



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF PALOS VERDES PENINSULA/SAN PEDRO**

MARCH/APRIL 2009

Voter

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CALENDAR

Mar 27, Fri	10:30 am	Committee meeting on National Popular Vote Compact, Elaine Asch's home
Mar 28, Sat	9:00 am-12 noon	LA County Convention, Pickwick Gardens, Burbank
Apr 11, Sat	9:30 am-12 noon	Ballot Briefing for May 19 election, Hollenbeck Palms (see pg 6)
Apr 15, Wed	10:30 am-12 noon	Local Program Planning session, Joan Hogan's home
Apr 15, Wed	12:00 noon	Board Meeting, Joan Hogan's home (date moved so as not to conflict with holidays)
Apr 17, Fri		Ed Source Forum, Irvine (contact Diana Halderman)
Apr 18, Sat	9:00 am-12 noon	National Popular Vote Compact study - presentation and consensus, St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, 26825 Rolling Hills Rd. (north of PVDr. North) (see note page 3)
Apr 22, Wed	11:30-1:00 pm	PVPUSD update, luncheon with Walker Williams, district superintendent at Giorgio's (see page 9)
May 6, Wed	7:00 -9:00 pm	Ballot Proposition Public Forum with AAUW, PV Library
May 9, Sat	9:00 am-3:30 pm	HealthCare for All Conference: The Single Payer Solution at Pasadena Presbyterian Church (see page 5)
May 15 - 17	Fri - Sun	LWVC State Convention, Long Beach Marriott
May 19, Tue	all day	Special Election to address six State Budget propositions
May 30, Sat	10:00-2:00 pm	Local Convention, Los Angeles Yacht Club, San Pedro

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FAMOUS MARCHES

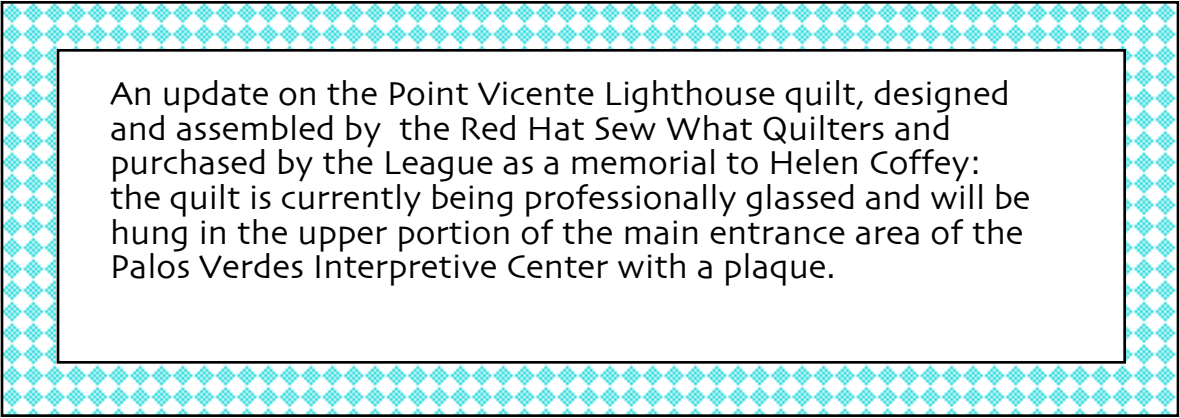
PRESIDENTS' LETTER

We are facing probably one of the busiest springs in recent history with a runoff for community college board (see page 3 for article on how we can avoid this kind of extra expense!) plus a six proposition state ballot in May. We have listed resources for information about the May ballot and will be sponsoring a public forum at the library along with AAUW. Please join us at Hollenbeck (April 11) for a briefing by the League on pros and cons. We would love to have new faces available for presenting this information at the forum. Call Judith or Linda, or better yet, Jo-Anne Waller (310-544-9263 or e-mail Jo-AnneWaller@cox.net) if you would like to experience this prime League contribution to our community.

