

May 2003 Calendar

Thursday May 15
WOMEN IN ACTION LOBBY DAY
Sacramento
"Access to Health Care: Do We
Have It When We Need It?"
Information: www.wiald.org

May 16 - 18
LWVC BIENNIAL CONVENTION
Oakland

Tuesday May 20
ELECTION DAY
Burbank
**PROPOSITION AA: COMMUNITY
COLLEGE BOND MEASURE**
For impartial ballot information
on this issue, visit [http://
www.lwvlosangeles.org/
VOTER.htm](http://www.lwvlosangeles.org/VOTER.htm)

Saturday May 31
**GLENDALE/BURBANK
ANNUAL MEETING**
Castaway Restaurant
Registration 9:30 am
See flyer for details

Wednesday June 11
BOARD MEETING
7:30 pm
Home of Chris Carson

Saturday July 26
POPOVERS IN PASADENA
Women's City Club
Pasadena

More information coming soon

President's Message

Chris Carson, President

IT'S SPRING AGAIN. My roses, geraniums and azaleas are in full bloom. The burn area above my house is finally carpeted in pale green. Squirrels are tearing around the neighborhood at top speed and the Verdugo Hills Coyote Chorale is practicing nightly. The signs of change and renewal are all around us as we rejoice in the awakening of new life.

As with all things, League changes too. We have our own seasons and rites of change. One of the them is the yearly advent of Conventions and Annual Meetings. This month I fly to Oakland to attend the LWVC Biennial Convention.

There are some exciting and challengeing issues waiting for all of us. Concern over the State deficit and its impact on programs for the most vulnerable in our society is driving a move for reform of the Budget process, an idea long advocated by the League. This will be a major theme at the Convention. Education, long a cherished subject of League, is once again in the spotlight. Of course there is deep concern over the looming

cuts to the Education budget, but additionally members are seriously considering an update to our State Education position in light of the new Master Plan for Education being advocated in the legislature. And the decision in Los Angeles County to use Proposition 10 money to fund universal preschool only increases the need to update

our position in this area. The discussion and deliberation will certainly be lively.

At our own Annual Meeting on May 31st we have a unique opportunity to hear a very knowledgeable speaker address a topic of deep concern to

everyone in Burbank and Glendale—Housing. It has become a mantra throughout Southern California "We need more housing." But just how does a city create a housing plan? And what about that fabled beast "Affordable Housing?" Does it actually exist? Or is it like the Gryffon? Spoken of in whispers but never seen? Looming on the horizon is the even more fabled beast "Rent Control." What is

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a grant
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creating
an online
Guide to
Local Government**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued on page 3

League of Women Voters
Glendale/Burbank

Annual Meeting



Saturday, May 31, 2003

Speaker: Maria Martinez

Chair, Burbank Landlord-Tenant Commission

Creating a Housing Plan for Our Cities

Registration: 9:30 am

Meeting: 10:00 am

Lunch: 12 noon

Cost: \$20 per person
Includes morning coffee,
lunch, tax and gratuity

Castaway Restaurant

Valley View Room

Harvard, Burbank

Free Parking



Registration deadline: May 23, 2003

Yes! I am coming to the Annual Meeting on May 31. Please indicate your preference and the number of each: Chicken Vegetarian

Name(s):

Amount enclosed: _____

Send this tear-off and check to:

Vera Naylor

7714 Via Capri

Burbank CA 91504

(818) 768-7663

Are You Happy with County Government?

A RECENT SURVEY of Los Angeles County residents revealed some “disenchanted” views on local government. In fact, county government was rated excellent or good in solving problems by only 24% of county residents, compared to 59% in 1994. “But even as county residents expressed discontent, they applauded the complex, multi-layered system used to govern the nation’s largest county—including the county Board of Supervisors, 88 city governments and more than 200 special districts—saying it ensures that they get the services they need.”

The Los Angeles *Times* article stated that the 2,000 polled by phone in March said they would like to have more local government. “But they’re also telling us that city and county representatives don’t pay attention to people like themselves,” according to Mark Baldassare, research director at the Public Policy Institute of CA, who conducted the survey in conjunction with USC.

WHAT ARE YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS?

1. Are the residents of Los Angeles County adequately represented by the five members of the Board of Supervisors? Should the Board be enlarged?

What, if any, additional responsibilities should the Board of Supervisors have?

2. Should the chief administrative/executive officer be elected or appointed?

What is the difference between job responsibilities of a CAO and a CEO and which do you favor for Los Angeles County?

