important thing in the world, but it's second to whatever is."

And "League leadership is not a lifetime sentence." She took her League skills to other areas of life, as I did. But neither of us ever forgot where we started, and the importance of the San Diego LWV in giving us a direction in public service.

I am sad that she is no longer with us. And that I am the last of the Young Turks.

(Hi, Faye. I check out the Voter from time to time on the Internet. And yes, that's where I found your name and read Franny Venn's article for the Storybank. The League was a very important part of my life - of all the community groups I've been involved in over the years, being a League leader was the most satisfying. At age 85, I now find my satisfaction in water exercise, my book club, and classes, and periodic lunches with my conservative, American-educated lawyer - we can argue League style - each one of us influencing the other. Give my regards to everyone, Muriel)



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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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