League members Diana Halderman, DeDe Hicks, Connie Davenport, Fran Wielin, Judith Webb, Kathryn Gould, and Susan Seamans attended the PVP Chamber of Commerce Legislative Luncheon on March 20. We heard updates from our local state assembly and senate representatives, respectively, Bonnie Lowenthal and Roderick Wright. We are fortunate to have two people representing the Peninsula area (among others) who are visible and committed, both with great histories of community involvement and leadership. One of the pluses of this duo is that Bonnie is new to state office and Rod served in the Assembly previously, with a slight hiatus before being elected to the Senate. His experience and her appreciation of a mentor (difficult to come by in the current term-limit climate) are enormously valuable. They are both strongly involved in sponsoring bills, committee work, and basically committed to cleaning up the mess in California's budget and legislative areas. Good luck.

Please join Vi Iungerich and Judith on Saturday, the 28th, as we carpool to the LWV-LAC Convention in Burbank. Nancy Mahr of our League is president of the County League, and Arlene Block is on the board of directors, so we would like to have a good representation from the PVP League. It's never too late to join in—call Judith.

It is also time for our local convention which is scheduled for Saturday, May 30, at the Los Angeles Yacht Club. More details will follow but be sure and make a note of that upcoming event on your calendar.



An update on the Point Vicente Lighthouse quilt, designed and assembled by the Red Hat Sew What Quilters and purchased by the League as a memorial to Helen Coffey: the quilt is currently being professionally glassed and will be hung in the upper portion of the main entrance area of the Palos Verdes Interpretive Center with a plaque.

Linda and Judith

VOTING INFORMATION

CALIFORNIA RANKED VOTING BILL INTRODUCED



“the way democracy will be”

California Assemblyman Mike Davis has introduced AB 1121, a bill that would allow a limited number of general law cities and counties in the state to adopt ranked voting methods, such as instant runoff voting and choice voting. The bill would establish a pilot program to allow up to 10 municipalities to adopt a form of ranked voting.

Instant runoff voting (IRV) is a voting system used in single seat elections where voters rank candidates in order of preference. If a candidate receives more than 50% of the vote, they win. If no candidate is the first choice of a majority of voters, the race goes to an instant runoff. IRV can save money through fewer elections, eliminates the dropoff in turnout associated with runoff elections, and negates the spoiler effect when more than two candidates are running. For these reasons and more, it has been adopted in San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley, as well as various other cities, counties, and states around the country.

Choice voting is similar to IRV in that voters rank their candidates in order of preference; however it is a proportional representation system that is used for multi-seat elections. Where it is used, it has led to better representation for women and minorities, higher satisfaction with government, and higher voter turnout. Historically, choice voting has been used in 24 U.S. cities, and is used in various countries worldwide, including Australia, Scotland, and Ireland. In fact, some form of proportional representation is used in the majority of the world's democratic countries. In 2006, Davis voters approved an advisory measure calling for the use of choice voting for City Council elections, but were unable to move forward with this change because they are a general law city and not a charter city. AB 1121 would allow cities like Davis to use the voting system they see as best fit for their city.

To track the progress of this bill, visit California's [bill information](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html) (<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>) site.

For more information on choice voting, and other forms of proportional representation, visit FairVote's [Program for Representative Government](http://www.fairvote.org/?page=37) (<http://www.fairvote.org/?page=37>) page.

Erik Connell
Democracy Fellow, FairVote

DIRECT ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

In anticipation of our Saturday, April 18 meeting, on the National Popular Vote Compact study, you may want to read the Pros and Cons which are readily available on the 'LWVUS/members only' website (<http://www.lwv.org> Click on members only, see quick links on right)

UNITED NATIONS UPDATE

ACTION: APRIL 1 THROUGH MAY 29 IS INTERNATIONAL ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE MONTH. The US has not signed the International treaty. We are urged to contact President Obama and urge him to do so.