If you need more information to answer these questions, plan to attend the July 26th and October 4th County League days. They will prepare you for local consensus meetings on the League’s Los Angeles County government study this fall.

Georganne Thomsen
LWVLAC County Government Study Committee

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE continued from page 1

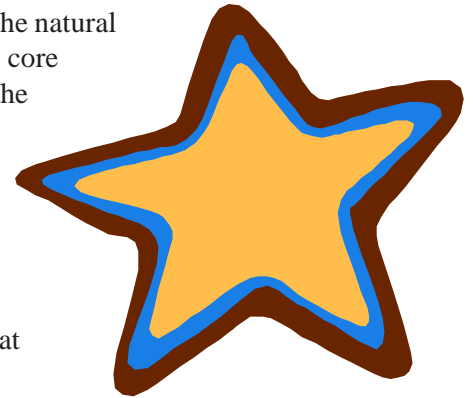
it—salvation or destruction? And is there an alternative to it? Marla Martinez, Chair of the Burbank Landlord Tenant Commission will address these issues. Plan to attend and hear some highly provocative and thought provoking things.

Finally I take great pride in announcing that our League has been awarded a grant from the Glendale Community Foundation to begin creating an online Guide to Local Government for Glendale and the surrounding area. Our League, with the incredible assistance of the LWVC SmartVoter group, submitted a grant application last year. Now that we have received partial funding we can start the work. The online Guide to

Local Government is the natural extension of League’s core mission, education of the voter about govern-

ment. In the precomputer days, we produced a brochure listing all the levels of government and their contact numbers so that citizens could have a handy reference when they

needed to negotiate the bureaucratic maze. The problem was that it became outdated before it was published and it was extremely expensive to produce, both in terms of time and money. Now, by going on the Internet, we can create a cyber Guide to Local Government that can be constantly updated, is accessible to anyone with an Internet connection, whether at home, school, in the library or at work. Ask whatever question you choose—What agency does what? Who do I talk to? Where do I go to get what I need? You will find it online at the Guide to Local Government site. New residents, business people, students, senior citizens, remodelers, school parents—the League will provide a free reference site to assist them in dealing with their government and representatives. This is an exciting new venture for us and we should be proud that our League is pioneering the project.



I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting and talking about the project.

Voting System Updates

The following information was discussed at the meeting of the L.A. County Registrar/Recorder/County Clerk's Community Voter Outreach Committee on April 9, 2003. by Arline Ames

TWO NEW VOTING SYSTEMS will be implemented in the next two years in compliance with federally mandated elimination of punch card voting and the requirement to have a new permanent system in place by the year 2006. The County will transition to a new system called Inkavote during 2003-2004 and have countywide Touchscreen voting machines in place in time for the November 2005 election. Touchscreen voting will be used in various local elections during the next two years. Inkavote will be quite similar to the present punch card system. The voter will place a card into the voting device and then use an attached pen to ink in the holes in the device that correspond to the candidate or question on the opposite pages. These ballots will be read electronically by an optical scanner.

Absentee ballot problems

Problems connected with Absentee (Vote by Mail) ballots that correspond to Inkavote ballots are still being worked on. Instructions accompanying the ballots will need to be clear and voters will have to use their own pens to fill in the holes. The County will conduct a mock election in May by sending absentee ballot packets to members of this committee and others, asking for feedback regarding comprehension of instructions and the voting process.

Touchscreen voting machines update

The cost of installing Touchscreen voting machines throughout L.A. County is estimated to be 100 million dollars. Current machines weigh 55 pounds and are difficult for poll workers to handle. The County is hoping that within the next few years the equipment will be improved. Touchscreen voting was used successfully in several local elections recently. In the City

of Irwindale two candidates were one vote apart and a recount was held. Touchscreen ballots were printed out and a manual recount was conducted. The results were exactly the same.

Uniform and fair registration/voting procedures guarantee

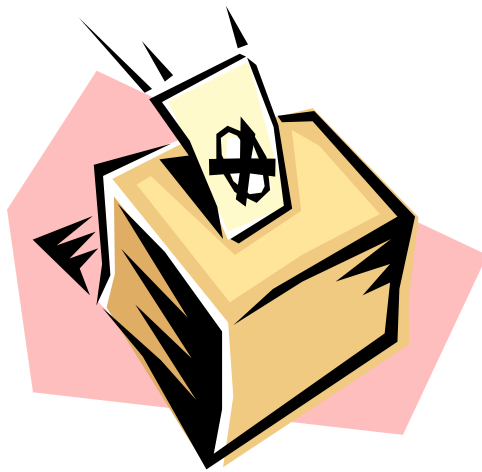
The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) will provide funds to guarantee that registration and voting procedures are uniform and fair throughout the

