

The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

87 Years of Fighting for Political Equality
League of Women Voters
Marks Anniversary of the
19th Amendment

(Press Release – LWVUS, August 24, 2007)

Washington, DC– This August 26 marks the 87th anniversary of the day that the U.S. Constitution was amended to grant women the right to vote. While American women now comprise more than half of our nation’s voting age population, according to the League of Women Voters, the struggle to become full participants in the political life of the country has yet to be fully realized.

“This anniversary of the 19th amendment, Women’s Equality Day, provides us with an opportunity to reflect with pride on the progress made on voting rights in the past 87 years,” said Mary G. Wilson, national League president.

“This year, we’ve witnessed a number of remarkable milestones for women. For the first time, a female has been elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a major contender for the 2008 Presidential election is a woman.

“However, these achievements do not mark the end of our journey. In communities across the country, citizens still lack real representation by their elected officials and the policies they pass. It is only with the continued work of citizens and leaders, of all backgrounds, that this can change.”

The League’s current and recent projects include the launch of a major voter education website, www.VOTE411.org, lobbying against the disenfranchisement of eligible voters, a campaign to end “taxation without representation” for D.C. citizens by granting DC a voting representative, and continuing voter registration drives nationwide.

“It is crucial that we continue to engage more citizens in the democratic process, on every level. Citizens volunteering, educating, lobbying; that’s absolutely necessary to democracy, and we need to see more of it,” Wilson said.

“Today is a time to celebrate the progress achieved by active citizens over the past eight decades, but it is also a time to look to what still needs to be done to make democracy work for all Americans. The League of Women Voters will continue to be the place where hands-on work leads to a better democracy for all.”

September 2007 Calendar

Thursday

September 20

Fall Social at

Gordon Biersch

See flyer on page 2

Saturday

September 29

**LWV/LAC Training for
Candidates Forums**

Thursday

October 11 7 PM

**Immigration Study
Consensus Meeting**

Part I

Glendale Fire Station

Community Room

421 Oak Street

(across from Galleria parking on
South Columbus Avenue)

**Please RSVP by October 7 to
tpjcarson@att.net**

Thursday

November 15

**Immigration Study
Consensus Meeting**

Part II

League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank

Fall Social

Gordon Biersch Brewery and Restaurant

145 South San Fernando Boulevard

(cross street is Angelino)

Burbank, California 91502

(818) 569-5240

Date: Thursday, September 20

Time: 6-8 pm

Parking: Valet parking is available starting at 6 pm

RSVP: by Monday, September 17

Vera Naylor

email: tinymom1541@sbcglobal.net

phone: (818) 768-7663



Health Care Reform in California: Will One of these Health Care Proposals Pass?

By Joan Hardie: Burbank/Glendale LWV member Joan Hardie is a RN at Huntington Hospital in Pasadena. She is also Voter Service chair for Glendale.

Not just in California, but nationwide, there is a definite momentum for health care reform. When I attended the state LWV Convention in Bakersfield this past May, I had an opportunity to attend an informative workshop on the various proposals that are being considered by our legislators. The workshop was presented by John Miller, a consultant to the Senate Appropriations committee, and David Powell, Research Director for the California Budget Project. The moderator was Pat Snyder, LWVC Health Care Consultant. I would like to share with you information that I gathered on what are now three different health care reform proposals circulating around in our legislature, the **Governor's Plan, AB 8 (Núñez/Perata), and SB 840 (Kuehl)**. I will discuss the main distinctions of each proposal and do some comparisons of who is covered and how it will be paid for.

As I'm sure you can relate, there are a lot of details when discussing these three different proposals, too many to include in this article. **For those of you who are interested in the details or a good source on health care reform, there are several good web sites, www.calhealthreform.org and www.cbp.org (California Budget Project)**. A lot has changed regarding some of these current health care proposals since I attended the workshop and continues to change rapidly. I referred to these web sites as a source for up to date information for this article.