TRADE

President Obama visited Canada to discuss issues of concern between the U.S. and Canada. The two countries can engage in joint research on technology to reduce carbon emissions.

Trade questions are on everyone's mind. You may remember that the NAFTA treaty grew out of a treaty between the U. S. and Canada. Trade will play an important role in the world's eventual recovery. The cries go up for protectionism. The European Union has reintroduced subsidies on agricultural products, Europe, India, and Brazil raised tariffs on imported steel.

Mr. Obama does not seem to feel that the trade agreements which have not been ratified are fair to the U. S. He wants to improve the North American Free Trade Agreement, but was not interested in efforts to restart the World Trade organization's round of international negotiations.

There are differences of opinion on these trade issues, which are understandable particularly in this time of economic crisis. But it is the time to start fighting protectionism. We need to engage China and other cash-rich Asian countries so they can start helping to pull the world out of recession.

Vigorous trade will help the world recover; for that to happen the U. S. will have to provide strong leadership and a clear commitment to fight protectionism.

(Information for this article was provided by the New York Times and other publications)

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT AND SUDAN

The International Criminal Court recently ordered the arrest of Omar Hassan al Bashir on war crimes. In response, Mr. Bashir ordered the expulsion of thirteen international aid groups that keep millions of impoverished Sudanese alive with food and medical care.

Many people are concerned that Mr. Bashir will now crack down harder on Darfur, where an estimated 300,000 people have been killed and 2.7 million driven from their homes. There is also concern that the arrest order for Mr. Bashir may provoke a violent backlash in other parts of Sudan. The African Union and some Arab states and China, seeking Darfur's vast oil supplies, are pressuring the United Nations Security Council to delay the indictment for a year to give peace talks a chance. But the U. S. and its allies should block any such move. Mr. Bashir and his defenders have made that same argument since November. Government attacks continue and it is clear that Mr. Bashir has no interest in peace.

During the U. S. presidential campaign Mr. Obama pledged strong action to halt genocide in Darfur.

A United Nations peacekeeping force is still short of troops and equipment. Many feel that Mr. Obama should press America's allies to contribute both. He should encourage China to stop supplying the weapons used by Khartoum's army and militias and call on the rest of the world to tighten sanctions on Mr. Bashir's crimes in hopes that they will finally oust him.

Muriel Kiefer, UN affairs

ON HEALTH CARE

The ban on embryonic stem cell research has been lifted. The Recovery Act ensures that 7 million men and women who have lost their jobs through the recession can keep their health insurance. It also makes critical investments in electronic medical records, prevention programs, and research on effectiveness of care.

Did you watch the White House summit on healthcare reform on C-Span on March 5? Did you know that in response to massive grass-roots pressure, the White House relented and sent last minute invitations to two advocates for a single-payer plan (Rep. John Conyers and Dr. Oliver Fein of Physicians for a National Health Program)? They were given no opportunity to present their ideas, at least to the C-Span audience, and only a few representatives suggested that there be a "public option" like Medicare. It was clear that the for-profit health insurance industry strongly opposes a "public option" as they anticipate most people would opt for it over private insurance. Recent news articles and information from the Center for Responsive Politics report that millions of dollars have been contributed from the health insurance and drug industry to our elected officials, especially those working on health policy.

Last year Rep. Conyers's HR 676 had 92 cosponsors and was endorsed by the National Conference of Mayors. CNN's Feb. poll showed 72% of those polled favored the government intervening for healthcare reform. Another recent poll showed 6 out of 10 people think the government should take responsibility for providing health care to all Americans. You can offer your opinion at www.whitehouse.gov.

Reminder: our county League is participating in a community meeting on "The Single Payer Solution" in Pasadena on May 9 from 9 am to 3:30 pm. Let Nancy Mahr or me know if you want to attend with us.

Mary Frangias, Healthcare



MAY 19, 2009 STATEWIDE SPECIAL ELECTION

The League of Women Voters of California is here to help for the Statewide Special Election on May 19, 2009.