United States. By the end of June revised registration forms will replace all forms that are now in circulation. A check-off box asking, "Are you a United States Citizen?" will be placed in a more prominent place and questions such as "Will you be 18 by the next election?" will be added. Voters who are registering for the first time will be asked to provide identification, such as their driver's license number

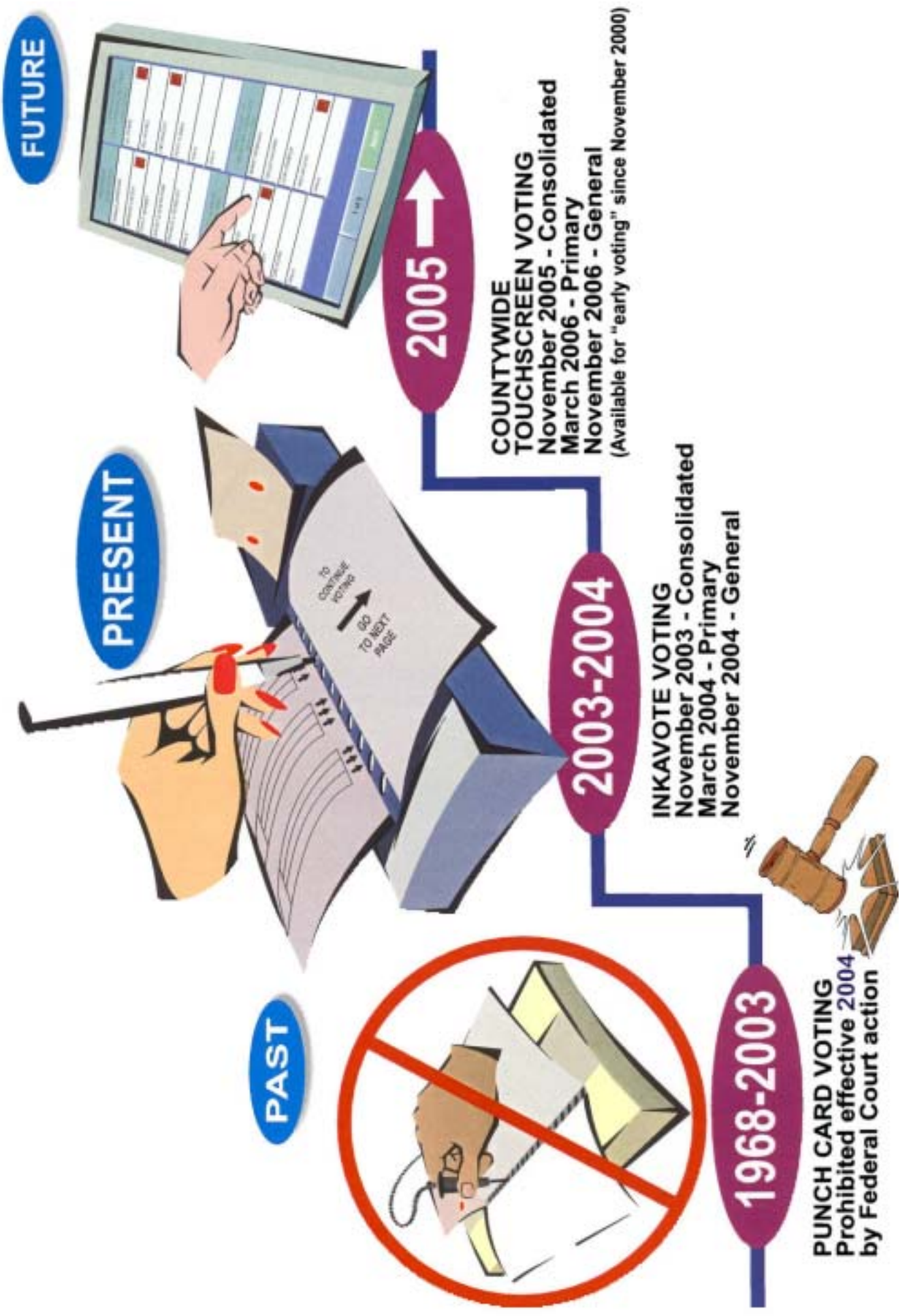
or the last four digits of their Social Security number. Other forms of identification are still being discussed and registration by mail presents various problems. The California Secretary of State will have the responsibility for standardizing and coordinating voter registration and maintaining a data bank of registered voters. It may be 2006 before all of the details are worked out.

