



# San Diego VOTER

Vol. 71 No. 7

September 2007

## September Unit Meetings: The City Charter: What's in it for Me?

**The September Units will concentrate on the City Charter (or constitution) for the way our city is run. It cannot be changed without voter support.**

As you recall, in 2005 voters approved a Strong Mayor form of government which added a whole Article to the Charter to have this new type of government on a trial basis (for up to five years). Last spring, the Mayor appointed a committee to review the Charter and recommend additional changes addressing the auditing function and strengthening the executive branch.

His committee has been hard at work and moving quickly to get these changes on the June 2008 ballot. (You can read more about it and get their meeting schedule by going to [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov) and hitting "Charter Review Committee" about half-way down on the right side of the home page.)

Meanwhile, the LWVSD has taken a leadership role in promoting an independent Charter Commission with representatives elected by district. Norma Damashek, vice president of Public Policy, is now writing a regular blog on the League's website ([www.lwvsandiego.org](http://www.lwvsandiego.org)) about the Charter, the Review Committee, and some of the proposed changes.

She has also issued a Public Records Request to examine emails and communications surrounding the Mayor's committee. Leaguers and the voters need to be familiar with the proposed changes to the Charter and their implications, which will be sent to the City Council for their approval to be put on the June ballot.

The LWVSD has been in a difficult position for the past couple of years since we still have a local position that supports the City Manager form of government. The last update of our city government position was done in 2000. There was a strong sentiment in favor of strengthening the role of the Mayor while keeping him/her on the City Council by giving the Mayor more involvement in the budget-making process. We will continue to rely on national, state, and local League positions on good government to guide our advocacy during the city's trial period with a strong Mayor system.

This Unit meeting will prepare our members to become advocates for the League's positions as the Mayor attempts to strengthen his office and make the Strong Mayor form of government permanent.

### Introduction for New Members

"Introductions to League" inform people about how the League works and are a great way to get to know our League members and Board as well.

Date: September 16, 2007

Time: 2:00 – 4:00pm.

Location: 1577 Vista Claridad

La Jolla, CA 92037

(858)459-4406

Please RSVP to the LWV Office (858)483-8696

Membership Committee

## League of Women Voters 2007-08 Board of Directors

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## President's Update



Don't think for a second that the League was on vacation in August. The activity was bustling. Frances Venn and Ruberta Castro were keeping an eye on the Board of Education. Norma Damashek has the heat on at the Charter Review Committee, plus has developed a LWV blog to keep us and the whole city informed. Please check it out and spread the word,

[www.lwvsandiego.blogspot.com](http://www.lwvsandiego.blogspot.com).

Sylvia Hampton has been spending evenings out discussing the Health Care Bill, and working on the possibilities for restructuring the Leagues in San Diego County. Peggy Finch and Peg Bates are working away to keep our membership intact. Anne Hoiberg, Peter Kent and the Program Committee have designed a series of fantastic luncheons to educate us and the public on the knotty problems of Immigration.

The August luncheon featuring Congressman Bob Filner and Christy Guerin of Brian Bilbray's office appears at this writing to be a sell-out. Please send information on the September event (see insert) to your friends. Faye Rose spends uncounted hours as she puts together our great Voter, and encourages you to keep the new deadline in mind . . . we now have two extra days, making the deadline for articles now the 17th of each month.

I was busy too. I was asked to represent the League and speak at a Voter Registration Drive lunch sponsored by Planned Parenthood of San Diego. One of the topics I discussed was a profile of women voters today. As I researched the topic, it was interesting to see how valuable the League's purpose was in forming our organization 87 years ago, and why it is still so needed today. Helping to register women to vote and counsel women on why they should vote are what started the whole thing.

The changes with women today were surprising to me and also show that our work is far from over. We are still 51% of the population, and with this majority, can influence critical policies that are important to us: childcare, choice, personal safety, economic stability, healthy environment. Yet women are not effectively exercising our hard-earned constitutional right to vote. 35% of all unmarried adults are not REGISTERED to vote; most of those registered do not vote. 50 million married and unmarried women are NOT registered to vote. Unmarried women are the largest voting block in the U.S. right now. If they turned out in sizable numbers they could be the deciding factor in close elections. That is how powerful your vote is. In 2006, 18 million unmarried women did not even register to vote.

