



League of Women Voters

North Coast San Diego County

VOTER

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Volume XXXVII No. 4 April 2009

LWV Telephone 760-736-1608

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April 2009

- Thursday, April 9 9:15 AM Board Meeting at the home of Liz Kruidenier
- Thursday, April 9 Noon Sustainability Group Group at Coco's, at I-5 and Encinitas Blvd., Encinitas
- Wed., April 15 1:00 PM San Dieguito Area Unit Meeting San Diego National Bank Community Room, Encinitas
- Thursday, April 16 10 AM Carlsbad Unit and Oceanside Unit Meeting La Posada, Carlsbad see pg. 5
- Friday, April 17 10 AM Women's Issues Group At the home of Alice Rodin Segal
- Monday, April 20 1:15 PM Book Group At the home of Edie Appel
- Wed., April 22 Earth Day**
Watch for media notices of events in North County and San Diego



Save the Date

- Saturday, June 6 9:15 to Noon **Annual Meeting 2009** and Continental Breakfast at the Lomas Santa Fe Country Club Solana Beach

LWVUS National Popular Vote Consensus Meetings

by Peggy Dornish

At our Unit meetings this month, members will hear a brief presentation on the NPV Compact from Study Committee members prior to discussion. Please consult the chart herein which gives the Pros and Cons comparatively and point by point. This information is all members need to make informed judgments and address the Consensus questions. Members may also wish to reread the previously cited essays on the LWVUS website.*

There are 7 Consensus questions to address, but basically they are variations on a single question: do we want to support the NPV Compact or not. The League has long advocated the direct election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College. Rather than seeking a Constitutional Amendment, however, the Compact proposes other, state-sanctioned means to achieve this goal. We are being asked whether or not we think we should add a position on the NPV Compact to our existing position, i. e., both/and, not either/or.

Committee members have labored long on the issues involved, and we hope many members will want to discuss them with us.

*Prepare yourself for the April Unit Meetings by going to:

www.lwv.org

click on **FOR MEMBERS** found on blue bar choose **Projects and Programs**

click **National Popular Vote Compact Study**

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*San Dieguito Area includes Del Mar, Encinitas, Rancho Santa Fe, and Solana Beach.

League of Women Voters Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the LWV on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

The League recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. LWV subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organizations's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

The League affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of America in its board, staff and programs.

Presidents' Message by Peggy Dornish

We wish to congratulate the members of our Sustainability Interest Group for their leadership in educating us and the wider public about the probable impacts of climate change in San Diego County. Roni and I have recently written area mayors and city council members to request they study the Focus 2050 report, the subject of our most recent General Meeting, and begin to take steps to mitigate, or even eliminate, these impacts. In our letter we urge our elected officials to initiate regional cooperation as the most effective way to organize and proceed in addressing these critical issues. Already on March 18, the Solana Beach City Council heard Dr. Emily Young's presentation of the Focus 2050 report, and we hope other North Coast cities will similarly avail themselves of this vital information at council meetings open to the public.

Earth Hour and Earth Day

No doubt many of us participated in Earth Hour on the evening of March 28, thanks to a timely alert by member Diane Mochizuki. Now let's join with people around the world to celebrate Earth Day on April 22. Earth Day was originally the brainchild of Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson who in 1970 initiated a grassroots movement aimed at raising environmental awareness by calling for "teach-ins" at college campuses across the country. (As Leaguers, we should take heart: grassroots movements do succeed). On this first Earth Day, 20 million Americans participated. Some 30 years later, Earth Day 2000 sent the message loud and clear that people everywhere want,

and expect, environmental protection. Founded by the organizers of that first Earth Day, Earth Day Network (www.earthday.net) now connects activists in over 17,000 organizations in 174 countries; indeed, Earth Day is the only event celebrated simultaneously around the world by people of all nationalities and religious persuasions. We urge our members to participate in Earth Day 2009.

The National Popular Vote Compact Proposal

The National Popular Vote Compact proposal offers a method of achieving the result of election of the President by popular vote without amending the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College. Instead, this method uses the mechanism of the Electoral College to ensure that the candidate who receives the most popular votes is elected President of the United States.

Under the proposed legislation to enact the National Popular Vote Compact, all of a state's electoral votes would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The bill would take effect only when enacted in identical form by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes—that is, enough electoral votes to elect a President (270 of 538).

