



# San Diego Voter

Vol. 73 No. 6

Summer 2009

## Looking Ahead . . . .

It's fun to look back at the 2008 election season and see how busy and needed we were. But now we're in the second half of 2009 and it is time to plan for the future.

As far as elections, we know we have at least two big decisions that are planned for 2010. The first will be the decision of whether the City of San Diego should keep the Strong Mayor form of government. Our work to update our position on City Government helped to prepare us on this, but do we know what we should look for in order to make this decision? Does our City have the correct structure for Strong Mayor or for City Manager type? What is important for either of these forms to be effective? Many of our citizens will be looking to the League for guidance. Will we be ready to give it?

The second big decision that will be on a 2010 ballot is whether we should have "Clean Elections" type of financing for the office of Secretary of State. What do we know about "Clean Elections" and whether this is an appropriate office to "try out" this type of campaign finance reform? I'm sure we will get some guidance from LWVC. Yet we don't just want to take their word for it. Our *raison d'être* is to educate ourselves and then others. So this coming Spring we will have a luncheon on Campaign Finance Reform and Clean Elections. We hope you will come to learn and become the kind of voter we all strive to be.

Another issue that is in the forefront of discussions locally, statewide and nationally is Healthcare. The Program Committee has planned a number of events preparing us to be well-informed about this complex issue. See "Save the Date" in this issue.

There is a lot to be learned, a lot to be done and as I used to tell my students, "Those who do the most work, learn the most." So be an active learner. As you fill out the interest forms that go with the membership notices, think about what you want to learn and how you can contribute to the work of the League. What are your skills? What are your interests? The League's future depends on all of us.

--- Jeanne Brown, VP Administration

## New Board Members, Etc. (Why not be one?)

The delegates to the LWVSD's Annual Meeting on May 30 did not vote in any changes from what was presented in the Annual Meeting packet in your *May Voter*. We have three new Board members: Jill Elsner, treasurer; Dolores Nelson, secretary; and Susan Baer, director-at-large. We are still in need of a VP-Voter Service along with a Nominating Committee Chair.

Jill emphasized that the approved budget is dependent upon using \$17,000 from reserves, cutting expenses especially in the office, and/or doing aggressive fund-raising.

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## How about Development!

Please open that letter from the League of Women Voters San Diego that may be sitting on your desk.....it's not only your dues renewal notice.... but it also has an interest survey that will help us generate new blood for our committees.

Among the interests which need your participation the most is the Development Committee. Without new Development your League won't be able to pay the bills. We operate with a minimum of outside help. We do have a meeting place that is usually available for a quick or scheduled meeting.

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**League of Women Voters  
July 2009 - June 2010  
Board of Directors**

Co-President Public Policy Chair	Norma Damashek
Co-President Int'l Relations Co-Chair	Anne Hoiberg
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VP/Membership	Peggy Finch & Peg Bates
VP/Program	Beryl Flom & Shirley Larson
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Voter Editor	Faye Rose
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Unit Coordinator	Jody Tadder
Director-at-Large	Susan Baer

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**Co-President's Message**

We had a great turnout at our 2009 general membership meeting, launching our 2009-10 fiscal year. Our newly constituted Board will be meeting in mid-July at a "mini-retreat" to explore some alternatives to the way we do League business, to set new goals, and to tackle the heavy-duty issue of keeping the San Diego League financially sound.

Of course it's not only our organization that's struggling with economic challenges. Most other nonprofits are in the same boat, trying to stay afloat and figure out how to get by with fewer resources.

What distinguishes us from most other groups, however, is that each of our Board members is an active leader, working alongside other League members on the essential business of promoting good government. Personal commitment has always been our secret ingredient and bringing "fresh blood" and new talent to our organization will always save the day.

The coming year will also be a political test for us. While we have a sturdy set of policy positions on which to base League advocacy, there are several issues on the political horizon that don't lend themselves to easy responses. Will we be able to juggle questions about the success or failure of the Strong Mayor form of government while steering clear of partisanship?