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL

Governor Schwarzenegger's plan is a proposal at this time. It is not a bill. In the August 27 edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, Schwarzenegger was quoted as saying the priorities for an ultimate health care plan, "needs to have mandatory health care coverage and it needs to have shared responsibility." Therefore, his proposal mandates that all Californians have coverage. To meet the requirement, a minimum benefit level of \$5,000 deductible, with out-of-pocket maximums of \$7,500 per person (\$10,000 per family) must be maintained. Who will pay? Employers with more than ten employees have the option to pay or play. If employers do not offer their own health care coverage, they will contribute 4% of payroll toward cost of

employee's coverage through a purchasing cooperative (not named at this time). Employers of all sizes must establish Section 125 plans to tax shelter employer and employee health insurance contributions. The **Governor's plan has a main distinction from the other proposals, AB 8 and SB 840, having to do with funding. There are requirements imposed on providers.** Providers would be required to pay fees on revenues, 2% on physicians and 4% on hospitals. And hospitals are required to spend 85% of revenues on patient care. Although the Governor often states he is opposed to government involvement in health care administration, his plan allows for expansion of several federal programs, including Healthy Families and Medi-Cal. His plan also offers support to low income families by establishing guidelines for how much is fair to spend on health care premiums based on income.

NÚÑEZ/PERATA BILL

Prior to June, there were two different assembly bills one by Núñez and one by Perata. As of June 2007, these two bills combined into one, **AB 8 (Núñez/Perata)**. This bill's main distinction is that it aims to provide expanded coverage to children regardless of immigration status. This bill would also call for the creation of a newly created state purchasing cooperative called California Cooperative Health Insurance Purchasing Program (Cal-CHIPP). As with the Governor's plan, employers of all sizes must establish a Section 125 plan to tax shelter employee and employer health insurance contributions. Employers must either spend a certain amount on health related services for their employees, or pay a fee to the state to allow their employees to gain coverage through Cal-CHIPP. Specifically, employers are required to pay 7.5% of social security wages for employee health care expenditures, or pay an equivalent amount into a trust fund to allow employees to access coverage through Cal-CHIPP. Employees are required to enroll in Cal-CHIPP if that is what their employer chooses to do. AB 8 claims it will enhance access to coverage for the self-employed through insurance reforms. Also, similar to the Governor's plan, AB 8 expands Medi-Cal and

HEALTH CARE REFORM continued on page 4

Conservation Corner

Cooling Tips for the Summer

- Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units. Place room air conditioners on the north side of the house. An air conditioning unit operating in the shade may use 10% less electricity.
- Keep drapes and shades closed on south facing windows during the day.

For more tips, see the U.S. Department of Energy's web site, <http://www.energy.gov/generalinformation.htm>

HEALTH CARE REFORM continued from page 3

Healthy Families. However, AB 8 expands these programs more widely to include more children and low income families than the Governor's plan.

SENATE BILL 840 (KUEHL)

The last bill to talk about is one that well known to LWV, it is **SB 840 (Kuehl), which also has a companion funding legislation SB 1014**. This is a proposal that calls for a newly created single-payer California Health Insurance System (CHIS). This bill is supported by the LWVC who has worked with the grass roots organization OneCareNow to assist with its promotion. I love talking about this plan because it is refreshingly simple; it has also been around the longest and is the most articulate of all the health care proposals.

The SB 840 (Kuehl) is also the most radical proposal because it does away with insurance companies as we know them. The newly created CHIS would act as the insurance company. For those of you familiar with Medicare, it would be similar to that. It would be funded by employers and/or individuals. Individuals are required to contribute a portion of income via taxes; first \$7000 of income would be exempt. Employers are required to contribute an 8% increase in payroll tax over \$7000 and under \$200,000. No premiums or deductibles or co-pays would be required. There would be a commissioner of the CHIS that would negotiate and set all rates for health care services. There would be cap on administrative spending of 5%. **Doctors and hospitals would remain their own entities.**

I wish that after attending workshops and reading on health care reform that I would feel more confident about what to do about health care reform, but I'm not. I still have more questions than answers. **As a RN at a busy hospital, I've observed over the years that doctors are increasingly unhappy, they are busier than ever while receiving less compensation.** More than once I've heard them say they would not recommend medicine to anyone, especially their children, I find this troublesome. I want doctors to be happy. When I tried discussing health care reform with some of the more approachable doctors I find they know very little about it, they are too busy! **One thing all MDs agreed upon was that health insurance providers as we currently know them, need reform.** And I was surprised to find more support for the single payer approach among the doctors than originally thought. I want to stress this was a very informal poll I took among only a few MDs.

