



# San Diego VOTER

Vol. 71 No. 6

Summer 2007

## Lunch with League

The LWVUS has recently launched a two-year Immigration Study aimed at helping communities understand the implications of immigration at the local, state, and federal levels. At the local level, we are endeavoring to educate ourselves and our community on this complicated and controversial topic.

To accomplish this goal, a series of "Lunches with League" will be held this Fall at Tom Ham's Lighthouse restaurant on Harbor Island.

**Luncheon and Program:**  
**"Immigration Luncheon with a View"**  
**Thursday, August 30**  
**11:30 A.M. to 1:45 P.M., Tom Ham's Lighthouse**

You will enjoy a stimulating program, a delicious buffet lunch and a fantastic view!  
The cost is \$20. Send in the registration form on page 7.

**Representative Bob Filner (D)** and **Christy Guerin, district director for Representative Brian Bilbray (R)** will share their views on the obstacles that prevented passage of the recent immigration reform package. They will also discuss changes that should be incorporated into future legislation to ensure greater acceptability by the President and members of Congress.

You are invited to pose such questions as:

- What seems to be the most acceptable "pathway to citizenship" proposal for the millions of undocumented immigrants?
- What fees should be considered?
- Should a guest worker program be re-created or expanded; who should administer it?
- How should the various visa programs be improved?
- Should amnesty be granted to children brought to this country as minors who live here for years, are educated here, but are not citizens?
- Should amnesty be granted to parents of children born here (who are U.S. citizens)?
- How should family unification issues be addressed?
- What's wrong with our current legislation?

Other "Lunch with League" programs on immigration will take up the issues of U.S.-Mexico relations, migration, economic research, and homeland security.

### Consensus Questions

A link to the consensus questions for the November Unit meetings can be found on-line at [www.lwvsandiego.org](http://www.lwvsandiego.org) in our Useful Link section and will also be printed in their entirety in an upcoming Voter. Please look them over and bring them to your Unit meeting.

### Directions to Tom Ham's Lighthouse

2150 Harbor Island Drive: Proceed on Harbor Drive to Harbor Island Drive, turn left (right turn if coming from Pt. Loma). Proceed two short blocks and turn right at the stoplight. Continue past hotels and marinas to the end of the island ----and Tom Ham's Lighthouse. Plenty of free parking.

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## President's Update



A new and exciting year is ahead of us, and I thank you for electing me your President for 2007-2008.

I just finished reviewing our League Membership Survey and found a wealth of great information to share with you. League members have many interests and great loyalty to the work of League. There is something here for everyone.

The top issues in the survey were #1, Health Care, with Immigration, Natural Resources and Reproductive Choice/Women's Issues close behind. Education also ranked high; other topics included City Government, Campaign Reform, International Relations.

75% of those responding have been in League for over 10 years. . . . some up to 50 years plus. 25% have been members for five years or less and are enthusiastic about their membership and want to participate more.

The activities they are most interested in: registering voters, interviewing legislators, Election Extra distribution, forums and debates, and planning programs.

Here are a few of the comments which are worth sharing with you. You may have thought about some of these ideas yourself and it is always good to know that you are not alone in what you think that may increase or keep the membership alive and growing.

- "I would like more monthly luncheons; working members could attend."
- "More unit discussions instead of long presentations."
- "League attempts to do too much."
- "League should speak at political science & government affairs classes."
- "We should do more leadership training".
- "We need more conservative members, League is getting too liberal."
- "We should recruit recently retired professional women to League."

The love you all have for this wonderful organization is at the top of the list. I look forward to your suggestions and ideas, don't hesitate to call me or email me.

**We represent the most respected women's organization in the United States. With your continued efforts and energy, we will have an exceptional year together.**

----- Shirley Vaine, [svaine1@cs.com](mailto:svaine1@cs.com), 858-674-4889

## Interview With City Councilmembers

In the Spring, we interviewed all eight Council members and the Mayor regarding their opinions on four issues: Prop. C Outsourcing, Redevelopment, Financial Recovery, and Charter Update. The Mayor's chose not to answer our questions verbally but later in writing. He and his staff asked about the League of Women Voters and **claimed they did not know anything about the organization.**

There are some common answers in the replies:

- 1) The Council is developing criteria for managed competition which will make all the bidders comparable to each other; city employees should be able to compete. Some Council members do not support outsourcing. The Mayor is still working on Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) in each department, so no outsourcing will occur till that task is completed. Council members were generally very pleased with the process of BPR.
- 2) Council members are very excited about the expertise of the Independent Budget Analyst (IBA), Andrea Tevlin, and the work she has done to enlighten them on the budget and finances. The IBA is a newly created position that was made necessary (and possible) by the Strong Mayor form of government.
- 3) Although there is a five-year plan for the City now, we asked if there could be a five-year budget. No one could conceive of budgeting that far into the future, but they feel they have the big picture in the five-year plan. They are optimistic about the City's financial situation. They say we are paying off the pension debt on schedule now.