Closure of public schools on election days

There are several bills before the State Legislature affecting voting. AB 1472, sponsored by Jackie Goldberg, would require that all public schools be closed on election days so that the facilities, including computer systems, would be available as polling places.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY VOTING SYSTEMS



Legislative Interview

On February 27, 2003, Arline Ames and Joylene Wagner interviewed California State Senator Jack Scott as part of the state League of Women Voters legislative interview program. by Arline Ames

THE STATE'S BUDGET SHORTFALL for the period January 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004 is now estimated at \$30 billion. Senator Scott does not feel that solely making cuts in programs can solve this problem. It will also be necessary to raise taxes. Some tax increases will probably be limited to a few years and will be automatically "sunsetting" unless renewed. For example, the vehicle tax, which had been lowered by two-thirds when the economy was doing well, could be returned to the former level. The time limit would probably be two years.

Another increase being discussed is adding a tax surcharge on incomes above a certain level. The highest rate at present is 9.3 percent. An increase to 10 percent for adjusted gross incomes above \$130,000 for single payers, \$260,000 for married payers, would provide needed income for the state. The highest incomes could be taxed at 11 percent.

Legislation to pass the budget requires a two-thirds vote so one-third of the legislature can hold up the budget. The same percentage is required to raise taxes. Scott would like to see this changed to 50% plus one and even 55% plus one would be better than the present requirement. This would need to be voted upon and there would probably need to be an initiative in order to get it on the ballot as he doesn't think the legislature would vote for it.

Senator Scott would not like to see cuts in education, but feels there are ways money could be saved. He would favor giving the schools more flexibility in the way they allocate categorical funds. If block grants need to be cut by 10%, schools should be able to determine what are the

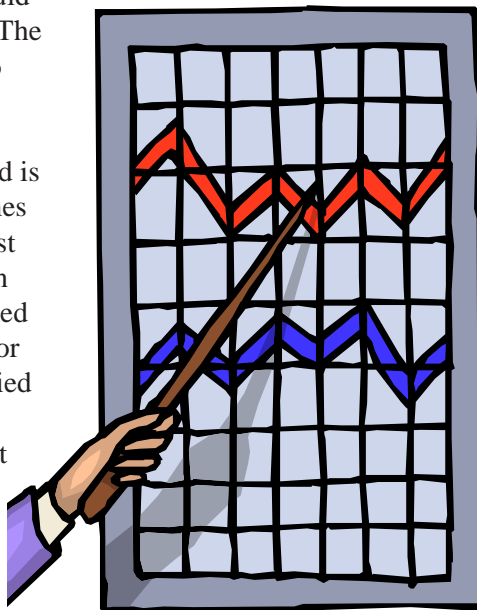
most valuable programs. Right now class size is rigidly controlled in grades K-4 at 20 students to one teacher. If one additional student comes in, another class has to be created, which increases costs. He feels some classes should be allowed to increase to 22, as long as the average class size in a school is 20, leaving this decision up to the school. This could save Glendale one million

dollars. Some programs are mandated, such as Special Education, and even though funds are provided for these programs, it is usually not enough to cover the costs and the additional funding comes out of the general fund. Prop. 49 which was passed in November for after-school programs will cost \$550 million every year and, even though Scott favors after-school programs, this is an additional cost to be considered.

If taxes are not raised, there is a proposal that cuts of 7% be made in every program over and above cuts re-

cently made by the Governor. Scott is not in favor of this solution, as it would impact many vital programs.

When asked about the recent proposal by State Senator Pete Knight to require the Pledge of Allegiance every day in each school classroom, Senator Scott said that he had voted against it. He feels that decisions such as this should be made by each school rather than having it mandated by the state.



LWV News

Civil Liberties

“THE LWVUS BOARD HAS ADDED the issue of civil liberties to the third level of the advocacy priority list alongside CEDAW, DC Voting Rights and Financial Issues, Health Care and Global Warming.

As you may recall, ‘the third group of issues are those where a building effort is expected. They represent particular legislative initiatives, but the political groundwork needs to be built for longer-term success.’”

This was in response to the expressed concerns of many Leagues throughout the country regarding the Patriot I and II Acts.

Health Care

Health care reform is the Issue for Emphasis for LWVLAC. Here is the latest news about the progress of legislation and advocacy.

The LWVC is again a cosponsor of WIALD, which this year features a topic of great interest to many League members, “Access to Health Care: Do We Have It When We Need It?” This event will take place on Thursday, May 15, at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento. If you are interested go to www.wiald.org or more information.

Keeping Informed on Health Care Issues:

A quick way to keep abreast of health care news is to subscribe to California Healthline (it’s free) at www.californiahealthline.org.

