



# *League of Women Voters of San Diego County* **COUNTY VOTER**

**Spring 2009**

*An Inter-League Organization (ILO) - City of San Diego • East San Diego County • North Coast • Escondido*

**Website: <http://sdcilo.ca.lwvnet.org>**

**Editors: Liz Kruidenier and Donna Bartlett-May**

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## **Co-Presidents' Letters**

At the LWV County Convention last June, members voted to concur with the LWV East County position on Fire Protection. "Support a county regional fire protection and emergency medical system supported by a sustainable source of funding for prevention and suppression of fires. Increased cooperation among cities and unincorporated fire agencies as may apply. Expansion of mutual aid agreements." Following the convention, the County Board agreed that we should do further study on Fire Prevention and Protection and formed a study committee.

The Fire Study Committee is comprised of Vicki Beck, (focusing on health issues), Eddie Cisco, Peggy Dornish, Elizabeth Gabrych, Nancy McCleary, Anita Reith, Nancy Telford, and Kay Ragan as chair. The committee has adopted a scope and timeline for the study. We expect to have study materials available for local leagues by next March so that consensus can be reached at the June 2010 Convention.

Committee members have attended meetings of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and most recently met with personnel from LAFCO to continue our research. We expect to make a brief report of our work at this year's LWV County Council meeting on June 20.

*Kay Ragan, Co-President*

The LWV County League started January with a vengeance. The board decided to participate with the Caring Council organization to make food stamps more accessible to county residents who need them, based on the LWVUS Social Policy po-

sition – Meeting Basic Human Needs. Marjie Larson, LWV San Diego, was appointed to represent the County League on the Caring Council. Sylvia Hampton, County League VP, wrote a letter to the SD County BOS on February 6 regarding the Food Stamp program enrollment procedures in San Diego County. The CL has sent another letter (see below) to the BOS on the Food Stamps program. Sylvia and Kay prepared it and I presented it on April 21 at the BOS meeting. The County League will post future action letters on the County web site [www.sdcilo.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.sdcilo.ca.lwvnet.org) - Local Action link.

For the County League I attended the Bureau of State Auditors' CA Voters First Act Regional Meeting on February 9, also known as Proposition 11. The Bureau was holding meetings statewide to obtain public input on regulations needed to implement the CA Voters First Act and choose a selection process for the Citizens Redistricting Commission. I expressed the need for extensive outreach to publicize the commission application process. Careful screening of the application must take place in order to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. I also stressed the need for transparency in the selection of Commission members. The Bureau will have additional public hearings on new Commission regulations from August to Sept 7. Specific dates to follow.

*Nancy McCleary, Co-President*

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## **Letter To Supervisors Regarding Food Stamp Program**

The League of Women Voters believes that one of the goals of social policy should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty. Persons who are unable

to work, whose earnings are inadequate or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and access to health care. The federal government set up the SNAP program and bears primary responsibility for financing the program to help meet the basic food needs of poor families. The secondary role played by state and local governments, along with the private sector, in financing the food supplement program in San Diego County has been shown to be an embarrassment for San Diego by showing us a dead last in enrolling eligible residents.

The League believes eligibility should be established through simplified procedures such as declaration of need, spot checked in a manner similar to that used in checking the validity of income tax returns. The privacy of participants should be protected. All administrative procedures should be conducted with respect for the rights and dignity of the individuals.

The California state policy requiring participants to prove their eligibility every three months is beyond the pale in its stupidity. Nutrition advocates say the eligibility could be determined only twice a year and would save administrative costs as well as easing the burden on applicants with transportation and other hardships. When people in San Diego County go to apply for food supplements they are too often made to feel as though they are almost criminals for being there. The effort to stop fraud is so unreasonable and complicated that many needy people just give up and suffer in silence.

The deep recession has increased the numbers now enrolled, but San Diego County has a long way to go. The League urges you to move quickly to provide application assistance in places that low-income people are likely to visit, including community clinics and food pantries. San Diego Hunger Coalition and the San Diego City Schools are looking at how the food stamp enrollment can be done on school sites with high numbers of low income families. Trained volunteers would screen parents, answer questions, and fill out paperwork. Those school children who already qualify for free and

reduced district meals are a good place to start. And their parents are comfortable going to their neighborhood school site. The Board of Supervisors should work with these community efforts to improvement enrollment and preserve the dignity of our less fortunate neighbors.

Nancy McCleary, Co-President

Kay Ragan, Co-President

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## The LWVC Recommendations for the May 19, 2009 Special Election

The League of Women Voters of California announced its opposition to Propositions 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E on the May 19 Special Election ballot and urged voters to reject them.

“We oppose these measures because they are NOT the solution to our long term financial crisis, with the continuing structural deficit in the state budget and flawed budget process,” said Janis R. Hirohama, president of the League. “We make this decision with regret. We would support real reform to make the state budget process more accountable and give the Legislature and Governor effective tools to advance state priorities. However, these hurriedly drafted propositions, produced at the end of a flawed process that kept both the public and most legislators in the dark, will only make our fiscal situation worse.”