Scott Peters outlined their other accomplishments:

- The City worked with the unions on wages. All wages were frozen from 2005-07 and the City took 6% of their existing pay to fund their benefits. They said this was saving \$250 million.
- They gave the police an increase in wages this year, but cut their healthcare choices. Where there used to be 21 choices of plans, there are now three medical, two dental, and one vision plan.
- They used \$1 million in tobacco settlement money as collateral for \$100 million in bonds.



- 4) They all think there is more work for CCDC to do in downtown redevelopment before it is phased out. They are very impressed with the character of the area and want to see more affordable housing and service-type construction. They feel that redevelopment brings more money to the city, which they see as a good thing. Mike Jenkins, a member of our Public Policy Committee and a redevelopment attorney, asked if redevelopment districts could be combined into one city-operated department; thus other redevelopment districts such as NTC and City Heights would benefit from the expertise of CCDC. They thought this was an idea to pursue. Most think that CCDC does not have a lot of power.
- 5) The most important Charter change, in the minds of most Council members, was the proposal to add an internal auditor, who needs to be independent of the Mayor and report to the Council. Many spoke of adding a 9th Council district, but they do not want it to be at-large; they want another district formed. They felt that an at-large Council member would be like a mini-Mayor. They were split about adding the 9th seat before the 2011 redistricting, or doing a special redistricting now. Some support electing a Charter Commission rather than using the Mayor's appointed Charter Committee.

**A couple of Council members emphasized that we should not assume that they know everything that's going on, and not to hesitate to tell them. They don't always get told things by the City.**

Beryl Flom, 858-459-4406, [edflom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:edflom@sbcglobal.net)

### The League of Women Voters ---Making Democracy Work

Who are we? 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 long-standing tradition of educating voters.

## Rally In The Valley

Six members of the LWVSD attended The California biennial convention in Bakersfield this Spring. We also spent a half-day being trained to conduct Homeowners Association elections. A state law that has been in effect for about a year now requires outside groups to oversee these elections, so there is a real opportunity for the League to step in.

The budget report included impressive gains in outside funding to the Education Fund. Jill Kaiser Newcom, the Executive Director for the last two years, has raised thousands of dollars through grants, corporate gifts, and increased donations from League leaders in the face of dropping membership statewide. (San Diego County's membership has increased by 96 members in the last four years.) There will be no Per Member Payment increase in the next two years.

There were no new studies approved although one not-recommended study came to the floor to update the redistricting position to make multimember districts with proportional voting. The example given was 16 state assembly districts with 5 representatives from each. Potential topics discussed in caucuses included Electronic Voting and Prison Reform. The three items for Education and Advocacy that passed are Healthcare, Redistricting, and Education. We also approved the new Energy position with some wordsmithing.

Shirley Vaine came to promote a resolution sponsored by the County League to urge the California Energy Commission not to accept any license renewal applications for any state nuclear power plants until the completion, adoption, and implementation of the Commission's analysis of costs, benefits and risks of California's aging nuclear plants.

### **Part of every state Convention is a time when each League toots its own horn. Here's what we said:**

- We are the largest League in California and have maintained a steady membership of about 530 for several years. Members are enthusiastic about our bimonthly Lunch with League programs with speakers on timely topics such as Nuclear Energy, Redistricting, Downtown Parks, and Education.
- We have been a prominent and active player in the way city government is evolving as San Diego has changed its type of government to a Strong Mayor/Strong Council form. Our Vice-President chaired the committee responsible for organizing the transition and is now working on an elected Citizens' Charter Review Commission.
- We were very visible during the November election by manning the election hotline for a local TV station, writing editorials, and giving many pro and con presentations on the ballot measures all over town.

----Beryl Flom, Jeanne Brown, Catherine Stoll,  
Sylvia Hampton, and Nancy McCleary

## Water— It's Becoming More and More Precious!

Remember the song "Food, Glorious Food" in the musical *Oliver!* Maybe those lyrics should be changed to "Water, Glorious Water" as increasing temperatures and lower rainfall are becoming mainstream around the world, thereby rapidly depleting available non-salty water.

Even though water covers two-thirds of the earth's surface, only 2.5% is not salty, and after excluding water locked up in ice caps and in remote areas, less than 0.08% of all water is available for humans.

About 70% is used in agriculture, but the World Water Council estimates that by 2020, we shall require 17% more water if we are to feed the world.