The NPV Compact proposal is predicated upon the portion of the United States Constitution which states:

"Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors..." (Article II, Section 1, Clause 2) (emphasis added)

2008 - 2009 LWVUS Study - National Popular Vote

	Supporters Say:	Opponents Say:	Note
<p>1. Constitutional Issues:</p> <p>Constitutional Power</p>	<p>Over 70% of population favors direct election for president. A constitutional amendment to eliminate Electoral College (EC) would accomplish goal of electing president by popular vote, but it is not the only way. The amendment process is a long and difficult one which is why other issues, such as women suffrage was more successfully achieved through a state by state process. NPVC would be a more rapid, direct path to direct vote and would be in the interest of the electorate.</p>	<p>Although U.S. Constitution gives state legislature power to determine how state's electors are chosen, there could be legal challenges to a compact between several states on selection of electors.</p> <p>Abbreviations: EC - Electoral College NPV - National Popular Vote NPVC - National Popular Vote Compact</p>	<p>League already has position to eliminate EC and support a national direct vote. (1970) Question of study is whether to adopt NPVC as an additional means to accomplish this national popular vote.</p>
<p>Political Compacts</p>	<p>Interstate Compacts are legitimate - involving myriad of topics. They have long been a part of U.S. history & are sanctioned by Constitution. Over the years, courts have upheld such compacts & ruled that they bind parties to terms of agreement. Compacting states do not gain anything over non-compacting state because all voters in all states are being treated equally as the winner will be the candidate who wins the most national votes.</p>	<p>Opponents say political compact - one that tends to enlarge political power of compacting states at expense of either federal gov't or non-conforming states - may function differently from other types of interstate compacts (boundaries/ economics).</p>	<p>The Compact will be dissolved if there is a constitutional amendment establishing a national popular vote for president.</p>
<p>Non-Compacting States</p>	<p>Voters in non-compacting state will have their vote counted equally along with voters everywhere else in the country. All votes will be equal (compacting or non-compacting state) because the winner will be the winner of the national popular vote.</p>	<p>Opponents say that electors from state not part of the Compact would have little influence on selection of the president. Interests of states which have not signed the Compact could be greatly diminished.</p>	
<p>Constitutional Protections</p>	<p>Under Constitution, states already have right & power to implement the change. Supreme Court cases have established the wording gives exclusive & complete power of appointment of electors to states - up to each state to decide how power is exercised, as they deem fit (considering no other provisions are violated). Composition of states in the compact (geographically) has no bearing on result as all votes are equal wherever they are cast.</p>	<p>U.S. Constitution protects all states in electoral process. NPV Compact could shift political power between states that are/are not party to Compact. Whether there is good broad geographic base for Compact not clear until we know which states enter the compact.</p>	
<p>2. Evaluating Fairness:</p> <p>Fairness for states and voters</p>	<p>Voters assume candidate with most votes wins the Presidential election.</p> <p>Voters care more who is elected President nationally than who wins their state.</p> <p>Under EC Presidential campaigns focus on relatively few key competitive states, therefore voters in "safe states" reduced to spectator/funding source status.</p>	<p>Voters want Electors to support candidate who wins their state.</p> <p>States would have to relinquish their historic (independent) role in electing President.</p> <p>Candidates would tend to campaign in areas of densest population (urban vs rural)</p>	<p>Only 20% support current system vs 70% opposed.</p> <p>In 2008, 98% of campaign spending and visits were made in only 15 states.</p>

	Supporters Say:	Opponents Say:	Note
Evaluating Fairness (continued) Fairness to small states	Political power of small states would be increased (not decreased) under NPV. Currently few of the 22 least populous states are battlegrounds. With NPV each vote is important regardless of state or state size. Closeness of race within state is less relevant.	Since there would be more "votes" in the more populous state, candidates would give more attention to the larger states. Electoral College protects small states.	Arguments exist whether the EC does or does NOT protect small states.
3. Mechanical Issues: Enforcement	A state may withdraw only during non-blackout periods. Contract law binds parties.	Not clear how to enforce NPVC provisions. Might be unenforceable. Not clear remedy if a Compact state pulls out during 6-month blackout.	
Close Elections	Close elections may result in "Wrong winner." NPVC would eliminate this.	Current EC requirement for 270 votes to win makes vote legitimate.	
Recounts	NPVC drafters believe less need for recounts. States are still responsible for recounts, not a NPVC responsibility.	NPVC has no method to carry out recounts in close elections, especially in non-compacting states.	
Election Fraud/ Voter Suppression	Adoption of NPV Compact may diminish problem. Currently, with only few battleground states in play, temptation is increased by skewed weight of votes in battleground states. Under direct vote (NPV) nationwide, one fraudulent vote has far less effect on outcome and massive fraud is more difficult.	Fraud investigations at national level would be more difficult when an election is to be decided by national popular vote totals (NPV or otherwise).	
4. League Issues Uniform Standards	NPV Compact aims to have all states become members of compact, thus sharing goal of uniform & universal method of presidential election. The fact that Compact will become effective when states representing 270 electoral votes have joined does not change ultimate goal. Most importantly, NPV creates uniform standards because EVERY national vote would be counted equally. While U.S. is a democratic republic not a direct democracy, LWVUS supports direct election of the president. One person - one vote - for one seat. League rejects arguments for federalism over those for individual voters' rights in this matter. We have held positions for over 30 years, nothing before has been as practical and possible as the NPV.	The LWVUS supports uniform standards for all elections. While current EC system is also not uniform (Maine & Nebraska), neither is NPV Compact. Nationwide change by constitutional amendment is better than any measure adopted on a state by state basis. While the LWVUS supports abolishing the EC, the method used to replace it must be considered carefully.	