All HCOP options and findings are available to read and download at www.healthcareoptions.ca.gov.

School Bond Measure

The Board has agreed to reaffirm its previous intent to support the school bond measure already set to be placed on the March 2004 primary ballot. This is a \$12.3 billion bond measure that is the second part of the legislation that put last November’s Proposition 47 on the ballot. It includes \$10 billion for K-12 school facilities, with approximately half for new construction and a quarter each for modernization and critically overcrowded schools. The remaining \$2.3 billion would be allocated to the community college system.

Racial Privacy Initiative

The Board also reaffirmed its decision to oppose Ward Connerly’s initiative, which has now qualified for the March 2004 ballot. The measure bans “classifying” based on race, color, ethnicity or national origin in public education, contracting, or employment, or in other government operations, with some limited exceptions. It would stop the state from collecting or compiling statistics in vital areas such as public health and education. This would make it difficult to target programs and funding to the populations most in need of them, and would mean that statistics would not be readily available to track positive or negative trends in society. Our opposition is based on the LWVUS Equality of Opportunity position, which has been interpreted to support a broad range of affirmative action and outreach measures that would be hard to implement or monitor without statistical support.

Pre-Convention News

The slate of nominated officers for LWVC:

OFFICERS

- Jackie Jacobberger, LWV North San Mateo County, President
- Barbara Hopkins, LWV Sacramento, Executive Vice President
- Pat Richardson, LWV San Diego, Secretary
- Wendy Phillips, LWV Beach Cities, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

- Lynda Hungerford, LWV Sonoma County, Communications
- Jean Matsuura, LWV Central San Mateo County, Development
- Roberta (Robbie) Davis, LWV Pasadena Area, Educational Activities
- Donna Chipps, LWV Sacramento, Government
- Marion Taylor, LWV Santa Cruz County, Legislation
- Beverly King, LWV Santa Barbara, Member Services
- John (Jack) Sullivan, LWV Claremont, Natural Resources

COUNTY NEWS continued on page 9

Our Advertisers

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- Kathy Webb, LWV Fresno, Social Policy
- Sue Kelley, LWV Ventura County, Voters Service

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Diane Park, LWV San Joaquin County
- Veronica (Roni) Seay, LWV Solano Beach
- Caroline deLlamas, LWV East San Gabriel Valley

Program/Advocacy

The LWVC board reviewed the results of program planning by local Leagues and voted to recommend only two Issues for Emphasis for adoption by the Convention 2003 delegates:

- Health Care (education and advocacy)
- State and Local Finances (education and advocacy).

Only two issues will be recommended because of the need to focus the League’s activity to fit available financial and staff resources.

The Convention will vote to accept/reject these recommendations. Also the delegates could add to them.

Studies and Consensus

The Convention will consider and vote on the Community College Study consensus and a possible restudy of our State Education Position. In addition there is much discussion about the Election Study position which was agreed upon two years ago. As it is currently written, ...“Support election systems for executive offices, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes...” it is debatable whether leagues can advocate for Instant Run Off Voting at the local level unless they have done a study for their city/cities or at State level at all. Several Leagues are asking for concurrence with other State League Election Systems positions which would allow the California State League to specifically support Instant Run Off Voting where appropriate.

If you have questions/opinions about these Convention issues please contact me before I leave on May 16.

Chris Carson President

Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All citizens of voting age are welcome.

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)

- \$50.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$70.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

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. Dues are not deductible for tax purposes.

Gifts made payable to “LWV Education Fund” are tax deductible.



Stalwart League members, Gwen Cochran, Georganne Thomsen and Arline Ames oversee the LWVLAC Annual Convention.

Nominating Committee Report

PRESIDENT: Chris Carson
 SECRETARY: Mary Dickson
 DIRECTORS: Di Rodriguez
 Barbara Paul
 Connie Wilson

REMAINING IN OFFICE

VICE PRESIDENT: Anna Rundle
 TREASURER: Vera Naylor
 DIRECTORS: Arline Ames
 Joylene Wagner

SUBMITTED BY THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:
 Rita Zwern, Pam Ellis, Gwen Cochran,
 Anna Rundle, Vera Naylor

The Voter

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 Editor: Chris Carson
 Production: Carole Dougherty
 Circulation: Anna Rundle

The **League of Women Voters** is a nonpartisan organization open to citizens—women and men—of voting age. The purpose of the League is to promote political responsibility through informed participation of citizens in government, and to act on selected issues.



LWV League of Women Voters
 Glendale - Burbank
VOTER

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

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