The workshop presenter, John Miller, was pressed with the question: "Do you think health care reform will pass?" In response, he seemed to indicate that some form of health care reform would pass. He also mentioned that what might pass might make things worse before they get better. Remember to refer to web sites I listed previously for detailed and current information on what is happening in health care reform.

The LWV and American Elections

By: Xandra Kayden, Member of the National Board of LWVUS and Senior Fellow at the School of Public Affairs at UCLA

The 2008 presidential race may have the shortest nominee selection process since the effective demise of the convention, but it could also be known as the election with the longest debate season. After a full year of candidates running before ever a vote is cast, the selections of the major parties could be over in the first five weeks of 2008.

To many Americans, debates “R”Us — the League of Women Voters. We lost the opportunity to organize presidential debates in the 1980s, but state and local Leagues have been doing them since we got the vote and have stayed the course. **According to a paper by Mary Ann Guyol,¹ a former LWVUS staff member, we initiated many of the most significant voter educational practices now in use.**

The women who fought for suffrage were just as committed, passionate, and heroic in taking the next steps of assuring an educated electorate. We didn’t chain ourselves to fences, but the path was hardly smooth. Every League member who has ever organized a debate knows how difficult it is to referee that particular struggle for power. One early League president is said to have broken five gavels trying to keep order in a debate. Maybe that’s how we began pounding home our reputation for integrity and fairness!

Maud Wood Park, the League’s first president, came up with the idea in 1920 of questionnaires to be posed to candidates for Congress that would reveal how they compared on the League’s priorities. As she put it “Women are accustomed to asking questions when they shop. They want to get the most for their money. Likewise, they want to get the most for their votes.” Leagues across the country asked questions such as “Are you in favor of an audit of the gold at Fort Knox,” addressed issues of child labor, appropriations for the Children’s Bureau, and legislation affecting maternity and infancy. Or this one: “Mark the answer that most closely reflects your beliefs. Man was created by ___ God, ___ is the product of a [r]evolutionary process having descended from lower forms of life, or ___ undecided.” Sometimes, it was just a question of keeping order. One moderator told a heckler that if he didn’t quiet down, she would tell his mother in the morning.

The League was not universally applauded for its efforts. One editorial asked “What business is it of these women how these candidates think *now* on these subjects? These issues arise in the legislature and they will be all more or less party matters and the candidates will then vote in accordance with party theory.” Not a far-fetched notion when the parties controlled the nomination

of candidates, but there were other complaints. One candidate called to say that he’d just received the questionnaire and didn’t like it at all. “Why, you’ve asked me to answer questions I’ve never heard of . . . Why, lady, I venture to say that there isn’t a candidate running who could answer these questions. I’ve asked three officials at city hall and they couldn’t answer them . . . You’ve asked my attitude on the ratification of the Child Labor Amendment. I never heard of such an amendment. You want to know whether I am in favor of reapportionment of funds to take advantage of federal aid for the Sheppard Towner Maternity Act. Now, I don’t know what the Sheppard Towner Act is.” Some thought we should just tell them what we wanted them to do and not go to the trouble of asking what they thought.

The parties complained that it was “mortifying” when people came to the state committee headquarters asking for such information and — when told it could not be furnished — to be asked “Why not? The League of Women Voters has it.”

We called for election law reform; citizen education about elections and campaigning; candidate fairs, debates; permanent registration; accessible polling places, absentee voting; the Australian ballot; and opening up the presidential nominating process through caucuses and primaries. We opposed poll taxes. We formed coalitions, went to court, and lobbied in city halls and state legislatures, to say nothing of Congress and the Executive branch.

Sometimes we were praised; often we were called interfering women. We sponsored over 1500 “citizenship schools,” in our first decade, often in conjunction with universities. One U.S. senator explained how broad-minded he was and, when handed a paper ballot, said “I always take out my pen and I always check carefully the people I vote for.” Someone asked him about the pen, noting that the regulations required the use of a little blue pencil in the voting booth. One hopes she maintained a League-like demeanor when pointing out his vote never counted. . . .