Bulletin Board



Carlsbad & Oceanside/Vista Units

The Carlsbad Unit Meeting, combined with Oceanside/Vista, is on Thursday, April 16th, from 10:00 AM to Noon at La Posada de Guadalupe, 2478 Impala Dr., Carlsbad. Snacks and coffee are provided.

We want your opinions and thoughts about two current subjects at this combined meeting.

First, our own study committee will summarize the National LWV Study on the “National Popular Vote Compact” issue and ask for a consensus. Please see information on previous pages.

Second, we will conclude with “current local issues” that are important to us for study, action or emphasis next year. Please come to express your opinions and help determine new programs for study or emphasis. Any Questions? Call Tina Schmidt or Mary Crowley, who are always open to any suggestions or comments.

Directions: From El Camino Real, turn east on Faraday. Take the first left, Palmer, and go one block to Impala. Turn right one block on left. See LWV sign.)

San Dieguito Unit

The San Dieguito Unit meeting will be held on April 15 at 1 PM in the Community Room of the San Diego National Bank, Encinitas, (Ralph’s/ Long’s Drug shopping center north-east of the intersection of El Camino Real and Encinitas Blvd.).

The National Popular Vote Compact Study Committee will lead a discussion on the NPV and we will try to reach consensus on the subject. Please prepare for the meeting by reading the information on the study

in this VOTER and if you go online you will really be up to speed.

Members then will participate in Local Program Planning and will decide on our Unit’s focus for the coming year.

Also, we need donations for the raffle for our Annual Meeting June 6. Leita McCormick, Raffle Coordinator, will have more details to follow. Just wanted to give you a heads-up so you can be thinking of some contacts for prizes.

See you on the 15th. Don’t forget to pay your TAXES first!

Nancy Dietrich and Pat Yeakley
Co-chairs, San Dieguito Unit

League Issues Group Meetings Open to All

Sustainability/Water Discussion Group

The Sustainability Discussion group will meet at noon at Coco’s, on Encinitas Blvd. and I-5. We continue to monitor and report on sustainability efforts and services that are available to people living in our League service area. Call Anne Omsted if you have any questions.

Women’s Issues

The Women’s Issues group will meet Friday, April 17, at 10:00 AM. The meeting will be held at Leita McCormick’s home. The women’s Issues Group is developing a role we can play in supporting local efforts of community clinics through advocacy Call 760-448-5128 for directions.

Media Monitors

Contact Roger Fox at 760-720-3793 or rbfox3905 @roadrunner.com for information on upcoming meetings. Media Monitors discuss activities in all areas of public communications.

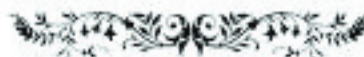
Book Group

Our lively and friendly Book Group discusses Barack Obama’s *Dreams from My Father* on April 20 at 1:15. Our hostess is Edie Appel and our leader is Vicki Beck. Don’t miss out. Questions? Carpool? Call Carolyn Taylor at 760-931-1807.