Here in California, the government will invest \$4.9 billion in water storage, restoration and conservation to help alleviate the crisis. No matter what significant measures are undertaken to preserve and store this water, scientists predict that we will lose much of this valuable resource. At the local level, we import about 85% of our water needs (a significant amount from the Colorado River which is in its eighth consecutive year of drought conditions).

**As uncertainty grows over our water sources, the San Diego Water Authority has just requested that we reduce our water use by 20 gallons a day per person so the region can store more water for 2008. In August there will be an advertising campaign to promote the "20-gallon challenge".**

### **How to reduce your water consumption:**

1. Run the dishwasher only when full
2. Don't leave water running when rinsing dishes
3. Turn off water when brushing teeth
4. Shorten showers
5. Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket
6. Wash only full loads of clothes
7. Fix leaky toilets and faucets
8. Install aerators with flow restrictors
9. Replace older, high-volume flushing toilets
10. Only water before 6 am and after 8 pm
11. Use a broom instead of hosing down patios, etc.

For other tips, check out [www.sdcwa.org](http://www.sdcwa.org).

**If you do all these things, you will save yourself -- and the City -- MORE than your 20 gallons per person per day! Ask your family members, relatives, friends and colleagues to do the same!**

- - Jill Elsner, [jill@jillelsner.com](mailto:jill@jillelsner.com), 858-274-2475

## Mandatory Recycling in San Diego

As you may know, the City of San Diego's only landfill, Miramar Landfill, is expected to be full by the year 2012 given the population growth projected by SANDAG and our current rate of disposal. Many years ago, the voters passed "The People's Ordinance" which prevents the city from charging for solid waste collection from single family homes. (Multi-family buildings and businesses do pay for this service.) San Diego is unique in this fee structure and is behind most California cities and counties in mandating recycling.

City Attorney Mike Aguirre has introduced an ordinance to the Natural Resource and Culture Committee (NR&C) of the City Council, chaired by Donna Frye, which mandates recycling for everyone who lives in the city ---- all types of housing and businesses. Apartment buildings, condominiums and other large buildings must have storage space and a system to separate recyclables from trash. This bill will be presented in public meetings on August 8 and 29 at 9:00 am at the Ridgehaven Green Building, 9601 Ridgehaven Ct., Ste. 320. Donna has urged the City to move ahead on getting this bill to the Council.

Meanwhile, in 2005, the Council passed and the Mayor signed an ordinance requiring recycling of construction and demolition waste (C&D). The Mayor told the NR&C Committee that he had decided not to build a facility to separate materials at Miramar and will not implement C&D recycling until the Fall of 2008. Councilwoman Donna Frye was very upset with the Mayor's decision so that, too, is being discussed at the NR&C Committee.

I represent the League at the CAC and will continue to follow and write testimony on this issue.

### **This testimony was given to the NR&C Committee, 7/18/07 ---Agenda Item #6, Mandatory Recycling**

"The League of Women Voters of San Diego supports mandatory recycling as a way to reduce waste being dumped in the landfill and to save finite resources by reusing materials being disposed of.

In order to adopt the resource management way of thinking, the League recommends that the City of San Diego collect and recycle greens, food waste, glass, plastics, cans, aluminum, paper, cardboard, etc. from all single and multi-family housing units and all business and commercial establishments. As well as protecting our resources, mandatory recycling would benefit the City by extending the life of Miramar Landfill.

In order for this program to be successful with a high level of participation, residents need to be better educated about the importance of recycling and how to recycle. The City needs to enforce its ordinance requiring storage for recyclables in the building code. Once mandatory recycling is in place, it too needs enforcement. Ideally, the fee structure needs to be changed to encourage recycling, not discourage it."

- - - Beryl Flom, 858-459-4406, [edflom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:edflom@sbcglobal.net)

## Help Stop California AB 1430!

A bill was introduced in the California Assembly in July entitled AB 1430, which would prohibit local jurisdictions from regulating the source and amount of money that political parties can use to campaign for local candidates. **This bill would take away local control of local elections and undermine local campaign finance limits.** It passed the Assembly unanimously! They seem to think it is acceptable to take away local control of local elections.

It will most likely be brought to our State Senators in mid-August. We need to let them know that we do not want more loopholes in local campaign finance laws --- we need less. The League has joined with other groups such as Common Cause, CALPIRG, the *Los Angeles Times*, *San Diego Union-Tribune* and *San Francisco Chronicle* and others opposing it.

You can go to [SmartVoter.org](http://SmartVoter.org) or [LWVSD.org](http://LWVSD.org) if you don't know the name or address of your State Senator. Please write, email, or fax them with your opposition. And spread the word among your friends and neighbors!