VOTER SERVICE INFORMATION

SmartVoter.org - Everything a voter needs! Smartvoter.org provides comprehensive resources online and via mobile phone. Polling place lookup, candidate info, measure analysis and more. Check Smartvoter.org on March 23 for updated Statewide Special Election.

LWVC.org election page - Check the LWVC Web site often for voter education materials as well as other great nonpartisan resources. <ca.lwv.org/lwvonly> and click on 'elections'

OTHER NONPARTISAN ELECTION RESOURCES:

The Legislative Analyst's Office has just issued the following webcast:
Mac Taylor Discusses the Fiscal Outlook Under the February 2009 Budget Package
The LAO also provides analysis on the ballot measures online.

The California Secretary of State has valuable educational materials available to you. Our contacts at the Secretary of State's Office have indicated that the following publications will be available between March 23 and March 30:

The Secretary of State Voter Information Guide (mailed on April 9)

The Secretary of State - *Quick Reference Guide* (included inside the VIG)

Info on campaign committees set up to support and oppose the ballot measures and how much money is being spent can be found online - <http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/campaign/>.

Due to the Statewide Special Election, the LWVCEF and the LWVC needs donations now more than ever!
Please consider donating online today.

PROS & CONS BALLOT BRIEFING & ACTION WORKSHOP

April 11, 2009, 9:30 to Noon
Hollenbeck Palms, 573 S. Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles

(Directions: Located on Boyle Avenue between I-5 and 101 Freeway just east of Downtown LA. From either I-5 or 101 exit at 4th Street. From 101 head East on 4th to Boyle Avenue. From I-5 go West on 4th to Boyle Avenue. Turn South on Boyle and proceed about 2 blocks to the Stoplight. Turn right into Hollenbeck Palms. Parking will be limited due to new building.)

- 9:30 am Sign-in and Refreshments
- 9:45 am Welcome
- 9:50 am Model Presentations of State Ballot Measures 1A - 1F
Questions answered after each measure
Discussion of Ballot Box Budgeting
- 10:00 am Action Workshop in Boardroom

Oppose for 1A, 1C, 1D, 1E Neutral on 1B
No position on 1F

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Noon Adjournment



ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

2009 WOMEN OF DISTINCTION

Congratulations to League of Women Voters PVP/San Pedro members and LWV leaders, **Nancy Mahr and Jacki Bacharach**, recently recognized by Senator Roderick Wright for their outstanding commitment to our community. Awards were presented at a recognition luncheon held March 6, 2009 at Ports O'Call Restaurant.



Nancy was nominated by our League as well as by the Palos Verdes Library District. She has been active in many community and professional organizations, serving often as president or publicity chair. They include the National Charity League, League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women and the Association of California School Administrators. Since her retirement, Nancy's interest has been focused on public program areas and legislation.

KUDOS!



Jacki was nominated by Larry Clark, Mayor of Rancho Palos Verdes and Ginny Lambert, Mayor Pro Tem of Hawthorne. Jacki served as president of our League from 1975-1977. In 1980 she was elected to the Rancho Palos Verdes City Council. Of her 14 years on the council she served as mayor for three and one-half years and on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission for 12 years. Jacki was the Founding Chair of the five County Southern California Regional Rail Authority and has chaired the Southern California Rideshare. She has been honored with numerous awards for her great community involvement.



Ed Mennis, beloved husband of Tres for 63 years, died on March 18. Ed was always at Tres' side, wonderfully supportive of her commitment and involvement in the League of Women Voters. The Mennis' arrived in Palos Verdes in 1973. Ed rose in the ranks of Security Pacific Bank to become CEO, a position from which he retired in 1981. Widely respected as a financial analyst, Ed wrote numerous books and received many awards in this field. In retirement, Ed devoted his time to the community, especially to the Friends of the Library, Little Company of Mary Foundation, and the Palos Verdes Estates financial advisory committee.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Kay Ann Bara, longtime LWV member. She lived with her husband Richard in the gatehouse 'Villa Francesca' of Portuguese Bend - a historic building due to her efforts to have it listed. She had been a Juvenile probation officer. She was an equestrian who volunteered her time teaching children to ride, worked with the city of RPV on horse issues and trails, and the Coastal Conservation Coalition to promote conservation along the coast.