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## September Unit Meetings The City Charter: What's in it for Me?

Monday, Sep 10th 9:30 - 11:30 AM	Rancho Bernardo and Scripps Ranch	San Diego National Bank Community Room, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor 16789 Bernardo Ctr. Dr. San Diego, CA 92128	Irene Dunny (858) 613-0335
Monday, Sep 10th 5:30 – 7:30 PM	Mission Valley	Mission Valley Library 2123 Fenton Parkway San Diego, CA 92108 (next to IKEA & Costco)	Debra Blum (619) 225-0353 Karen Beeson (619) 475-8236
Tuesday, Sep 11th 9:30 - 11:30 AM	La Jolla	La Jolla Public Library 7555 Draper Avenue La Jolla, CA 92037	Alice McCauley (858) 642-1856
Tuesday, Sep 11th 1:00 – 3:00 PM	University City	Home of Susan Betts 2648 Nansen Avenue San Diego, CA 92122 (858) 455-6259	Mary A. Mc Donald (619) 542-1438 Margaret Stevenson (619) 299-0036
Wed., Sep 12th 9:30 – 11:30 AM	North Shores/ Point Loma	LWVSD Office 4901 Morena Blvd., Bldg 100, Suite 104 San Diego, CA 92117	Betty Carlson (619) 276-3223 Nancy Witt (619) 222-7230
Wed. Sep 12th 1:00 – 3:00 PM	Tierrasanta	Villa Monterey Clubhouse 5275 Rimpark/Apple Tree Dr. San Diego, CA 92124	Carole Porter (858) 279-5474
Thurs. Sep 13th 9:30 – 11:30 AM	East San Diego	Home of Barbara Evje 8767 Blue Lake Drive San Diego, CA 92119	Barbara Evje 619-462-4772

### LWVSD Calendar — September

September			
9/1	Sat.	9:00 a.m.	LWVSD Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
9/3	Mon.		<i>Labor Day</i>
9/6	Thurs.	9:30 a.m.	Unit Council, LWVSD Office
9/10 to 13			<b>UNITS - City Charter</b>
9/16	Sun.	2:00 p.m.	Introduction to League, 1577 Vista Claridad, La Jolla, Beryl Flom's home
9/19	Wed.	10:00 a.m.	Membership Committee, LWVSD Office
9/19	Wed.	12:30 p.m.	Education Committee, LWVSD Office
9/25	Tues.	11:30 a.m.	<b>IMMIGRATION LUNCHEON</b> , Tom Ham's
9/28	Fri.	9:30 a.m.	Public Policy Meeting, LWVSD Office
9/28	Fri.	12:00 noon	Program Committee, LWVSD Office
9/29	Sat.	9:00 a.m.	LWVSD Board Meeting, LWVSD Office
October			
10/26	Fri.	11:30 a.m.	<b>IMMIGRATION LUNCHEON</b> , Tom Ham's

## Are You Reducing Water Consumption By 20 Gallons Each Day?

Per last month's article, how many of you have attempted to reduce your family's and your water consumption by 20 gallons per person per day? Is it difficult to implement? Easy? Are you talking about it with others?

Here are some recent steps I have taken to reduce my water intake at home:

1. **Switch watering to before 6am or after 8pm (to reduce evaporation and wind interference).** This was an easy adjustment . (If you notice freeway sprinklers operating outside the recommended time frame or leaking, call their hotline 619-515-3525}. **Estimated water savings 20 gallons each time sprinkler used**
2. **Reducing automatic sprinkler time.** I'm now experimenting with 15 minutes three times a week instead of 20, and will continue until I begin to notice adverse affects. **Estimated savings 15 – 25 gallons for each minute;**
3. **Turning off water while brushing teeth/cleaning dishes.** Only resuming when ready to rinse. **Estimated savings 2 to 2.5 gallons per minute;**
4. **Reduce water usage during showers** You can wet your body and hair then turn off shower, lather, shampoo and then turn shower on again to rinse off. **Estimated savings 2.5 gallons per minute; and**
5. **Only flush toilet sparingly.** While an energy efficient toilet is recommended, also consider flushing fewer times. **Estimated savings 1.6 gallons per flush.**