## SMARTVOTER

Don't forget to check out the Smart Voter website ([smartvoter.org](http://smartvoter.org)) for more information. Links to additional information related to the measures are included. With so little time before this important election, the site is an excellent way for voters to receive timely information.

Remember also to check your polling place on Smart Voter as it may have changed for the Special Election. The Easy Voter Guide Project is partnering with the Center for Governmental Studies and Univision to produce Video Voter Minutes in English and in Spanish. These videos are available on [Smartvoter.org](http://Smartvoter.org), [CalChannel](http://CalChannel), [Comcast-On-Demand](http://Comcast-On-Demand), [Univision.com](http://Univision.com) and the LWVCEF YouTube Chanel.

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## LWVC Convention 2009

The LWVC is happy to announce three speakers and a visit from a very special League friend for LWVC Convention 2009 in Long Beach. Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Dean Logan will be the featured speaker at the pre-convention Smart Voter dinner on Thursday, May 14. Mr. Logan will address our group and share some interesting insider views on voting issues just a few days before the May 19 Special Election.

The luncheon on Friday, May 15 will feature John Cruz, Appointments Secretary to Governor Schwarzenegger. Mr. Cruz oversees the appointment making process to positions for which the Governor is responsible, and frequently represents the Governor at public forums that provide opportunities to recruit potential candidates for appointment.

The featured luncheon speaker on Saturday, May 16 will be State Senator Jenny Oropeza. Senator Oropeza, who represents the 28<sup>th</sup> Senate District, is a policy leader in such diverse areas as election reform and fighting air pollution. She serves on the Senate Rules and Appropriations Committee and the Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee, among others.

During the Saturday plenary session Secretary of State Debra Bowen will honor us with a visit. Secretary Bowen is a pioneer in open government reform, integrity, and personal privacy rights. She became only the sixth woman elected to statewide constitutional office in California when elected in November 2006.

Four workshops are scheduled on various aspects of advocacy. You can attend these workshops by signing up on the Convention registration site. Please check out the Convention page and blog at <http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/aboutlwvc/convention/2009/index.html>

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## LWVC Legislative Priorities for 2009

The LWVC Board has adopted Legislative Priorities

for 2009 that address key issues expected to be active in the legislature during the current session. The priority issues will be State and Local Finances/State Budget—focusing on reform of the state budgeting process and support of equitable and adequate generation and distribution of tax revenues. As time and resources permit, we will take action on areas of Health Care, Water and Climate Change.

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## State Auditor Moves Forward on Implementing Redistricting Reform

The first round of public hearings on redistricting reform has concluded and now the State Auditor will write a first draft of regulations to implement the selection process for Commissioners. That draft will be posted for public comment. The League will be a part of that process. After the regulations are in effect, the application period for the Commission will begin, no later than early January, 2010.

Stay up to date on what's happening on the web site and keep an eye on the State Auditor's web site. Consider applying for the Commission. Look for information in the Secretary of State's Voter Information Guide for the May 19 Special Election. Join the Redistricting caucus at the LWVD Convention on Saturday, May 16 at 7:00 a.m. Find out how you can be a part of this historic change. <http://lwvc.convio.net/site/R?i=w9F6J5gq49RS-V9oMLqJcA>

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## New Single Payer Bill Introduced

California's landmark single payer health insurance bill was reintroduced as SB 810 by Senator Mark Leno, taking up the standard from former Senator Sheila Kuehl. Senator Leno held a press conference March 11 where he was joined by the bill's coauthors and member from the State Strategy Group, a coalition that works for passage of single payer insurance. See Senator Leno's home page for more information: Senator Leno pointed out that California does not have a health care system, but an insurance system that considers health care provisions a medical loss to their bottom line.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
Council 2009

***Brunch, panel presentation, honors, budget approval,  
Business meeting, local League reports***

Saturday, June 20, 2009  
9:00AM to 12:30PM  
**First United Methodist Church  
2111 Camino del Rio South  
San Diego, California 92108**

**Program:**  
**Report on Hunger in San Diego County**

***Barriers to self-sufficiency; the role of safety net programs***

**Joni Halpern, Esq.**  
Director Supportive Parents Information Network

**Dr. Bill Oswald**  
Chair of the Caring Council and faculty member of Springfield College

Brunch Chairs: Elaine Barton: [elaineb310@cox.net](mailto:elaineb310@cox.net) & Liz Kruidenier: [liznandy@roadrunner.com](mailto:liznandy@roadrunner.com)  
Will gladly recruit volunteers from each League to seek donations of fresh fruit, muffins/ coffee cake, and/or quiche/frittatas . Coffee & juice provided. Can of Nutritious Food Kick Off Drive: We hope each member will bring a can of food to each league and unit meeting over the next year starting with this one. It's an easy way for us to share the pain.

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\$20 reservation covers registration, brunch, donation and church expenses

**NO CASH AT THE DOOR, CHECKS ONLY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ email or phone \_\_\_\_\_

Local League \_\_\_\_\_ Delegate? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Mail to: LWV San Diego County, Ellen Gifford, Treasurer

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