Will we advocate the construction of a central downtown library if it involves violating the public trust regarding school bond initiatives? Will we support stop gap measures to balance the city budget without first demanding financial accountability from our mayor? Will we speak truth to power if it conflicts with fundraising opportunities? We'll know soon enough how it all plays out.

---Norma Damashek, Co-President

**Mission Statement**

*The League of Women Voters is strictly nonpartisan but wholeheartedly political, working to influence public policy through education and advocacy.*

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The Board will be discussing this concern at the Board Retreat on July 18 and is looking for volunteers to help with League work. We are going to have to cut our expenses because we do not want to run down our reserve account.

**PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP THE LWVSD CONTINUE  
IMPORTANT WORK IN MANY AREAS OF CONCERN.**

--- Beryl Flom, VP Program Chair

## California LWV Convention Presented No Surprises

Items voted included:

- No increase in Per Member Payment
- No new study, not even on prisons
- No new President – Janis Hirohama took a second term
- No glitches

Well – what was exciting was a speaker named Robert Hertzberg from “California Forward” talking about radical changes in the way California is governed. LWVC is part of a coalition working on changes in initiatives, term limits, ballot box budgeting, and bringing the state’s government down to size so that we feel we are represented again.

Along with other state Leagues, the delegates sent a message to LWVUS to actively support the principle of single payer national healthcare by vigorously advocating that a single payer legislative proposal be included in deliberation of health care reform by Congress and the Administration and by insisting that side-by-side comparative analyses of single payer proposals with other proposals for health care reform be part of these deliberations. The LWVUS position on healthcare is written broadly enough to support single payer, but so far LWVUS is talking in general terms regarding universal healthcare. Meanwhile, the LWVC is advocating for and educating on single payer and is totally convinced this is the best solution for the healthcare dilemma. This Fall, the LWVSD Program Committee is planning a series of events on healthcare and is starting off with Former Senator Sheila Kuehl speaking on SB 840 (now called SB 810) which outlines the single payer system for California. It will be a luncheon on September 22.

Like the rest of non-profits and Leagues, the LWVC is short of funds and has made some decisions related to that. One is not to publish *Pros and Cons* anymore; it takes a lot of research and printing/ mailing costs and is really not that different from the publication sent to every registered voter by the Secretary of State. (In fact, the LWVSD had decided not to purchase it from the LWVC anymore.) A resolution from the Convention delegates asked the LWVC to reconsider that decision; they may present it in a different format.

Secretary of State Debra Bowen popped in and presented the Medallion Award of the National Association of Secretaries of State to the LWVC for nonpartisan voter education and outreach. She was dressed in her baby blue matching coat-dress and hat and was a refreshing and exciting addition for the hard-working delegates. There was also a victory party for the passage of Prop. 11 on state-wide redistricting. The LWVC is right in the middle of helping set up that process.

Delegates from LWVSD were Cathy O’Leary Carey, Norma Damashek, Peggy Finch, Beryl Flom, and Shirley Larson. There were about 20 workshops and caucus meetings, many of which we attended. Meetings went all day and well into the night, but we had fun and did a lot of networking. Thanks for providing the funds to help underwrite our participation.

--- Beryl Flom, VP Program Chair

### Needed-- Forum/Debate chair

I have done it for several years, however due to health problems I will not be able to continue.

I have trained several members to be moderators and have all the information on things the chair needs.

Please contact me. I'm sure this next election will bring many requests to the League.

---Betty Weinberger, 858-674-0909

### Volunteer Needed for a One-Time Service

With a change in treasurers, the League board is looking for a person with accounting, bookkeeping or similar skills to assist in conducting a fiscal review for the year ending June 30, 2009.

If you have a few hours to contribute or questions about the task, please contact me, [kmacleod1@cox.net](mailto:kmacleod1@cox.net).

---Kathleen MacLeod, 619-262-4223

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We have a part-time office manager who gets out emails to everyone and updates the web site, helps to print the Voter and takes reservations for our events.

If we don't raise more money, we may have to give up this office and our way of operating. We don't want to do that. Come join in the discussion with a small group of people who want to put the word out to our San Diego community that we need financial support -- their support.

Call me or the Office (858) 483-8696 and leave your message that you want to be part of this effort.