What is most extraordinary about the impact of the League of Women Voters is the continuity of our mission, the shortness of our history, and how much we have contributed to American elections.

¹ Most of the stories in this article comes from the draft of a paper by Mary Ann Guyol in 1984, entitled “Opening the System: the Impact of the League of Women Voters on Elections.” I came across it in the papers of Willie Grace Campbell, who died last year at the age of 90, a former president of the Indiana League, member of the national board member and president for many years of the Overseas Education Fund.

Élections à la Française (Part II)

By Sally Rivera, LWV Whittier. Sally served as an international observer in the French elections earlier this year. She has written an article describing her experiences. Part I appeared in the August issue of the Voter.

In French elections, provisional and absentee ballots do not exist. However, if a voter cannot vote in person, the ballot may be cast through procuration, which is a type of proxy voting. By writing to the local jurisdiction to ask for procuration due to specified, officially approved reasons (examples: physical incapacity, employment obligations), a voter may designate another to cast the registered voter's ballot. The proxy is named, is listed in the roster, is verified against a supplemental form, goes through the ballot process at the polling station, provides photo identification and signs his/her name in the roster as the proxy.

Even though French elections typically consist of only one question, officials have been experimenting with electronic voting. During the April 22 election, 82 communities went electronic. Following difficulties with systems and logistics problems, five communities dropped electronic voting for the May 6 runoff. Although some computer system problems were reported, more difficulties were attributable to insufficient training for use on the part of poll workers and voters, an inadequate number of available machines, poor design for the aged and vision-impaired and waiting in line for more than an hour. Due to the simplicity of the ballot, the confidence in the current system by the electorate, the opportunity for civic engagement by volunteering to tally election results and the speed with which results are reported, I asked an elections official what rationale is being given for converting to electronic voting. The principal reasons given were speed in reporting results, long-term cost savings and modernity. Conversion is proceeding. System vendors for the spring elections were Nedap (Netherlands), Indra (Spain) and ES&S (United States - known in Los Angeles County for its association with the InkaVote Plus system).

During the legislative elections 7,639 candidates were vying for all 577 seats of the Assemblée Nationale. By French standards, voter turnout was low - 60.50 percent on June 10 and 60.02 percent on June 17. Although legislative elections have a history of low turnout (even when they were the sole elections held in any one year), some speculated that voter fatigue was

the cause and recommended consolidating the presidential and legislative elections. **An intriguing twist in voting for the député is the simultaneous vote for the candidate's suppléant. If the elected député cannot serve for whatever reason, the suppléant automatically becomes the representative.** There is no need for a special election and voters know in advance exactly who will serve if the elected representative cannot complete the five-year term.

A similarity between the U.S. and France can be found in redistricting complaints. Redistricting for the 577 seats has not been done since 1986 (based on a 1982 census). Critics have pointed out repeatedly that there have been major population shifts since the 1982 marker. Although redistricting has not been among high legislative priorities, Sarkozy has announced that proportional representation changes are among recently initiated institutional reforms. There was a very strong push by the UMP to strengthen Sarkozy's power with an overwhelming legislative victory. Francois Fillon, the new prime minister, encouraged all cabinet ministers to run for election or reelection (not all decided to do so) as a validation of the electorate's support for Sarkozy. The first round saw the outright election of 110 candidates - 109 UMP and one Socialist. However, following the June 17 runoff for the remaining seats, the UMP lost 35 and the Socialists gained 58. In addition, a completely new center-leaning party, the Mouvement Démocrate (MoDem), founded by Bayrou following his third-place finish, obtained four seats. The UMP maintained its majority status, but it was weakened. Among UMP casualties was Alain Juppé, a very high-ranking cabinet member. Following the loss of his legislative seat, Juppé decided to resign from the government. His resignation set off the formation of the second Sarkozy/Fillon government. The line-up was announced on June 19. The first session of the newly elected Assemblée Nationale was on June 20.