--- Jeanne Brown, [jhisten@cox.net](mailto:jhisten@cox.net), 619-224-1807

## State Prison Reform

One of the workshops I attended at the LWVC Convention 2007 in May was one on the Proposed Study of State Prison Reform. It was run by the L.A. County League and I found it fascinating. In 2004 the L.A. County League was approached for help working with the county jails to provide information and assistance to the eligible inmates on their voting rights. They designed a brochure working with the ACLU, the County Registrar and others. They then included it as a topic for Continuing Education and began to look at the incarceration process, sentencing and funding situations and outside resources. They followed this with one League Day focusing on the LA County Jail System and the following year another one on prevention, rehabilitation and the problems relating to society for those incarcerated.

I was very moved when the attendees of the workshop (all Leaguers) were asked how many of us had family members that have been through the penal system. Out of about 20 attendees, I would say about 15 raised their hands. Many of these had family members who entered the system on drug-related charges but then kept returning to the system, increasing in the severity of the crimes committed.

Jails are run by the county and through their study so far, they found that there is a great deal of crossover between jails and the state prison system relevant to sentencing, contracts with housing of inmates, temporary holding of prisoners, etc. Along with the overcrowding problems that we hear about regularly, they feel that this is a problem ripe for studying.

If any of you are interested in more information on this subject that our friends to the north are researching, you may want to contact Jean Thomson from the LWVLA at [thom@social.rr.com](mailto:thom@social.rr.com).

---Jeanne Brown, 619-224-1807, [jhisten@cox.net](mailto:jhisten@cox.net)

## Public Record Act Request

A California Public Records Act request was sent to the City this week. The national LWV stands fully behind requests of this kind for public records. It puts City officials on notice that open government and public access to important public business (like rewriting the City's constitution) must be an open public process.

LWV will continue its active involvement in the Charter change process. Stay tuned.

---Norma Damashek, VP Advocacy & Public Policy  
[ndamashek@ucsd.edu](mailto:ndamashek@ucsd.edu), 858 459-8751

### The League Speaks Out

A letter-to-the-editor by LWV appeared in the Union-Tribune on Monday, July 23. The letter, quoting LWV principles, encouraged the investigation of the recent land deal between Madigan/Nieto and the San Diego Community College District.



## Membership Report

As of June 30, 2007 we had 524 members. Please welcome our recent new members.

Kelly Aranaz	92121
Carolyn Barry	92117
Susan Buckley	92120
Sarah Bucko	92037
Dolores Harmes	92131
Lois L. Hammond	92129
Susan Inot	91902
Annie Kesselman	92122
Steven Kollisch	92127
Karen Longstreth	92103
Evelyn C. Pranko	92126
Bonnie Rose	92122
Rosemary & Will Straley	92037

## Women's Equality Day

**Celebrate the 87th anniversary of women's suffrage!**

March in your favorite suffragette costume from Kate Sessions statue near Sixth and Laurel through Balboa Park to an ice cream social and a viewing of "Iron-jawed Angels," Sunday, August 26, 1:00 - 4:00pm. More specific information will be emailed to members with e-mail. Sponsored by the Women's History Museum, Women's Equity Council of the United Nations Association, and the LWV's International Relations Committee.

---- Anne Hoiberg, 619-223-8074, [ahoiberg@aol.com](mailto:ahoiberg@aol.com).

Announcing  
A meeting of Common Cause  
with distinguished LWV speakers!

**Charter Review: What's in It for You?**

**Saturday, August 18, 2007**

**Noon to 2:00 pm**

**Mission Valley Library**

**2123 Fenton Parkway (next to Ikea)**

Speakers: Norma Damashek, VP Advocacy & Public Policy, LWVSD  
Atty. Cory Briggs, executive committee member, Progressive San Diego

All are welcome      No charge

**OUCH! What a SiCKO System**

Even our schools feel the pain. The new movie "SiCKO," the documentary/comedy/tragedy about our health care system, shows us how the for-profit market-based system we have in the U.S. is just plain horrible. 30% of every premium dollar goes for advertising, marketing, stockholder dividends and campaign contributions. The only bill now in the state legislature that removes the profit-taking is the California Universal Health Insurance Act, (SB840) supported by LWVC. It would take out the profit motive. The method of paying claims changes to a single fund---not 6000 insurance companies.

An amazing thing is how SB840 can cover everyone and still save money. Businesses, families, governments and yes, school districts. I was astounded to learn that, under SB840, school districts in San Diego County would save money or be able to provide much better health benefits. San Diego City Schools last year would have had a cost saving of over \$62 million. Tell your Assembly Member, CA Senator you want the good health and fiscal responsibility that's in SB 840.

----Sylvia Hampton, V P Health, San Diego County LWV

**Lunch with League:**

**"Immigration Luncheon with a View"**

Reservations must be received by Friday, August 24th.

Send your check to LWVSD,

4901 Morena Blvd., Ste. #104, San Diego, CA 92117

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_




Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$20.00 per person)

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*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.*

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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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