Wow! I've now reduced my water consumption and it was easy! I just had to "think" before taking an action. I'd like to encourage League members to serve as role models for the community in tackling this issue. So, during the next month or two, can you please commit yourself to "taking the 20 gallon water challenge reduction per person per day" and email me what you are doing (jill@jillelsner.com). I will tally all and send out the results to you all. Then depending on the results, I may try to generate some outside PR.

To review the complete listing of water saving tips, please visit the San Diego County Water Authority web site ([sdwca.org/manage/20\\_gallon\\_challenge.phtml](http://sdwca.org/manage/20_gallon_challenge.phtml)).

My next goal is to evaluate some of the appliances I have and determine if they should be changed to those more efficient.

---- Jill Elsner, chair, Natural Resources

### (continued from page 2)

Why, you ask? A main reason for women is "they don't think their voices count." Men and women also reported that they are "too busy or had conflicting schedules." My other project, the "nuclear waste build-up on the San Diego Coast", sent me to Sacramento a few times for discussions with our legislators "not to lift the California ban that protects us from new nuclear power plants being built in our state until there is a safe place for the waste." There is a state initiative now being proposed to do that; I will keep you posted.

Congratulations to California. Our state League is one of five states that has been chosen for year two of the Membership Recruitment Initiative. This is an exciting opportunity to ensure a healthy future for our organization!

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

## Good and Bad News on the Public Education Front

Let's get the bad news out of the way first: As of August 1st, the State Senate failed to achieve the required two-thirds majority needed to approve the 2007-2008 spending plan. The budget bill was approved in the Assembly by a vote of 56-23.



Summer is when school districts make plans for the school year that is about to begin, but frequently the State Legislature bickers over the amount of funds it will supply to public education until after the school year has already begun. This leaves school districts trying to read a crystal ball to determine how much money will be available for the coming school year. All too often in the past, public education has become a political football as the legislature and the Governor negotiate for their favorite items, and the money allocated for students ends up losing out. This is one reason California public education is so badly underfunded in comparison to the other large industrialized states.

Here is a summary of the LWVC positions adopted in 2006 under Finance: State Level. Do you think the State Senate is listening to us? Maybe we need to speak louder and more forcefully!

Responsibility at the State Level for:

- a) primary funding of public education;
- b) providing sustainable, transparent, adequate, flexible, and timely funding from a combination of sources to ensure all students have an opportunity to achieve state standards;
- c) developing a school finance system that incorporates a multi-year mechanism and enables orderly, effective budgeting;
- d) developing a process for forward funding of the education budget with decisions made in the year before implementation.

Now the good news: School Board members John de Beck and Mitz Lee have secured Superintendent Cohn's agreement to lead a "Budget Design Committee" that will work to prepare the 2008-09 budget in such a way that it will be transparent and reader-friendly and utilize input from all the stakeholders in the SDCS public education enterprise. The proposal called for participation by the LWVSD and the County Taxpayer's Association among others.

---- Frances Venn,  
LWVC Education Update Committee

## Membership

**As of July 31, 2007 we had 529 members.  
Please welcome our recent new members:**

Leslie Bolinger	92115	Betty Kaufman	92103
Suzy Bridges	92131	Anne Meyer	92119
John Carey	92128	Peter T. Norton	92110
Ward Hagaman	92122		

## HealthCare from a Different Perspective

On August 11, Sharon Allen ( our new Secretary) and I went to the forum on healthcare put on by “California Speaks” which is a subdivision of “America Speaks”. This forum was sponsored by Blue Shield of California Foundation, The California Endowment, and The California Wellness Foundation. “America Speaks” developed the 21st Century Town Meeting, a forum that combines small group, face-to-face dialogue with technology that engages large groups of people, simultaneously, discussing policy formulation.