Noticeably absent from all the campaigns were incessant television ads. Official campaign video is run at designated times on television (about 10 minutes per total installment for several parties/candidates)

ÉLECTIONS À LA FRANÇAISE continued on page 7

during the last week or two before the election. Ad quality ranges from extremely slick to homespun. Platform is the focus. Interviews on public interest and news shows are also done, but equal time must be given to the opposition. For the first time since 1995, a presidential debate was held (incumbent Jacques Chirac had refused to debate extreme-right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen of the Front national in 2002). Caution was exercised to make sure that neither Royal nor Sarkozy monopolized the debate. Each candidate was timed as they faced off, again staying almost entirely with issues of platform and experience. At the conclusion, Royal had spoken for 74:20 minutes; Sarkozy, 72:00 minutes. Other than a type of Palm Pilot held by Sarkozy to reference numbers, neither candidate used notes. Media analysis abounded for days.

Financing of campaigns is done via both public and private/party coffers. Individuals have contribution limits and corporate interests are not allowed to contribute. Although the most recent presidential campaigns are the most expensive in French history, they pale in comparison to American campaigns. The Sarkozy campaign expended 21.6 million euros (approximately \$29.2 million). The largest expenditures were for massive political events, such as a huge final campaign rally at the Bercy Stadium in Paris, easily costing 500,000 euros. All candidates also invested in the Internet as a means of

reaching the most voters at the least cost. The Royal campaign expended 1.2 million euros, while Sarkozy forces spent approximately 500,000 euros. The site for Royal was interactive, while Sarkozy's was a passive display of campaign materials. Royal's site received far more hits.

In addition to finding out about a multitude of elements that propelled the French elections process during my visit, I answered questions about American elections and showed my November 7, 2006 General Election sample ballot to many. **The French were uniformly struck by the ballot length (nine pages) and its complexity.** They wondered how far in advance of the election did the voter receive the ballot, how the voter obtained information to be an informed voter, the amount of time that would be required to study the ballot, how many voters would even want to study the ballot, and the length of time spent in the voting booth to complete the ballot. Almost everyone was bothered by our voting for or against judges. League has long agonized about low voter turnout and the difficulties of becoming an informed voter. **How many voters do not vote because they do not understand the issues presented to them? At what point does the complexity of the ballot undermine the democratic process? These are fundamental questions for the American electorate. These are League issues.**



Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All Citizens of voting age are welcome. Associate Membership is open to all others.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters as part of your voice for citizens and force for change. I enclose: (please check one or more of the following)

- \$60.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$100.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$30.00 for a one-year student membership

Name/Names _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

I would like to receive my VOTER by email.

My email address is _____

Make check payable to League of Women Voters. Mail to Vera Naylor, 7714 Via Capri, Burbank CA 91504

I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

Gifts made payable to "LWV Education Fund" are tax deductible.

The Voter

THE VOTER IS PUBLISHED nine times a year by the League of Women Voter of Glendale/Burbank, California.

President: Monica Marquez

Editor: Linda Lammers

Production: Carole Dougherty

Circulation: Anna Rundle

The **League of Women Voters**, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education advocacy.

The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and come to a consensus on. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.

Welcome New Member



A warm welcome to
Jeanne Zinniker,
a new member of our chapter

249 N. Brand Blvd.
Glendale, CA 91203
Corner of Brand/Calif.
tel: 818.244.4448
fax: 818.244.4795
M-F 8:30-6, Sat. 10-4
1125 E. Broadway
Glendale, CA 91205
Btwn Chevy Chase/Adams
tel: 818.242.4270
fax: 818.242.0525
M-F 8:30-6:30
Sat. 10-4, Sun. 12-4



MAIL BOXES ETC.
A UPS Company

Laurel Pavone
Notary Public

EMBE stores are independently owned and operated franchises.

CATHY SELLITTO NOTARY PUBLIC

Mobile Service

Business Hospitals Residence

(818) 502-0661

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
BURBANK/GLENDALE

VOTER

7714 Via Capri
Burbank CA 91504
(818) 247-2407

League websites:
LWV Glendale/Burbank
<http://www.gb.ca.lwvnet.org>

LWV California
<http://www.ca.LWV.org>

LWV United States
<http://www.LWV.org>

Printed courtesy of Mail Boxes Etc.