



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF VENTURA COUNTY

VOTER

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF VENTURA COUNTY !**



CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members and Friends of LWVVC:

As we enjoy the last few days of 2014 and look forward to 2015, we hope you and your loved ones are well and safe. Please make the coming year one in which you participate to the fullest in LWVVC activities. If you need more information about upcoming events or would like to arrange for a ride in order to attend, please feel free to contact us.

Our Best for the New Year,

Barbara Doyle and Pat Essick
Co-Presidents

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PROGRAM PLANNING

- state league solicits input on potential study areas •

Care About Voting? Never Miss an Election?

Do you care about voting? Never miss an election? Then you need to come to the League's program planning meeting at 9:30 am on Saturday, January 24, at the EP Foster Library Topping Room, 651 E. Main Street in downtown Ventura (See Calendar below for details about the meeting).

The League sets its agenda through the Program Planning process. You voted in November because you care about who will be setting our political future; you need to come make your voice heard about what you want California and the League's futures to be.

We'll be discussing League policy and positions at the state level, including where the League should focus its energy over the next 2 years. Do we think there should be a new study? Should we focus on community education? What are the areas of concern to us here in Ventura County?

Program planning is a three-part process that is a core component of the League's mission. It is composed of study on issues, consensus on what action to take, and advocating with one voice in support of that action. This is what makes the League of Women Voters a truly grassroots organization unlike any other!

Part 1 of the process: Study the issues. Attached to this VOTER is a copy of the *LWV of California Positions: Summary and Recent Use* handout. It shows all the positions our state league currently has, when the position were, and when it was last updated. Please take the time to read through this handout before our program planning meeting **and bring it with you** on January 24.

Board of Directors:

Co-Presidents:

Barbara Doyle
Patricia Essick

Secretary:

Judith Murphy

Treasurer:

Pamela Pecarich

Program Vice President:

Steve Lattimore

Directors at Large:

Pat Murray
Carol Lindberg

Part 2 of the process: Consensus on what action to take. At our meeting, as a group, we will decide what we want LWV of Ventura County to recommend to LWV California:

- That we have no state study;
- That we have a new study on a topic not currently covered by a State League position;
- That we update a particular LWV California position;
- Or, are we as a group aware of a position held by another League that we would like to adopt by concurrence.

Part 3 of the process: all local leagues in California will be reporting the results of their program planning meeting to State League. This information will be used by the LWV California board to determine what it will recommend for action. The program planning process culminates in the adoption of the statewide program at our State Convention, to be held in San Diego on May 15-17, 2015. All members are invited to participate and we will have 3 voting delegates to represent LWVVC.

It takes the enthusiasm and interest of our members to keep our program vital. You'd never skip voting in an election; you shouldn't skip the League's equivalent. The program planning process is your voice! I look forward to seeing you at our Program Planning meeting on January 24. And please feel free to bring a guest so that he or she can learn more about the League.

Submitted by Barbara Doyle, Co-president

DECEMBER WATER FORUM

• post water bond, what's next? a few clues •

LWVVC Panel on Ventura County Water Engaged Audience

On December 13, the LWVVC and the Political Science Department of California Lutheran University cosponsored a public forum addressing Ventura County water problems: “Post Water Bond, What’s Next?” An audience of 55+ turned out to hear the four panelists. President Barbara Doyle began the discussion by noting that the California League has had a position on water since 1959 and works diligently to study and take positions on water issues. While the LWVC liked much about the water bond provisions, concerns about spending controls and storage projects led the Board to take a neutral position.



Rapt Crowd Attends LWVVC Water Forum

Assemblymember Das Williams (D-37th District), recently appointed the new Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, demonstrated his broad knowledge of the issues facing our county and provisions in the proposition. He began his presentation by noting that local agencies have learned from the past and adapted to changing conditions, making them often better at solutions than state-based ones. Many local agencies have been doing well at reducing water use – and the state gives more funding to such communities. Mr. Williams acknowledged that he has the same overall misgivings as the League about Proposition 1, although he endorsed it.