---Jody Tadder, Development Chair  
(858) 277-4576 or the office

## Save The Date!

Former State Senator Sheila Kuehl introduced SB 840 in the California Legislature several years ago. It was a bill for Single Payer Healthcare whereby everyone in the state would have their health managed by one agency.

This would eliminate the multiple plans and insurance companies with their 35% overhead that contributes significantly to the high price of healthcare in the U.S.

Sheila has now been termed out and the bill has a new number, SB 810.

She will explain Single Payer Healthcare in more detail at the "Lunch with League" on Tuesday, September 22. Look for more details in the September Voter.

---Beryl Flom, Program Chair



**August 1, 2009**

Is it time to rewrite California's Constitution?

Common Cause will have a panel of experts to discuss whether our state's constitution needs to be amended, revised, or completely rewritten through a constitutional convention.

As California Common Cause begins to develop our position on this timely, controversial topic, we need to know what you think. This event is free and open to all.

Panelists: Xandra Kayden, LWV California government expert  
Thad Kousser, UCSD Political Science Professor and CCC board member  
Amy Bridges, UCSD Political Science professor and expert on Western States Constitutional Conventions

Mission Valley Library Community Room  
12:00 noon - 2:00 pm Light snacks will be served.



## **The League and Me: Fifty-One Unforgettable Years!**

### **By Joyce Tavrow**

Not only did the League teach me everything worth knowing about how government works, but also it introduced me to wonderful people who encouraged me to enter a number of non-League pursuits. From my start in Rochester, NY, I have been a LWV member in four different cities in California and two cities in Colorado. The height of my involvement was when I was nominated as State President of the Colorado League.

My League tale begins in 1958, when I read an editorial in a Rochester newspaper extolling the League of Women Voters as the best women's group in the country. I had never before heard of the League.

Two years later, we moved to Woodland, CA, which had no League. With my minimal League exposure and my natural chutzpah, I managed to convince thirty women to part with five dollars each for annual dues required by the State League to start a unit of the established Davis LWV. Woodland is now a full-fledged League of its own.

In 1962, with three young daughters under the age of five, we moved to Palo Alto, where I joined a thriving League. Our next home was in Portola Valley, where our son was born in 1964. While there, I joined the League of South San Mateo County. League friends asked me to collaborate with them in writing and publishing a monthly newsletter for third graders in the Bay Area called *The Bay Leaf*. It educated children about the history and structure of the Bay Area.

After fourteen years in California, we moved to Colorado. Naturally, I joined the League, and served as a State Lobbyist for five years before being nominated for State President. While President, I read about Colorado's Commission for Judicial Discipline that investigates complaints against judges and dispenses appropriate discipline. My work with the League helped me to secure a place on the Commission. Subsequently, I was a founder of the Colorado Judicial Institute that developed procedures for evaluating previously appointed judges who stand for election.

In 1987, my husband and I retired to San Diego, where I continued my association with the League. With the encouragement of dedicated Leaguer, Ramona Salisbury Kiltz, I was elected to the Rancho Bernardo Community Planning Board and served as its chair for three years. At Ramona's suggestion, I also agreed to write a monthly column in the *RB Sun* (now re-named the *Sun/Signature*), that I did for ten years.

When I learned that San Diego County was looking for patient advocates in long-term care facilities, my League experience gave me the confidence to volunteer. I served as an Ombudsman for twenty years.

At the end of this year, my husband and I will be re-locating to Palo Alto. Who knows what I'll find myself doing after rejoining the Palo Alto League?

### **Obituary: Ellen Revelle**

It is with sadness that we report the death of Ellen Revelle on Wednesday May 6, at the age of 98. She was a member of La Jolla's pioneering Scripps family who donated funding toward projects such as the sea wall at La Jolla's Children's Pool, Scripps College, and Scripps Institution of Oceanography. She was a supporter of our League, La Jolla Music Society, San Diego Symphony, La Jolla Playhouse and La Jolla Art Museum. She is survived by three daughters and one son, 11 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. This world indeed is a little less without Ellen but Heaven is a little brighter.

---Peg Bates, Membership Co-Chair



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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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