Specifically, we sat at tables of 10, along with 65 other tables, in Cox Arena. At the same time there were similar groups in Humboldt County, Sacramento, San Francisco/Oakland, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, and Riverside/ San Bernardino. In total there were approximately 400 people at each venue (fewer in Humboldt, more in L.A.) totaling around 3500 Californians. We were randomly selected and our demographics reflected that, with the exception that there were a lot more women than men. That could easily be due to who would come to an all-day workshop on a Saturday in August about Healthcare.

We each had keyboards to record our choices from multiple-choice , yes/no and ranking questions, giving us the results from all 8 locations simultaneously. At each table there was a laptop computer on which a volunteer from the table recorded our views, ideas and concerns.

This input was often seen later, up on the big screen, in the choices given to the entire group of participants to rank, along with a few questions that were obviously skewed toward the sponsors’ interests. Many of the results of the polling were not what the sponsors had hoped for because again and again the idea of “Single-Payer Universal Healthcare” came to the surface. Four plans were presented for us; AB 8 (Nunez/Perata), SB 236 (Runner), the Governor’s Plan, and SB 840 (Kuhl) .

The first three of these were presented as ones that would be discussed this year. Senator Kuhl’s bill, it was explained, would not be. And since we all agreed at the beginning that we needed to have health-care reform immediately, then we wouldn’t bother discussing that one. They thought that we would accept that reasoning. We didn’t. Because of the input from tables at each location, they had to change their plans and spend time, near the end, on Single-payer Universal Healthcare. Over and over, eliminating greed and profit and thus insurance companies, was put up on the big screens by us. That led me to believe that this wasn’t a hoax.

In the end, the results of the day were printed up and handed to us, hot off the presses as a Preliminary Report. We were impressed. The technology was definitely state-of-the-art. Complete results will be available on the project’s website: [www.californiaspeaks.org](http://www.californiaspeaks.org) . The Preliminary Report is available there now.

---- Jeanne Brown, Vice President

*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.*

## In Memoriam: Grace Lennon Roos

The League of Women Voters lost a devoted and valued member with the recent passing of Grace Roos. She first joined the League in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, in 1962. The small town boasted 5000 inhabitants and League dues were \$3. She became unit chair, Voter Service Director and Treasurer of her local League as well as Treasurer of the State League. As Grace put it, we were mostly in our thirties looking to make friends and discuss issues with our neighbors.

Educated at Marymount College, she was good in math and made it her major. Upon graduation she worked for four years at Met Life in their actuarial department before marrying her husband George and moving to Connecticut. There four sons were born and in addition to raising her family and doing her League work, she spent eight years being a Cub Scout den mother.

For the SD League Grace put all her talents to work quickly and quietly. She chaired the Transportation Study, became an Administrative Vice President and a Unit Coordinator and ran all kinds of special projects like the UCSD student elections and voter registration booths at the various Price Clubs.

Grace was ILO Transportation Director and a SANDAG observer for more than a decade. She also observed all the Regional Government committee meetings and co-chaired Arrangements for the 1997 State Convention and the following year did the same job for the 1998 National Convention, both held in San Diego.

Two of Grace and George's sons live in San Diego, one in Tucson and one in Germany. She was a grandmother to six grandchildren. Today we honor her memory as a tireless contributor to both her home League and the ILO Board. As a well-informed resource on County Government and transportation, the League called upon her constantly for help in educating its membership and in coming to consensus on the important decisions facing San Diegans as we strive to build and sustain a better life for all the members of our community.

As noted by Sylvia Hampton, "The name Grace suited her perfectly."

***A Memorial Mass for Grace will be held on Friday, Sept. 14, at 10 a.m. at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, 11451 Blue Cypress Drive, in Scripps Ranch. A reception will follow in the Church Hall. If you plan to attend, please respond to the League office, 858-483-8696 or Ramona Kiltz, 619-236-1810 so the family will know how many to prepare for.***




Directions: North on I5 to Scripps Poway Parkway, turn right at the 5th light (1.6 miles), onto Cypress Canyon Road. At the 2nd Stop sign (0.6 miles), turn right onto Blue Cypress Drive. The Church and parking lot are on the immediate left.

### **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.



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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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