Das Williams, Russ Baggerly, Rick Viergutz (L to R) Speak at LWVVC Forum

So far less than half the bond proceeds have been allocated. Among the best allocations is matching funds for recycling. He noted that the “second dumbest” practice is allowing water to be put back into the ocean instead of recycling it. “Dumbest” he reserved for the failure of many localities to “incentivize” replacing turf in residential and other areas. Reducing the use of water in landscaping through “Cash-for-Grass” is a valuable policy, but so far only a handful of agencies are taking advantage of the program. He also noted the importance of the new regulations on groundwater and the ongoing controversy over the best ways to store water – dams vs. ground water basins.

Regional management plans are important and can now be funded with bond money. It is raining and snowing in different locations than in the past so capturing it with existing systems is difficult. Assemblymember Williams sees surface storage as a problem, a “dinosaur of the past”, when there are better storage methods such as adjudicated groundwater basins. These are increasing in number although some areas are over-drafted. He believes “some” regulation of wells is necessary. We must change patterns to adapt for drought; the current worst drought in our history will not be an anomaly.

Russ Baggerly, Director of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency (GMA), addressed the history of laws governing water rights and the belated nature of groundwater regulation. California is one of only two states (Oklahoma being the other) that do not regulate groundwater. Water rights were established in California law in 1914. Because water was allowed to be transferred from its point of origin to someplace else for use, the belief became established among landowners that they had unlimited rights to groundwater. This belief must be

countered culturally and legally. The new legislation will help and it could not have come too soon. Citing 75 ft of subsidence in the Central Valley (which has one of the state’s largest aquifers), Mr. Baggerly noted that subsidence causes soils to compact in such a way that they will be unable to recover as well to hold water if conditions change.

Commenting that the groundwater right was always conditional, “you can’t manage what you can’t measure.” Accordingly, the GMA has developed extensive information about its basin so that it can manage the resource constructively. They have established a ‘safe yield’ level. The Ojai GMA plans to continue to work cooperatively with its pumpers.

Rick Viergutz, Groundwater Manager for the Ventura County Watershed Protection Agency and under contract with the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA), spoke about his agency. It was voluntarily established in 1982 out of concern over sea water intrusions in the Oxnard Plain, one of Fox Canyon’s major “jurisdictional” areas. Their district includes several basins and contains 1,300 wells, 700 of them active. The current rate of pumping is considered too much to sustain and so it recently acted on an emergency basis to reduce pumping allocations among its members.

The recently enacted legislation, Sustainable Ground Water Management Act of 2014, gives GMAs more authority and requires the development of specific local groundwater sustainability plans. It also suspends conservation credits. The FCGMA requires registration of new wells including semi-annual reporting. Proposition 1 has many provisions which apply to FCGMA, they are waiting to learn more about the process for allocating funds.

The final speaker was Eric Bergh, Manager of Resources, Calleguas Municipal Water District who contrasted the issues facing their agency. This district, which measures about 365 square miles, provides water to over 630,000 residents in southern Ventura County from Oxnard to Simi Valley. Their concern regarding the inadequacy of local water supplies led them on a long quest for a reliable supply of water.



Speaker Eric Bergh Rounded Out Panel of Experts

Currently, imported water is supplied from the Colorado River and the State Water Project which includes the Sacramento Delta (which Bergh noted is “broken”), the California Aqueduct, and various other surface water reservoirs. Because of the drought, water agencies in the West County and Oxnard Plain areas have been taking more water from Calleguas. In their district, many groundwater desalters are either operational or under development to increase local water supply reliability and increase underground storage capacity for storm water flows. Mr. Bergh was especially clear that Governor Brown’s Bay Delta Conservation Plan is their highest priority in order to ensure future regional water reliability.



Barbara Doyle, LWVVC Co-president, Directs Audience Questions to Panel Participants

During the Q&A session following speaker presentations a number of additional points were made: it is not yet known what the bond funds will do to address groundwater recharge; fracking uses very little from water supplies; from now on, groundwater will be regulated as much as surface water; residential capture of rainwater as is done in Australia is expensive and not a top priority; the effect of the drought on agriculture under SOAR is primarily a political question; the cost of sea water desalination is prohibitive and only helps as a supplement; desalting brackish water is being done now to improve quality; salt water intrusion is about the same as in the 1980s- no progress has been made.

Almost half of those attending the forum returned evaluation forms, which were very favorable.