LAND USE COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING WITH RPV MAYOR LARRY CLARK

Members of the League were treated to an extremely informational presentation by Rancho Palos Verdes Mayor Larry Clark on Wednesday, March 18. He provided an excellent overview of the various developments that are under construction or consideration by the RPV City Council.

One development touched on and nearing completion was Terranea Hotel, which will consist of a 400 room resort hotel, 50 casitas, 32 singled keyed villa units along with a conference center as well as a number of other amenities, including public trails and park areas. It is proceeding on track and it is expected that opening day ceremonies will be in June of this year. Once the economy picks up and the development is well occupied, the City hopes to benefit from increased income.

We also learned that Trader Joe's is definitely coming to the Golden Cove shopping area and were treated to the history of the turn-around in its future presence there. We also learned more about future non-commercial development planned for Pt. Vicente and continuing efforts to work collaboratively with the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy in conserving native habitats.



Land Use Committee members at meeting with Larry Clark, center.
L - R; Cindy Kondon (sorry), Julie Craemer, Pat Rome, Linda and Barbara Yamato

Additionally, Mayor Clark explained that, over the years, the City has been very conservative in its management of city funds and is well placed to deal with the current financial downturn when compared to other cities that are experiencing severe financial difficulties.

Following his comments about a number of other developments around the Peninsula, we were honored to hear his closing words complimenting the League for the work done by League leaders in the 1970s who laid the ground work so the City of Rancho Palos Verdes could be established.

Linda Herman
Land Use Chair

EDUCATION - THE KEY TO OUR FUTURE IN A MORE TECHNICAL WORLD



The State Legislature has finally approved a budget but it's impact on our Palos Verdes schools is very significant. Will the federal stimulus plan help? Join us on April 22 and learn from Superintendent Williams how the district will cope with the limited funds they will be receiving.

Superintendent of Schools
Walker Williams

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

11:30 AM – 1:00 p.m.

Luncheon

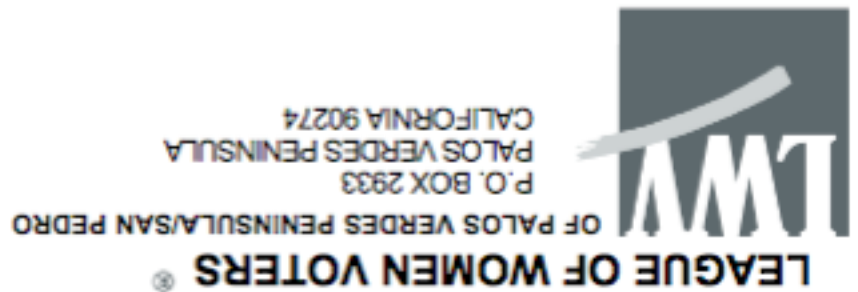
Giorgio's Restaurant
672 Silver Spur Road
Rolling Hills Estates

Lunch is \$20.00

Please send check (made out to LWV/PVP/SP)
with reservation form by Monday, April 20,
TO: LWVPVP/SP, P. O. Box 2933, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

Name _____

Menu includes salad, chicken piccata with pasta, tiramisu for dessert, and coffee. You may pay at the door if you make a reservation ahead of time. Call Linda Herman (310-541-3373).



* LWV/PVP/SP *

has an excellent, informative website:
www.lwvpvp.org
thanks to BETTY RIEDMAN
& PALOS VERDES ON THE NET
for providing & hosting this web site as
a public service to our community
Please visit our website for more information