LWVVC BOARD DOINGS

The Board did not meet in December

VOLUNTEER A LITTLE TIME

• lwvvc needs you! •

If you have some time and are interested in volunteering a bit of it for the good of the League, following is a list of projects that could use your help. If interested in getting involved, send an email to lwv@lwvventuracounty.org and let us know what you would like to do. Someone will contact you to follow-up.

The official League Board is down to seven members. This is the smallest board in the history of this League and therefore your participation as a member has never been more important. Several of you have stepped up to help – thank you.

Each of us needs to volunteer to do what we can, large or small, once or often, to keep this League vital.

- Barbara Doyle & Pat Essick

► **Articles for the VOTER** from other websites: You don't have to write it but if you are willing to check into state and national news, especially the state League's website, for relevant stories to include in the VOTER, please contact Suzanne at gray.harvey@verizon.net. Do it for us each month or for one month – we need the help.

► We (still) need people who would be interested in **servicing on a committee that shares the load** of getting the following jobs done:

- Member of Nominating Committee -
- Membership Vice President or, Member of Membership Committee
- Voter Service Vice President or, join as a Member of the Committee - we really need you here
- Program Assistant
- VOTER Production
- Smart Voter “Manager” - election season is hot time.

Please contact either Barbara Doyle (gregnbarbara@yahoo.com), or Pam Pecarich (ppecar@aol.com) for more information about the above 5 committee positions- phone numbers can be found in latest Membership Directory. The League needs you! Volunteer yourself or recommend a member whom you think would be able to serve – we'll take it from there.

Working on a project for the LWVVC and need some help? Send an email to gray.harvey@verizon.net and tell us what you need and we'll include it in the next Voter. Please include dates, location, time of day.

THINGS ARE HAPPENING!

- all league meetings are open to the public •

CALENDAR

► **Thursday, January 8** – LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 AM to 1 PM (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear.). Open to all members.

► **Saturday, January 24** – LWVVC Program Planning Meeting – 9:15 am to 11:30 am. Location: E. P. Foster Library, Topping Room, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura, free parking in the back. Our speaker, Jill Sarick Santos will speak about ways to cut water consumption followed by time for Q & A. We will then proceed to discuss program planning for the state League.

Agenda:

- 9:30 – 10:15 am: Jill Santos of Sustainable Ventura, City of Ventura’s environmental arm
- 10:30 – 11:30 am: LWVVC 2015 Program Planning



► **Sunday, January 25** -- Ventura County Reproductive Rights Network (VCRRN) celebrates the anniversary of Roe v. Wade with Panel Discussion - 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Location: Temple Beth Torah, 7620 Foothill Road, Ventura. January 22 marks the 42nd anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court decision upholding a woman's right to safe and legal abortion. Save the date for VCRRN’s annual anniversary event on

January 25, 2015! An engaging panel will focus on the changing political landscape, judicial appointments, and how they foresee the future. Panelists will share legislative, educational and legal perspectives. For RSVP information, contact VCRRN Coordinator at anna.lopez@ppsbsvslo.org or 805.722.1519.

► **Thursday, February 12** – LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 AM to 1 PM (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear.). Open to all members.

► **March, Date & Time TBA** – Program in honor of Women’s History Month - Light refreshments will be served. Location: E. P. Foster Library, Topping Room, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura, free parking in the back.

► **Thursday, March 12** – LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 AM to 1 PM (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear.). Open to all members.

► **Thursday, April 9** – LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 AM to 1 PM (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear.). Open to all members.

► **Thursday, May 14** – LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 AM to 1 PM (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear.). Open to all members.

► **May 15 thru 17** – LWV California Convention. Location: San Diego's historic Gaslamp Quarter.

Saturday, January 24 – AAUW Interbranch Council Luncheon – 11:30 am. Location: Los Robles Greens Golf Course, 299 S. Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks. Panel discussion entitled, “Overview of Human Trafficking”. Cost is \$30 and includes buffet luncheon. RSVP by January 10. Send check payable to AAUW IBC to Janet Linquist 32106 Village 32, Camarillo 92102. Anyone interested in attending the discussion only, please arrive at 12:30 pm.