Welcome New Members

- Nancy Danninger – Del Mar
- Mary Jo Guy – Encinitas
- Louise Garrett – Del Mar
- Ann Hallock - Carlsbad
- Gloria Marsh – Encinitas
- Jack Paxton – San Marcos
- Linda Pupols – Oceanside
- Zelda Waxenberg – Del Mar



Voter Service



Ready, Set, Vote! (Again)

Yes, Californians are facing another statewide election. This special election was called in late Feb. by the Governor and the CA Legislature for Tues., May 19, following three months of state budget negotiations. Unlike the lengthy buildup to last fall's presidential election, this leaves a very short time for voters to inform themselves about the important budget issues on this ballot. Therefore, it is vital that the California League (LWVC) and local leagues like North Coast offer election information to voters as it becomes available. This tight time frame will be an opportunity for us to guide voters to some excellent online resources: Smart Voter, League's popular election website, a California League election page and Action Guide, The Secretary of State's site, and our North Coast League website. It is planned that these sites will be updated as needed. By next month's VOTER, much more will be known about what information is available, where to find it, and what action LWVC might take on any of the measures. They are complex, important and will need close study. Be prepared to stay connected to the League.

Prop. IA: Limits future state spending, based on previous revenue growth. Requires a larger reserve fund. Extends tax increases for two more years.

Prop. IB: Allocates money to schools to compensate for past budget cuts, modifying Prop. 98.

Prop. IC: Allows state to borrow up to \$5 billion from future lottery proceeds. Allows larger jackpots to encourage ticket sales. Grants state permission to stop using lottery proceeds for education programs. Instead, school funding would be paid through general fund.

Prop. ID: Allows tobacco-tax money directed to some children's health care and social services programs to be used for other children's programs.

Prop. IE: Allows money targeted for community mental health programs to be redirected to pay for a low-income child development program.

Prop. IF: Prohibits state elected officials from receiving pay raises when the state is running a deficit.



Election Calendar

Thursday, April 9
Secretary of State starts mailing Voter Pamphlets

Monday, April 20
First day to apply for vote by mail ballot

Tuesday, April 29
Last day for counties to mail sample ballots

Monday, May 4
Last day to register to vote

Tuesday, May 12
Last day to apply for vote by mail ballot

Tuesday, May 19
Election Day, 7 AM to 8 PM



Fundraising Raffle at Annual Meeting

We need donations for prizes to be raffled at our Annual Meeting, Saturday, June 6.

Please contact Leita McCormick, at 760-448-5128 or klmpc@aol.com with items you would like to donate for baskets or prizes such as theater tickets, gift certificates for your favorite restaurant, resort get-a-ways, and beauty salons, bottles of wine or cash.

A letter with details and raffle tickets will be mailed out later this month.

League Action Page

LWV of California Opposes Propositions 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E on the May 19 Special Election Ballot

“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.”

Proposition 1A is touted by its proponents as the way to bring stability to the budget process. But what it will really do is tie the hands of the Legislature and Governor as they face changing needs for state and local government services. It will keep them from taking into account the state’s changing demographics and growth in the actual cost of important services like health care.

“Although some claim there is an urgency to pass Prop. 1A to resolve our state’s budget problems, we disagree,” said Hirohama. “Most of its provisions will not take effect for two years—two years that we should spend hammering out real solutions to our budget and fiscal challenges.”

The League believes elected officials should be allowed to carry out their responsibilities with flexibility. Years of “ballot-box budgeting” and formulas for auto-pilot spending have greatly eroded that flexibility. Prop. 1A, however, adds to the problem. For example, it dictates how half the funds that must be transferred to the “Budget Stabilization Fund” are to be used; it removes the Governor’s ability to suspend transfers to the fund in difficult years; and it imposes new formulas for calculating “unanticipated revenues” and specifies how they can be used in good years. And, after the deep cuts made during these strapped times, it could lock in a reduced level of services by failing to properly take account of increased caseloads and program costs.

If Prop. 1A passes, the Governor would be given new power to make mid-year cuts and suspend COLAs in state programs without legislative oversight. The League believes that mid-year budget adjustments should require joint action of the legislative and executive branches so that checks and balances are maintained.

Proposition 1C. This proposal attempts to raise money for the short term by selling bonds that would be paid off by future lottery revenue. In light of California’s poor credit rating and the state of the economy, those bonds would have to be sold at very unfavorable interest rates, if they can be sold at all. The Legislative Analyst says that in the long term, lottery profits probably would not be enough to cover the higher payments to education required by Prop. 1C. We criticized this proposal as irresponsible last fall, and if anything, that criticism applies more than ever now.

Propositions 1D and 1E. On May 19, voters will also be asked to approve the temporary taking of funds from early childhood and mental health programs that were established by two previous initiatives. These are illusory, stopgap measures, and the League opposes these propositions as part of this objectionable package. It is ironic that these initiatives, which did what many consider “the right thing” by providing a source of funding, now face reductions.

The League is neutral on Proposition 1B. State responsibility for the funding of public education is essential, and we appreciate the need to pay back the devastating cuts that our schools and community colleges have sustained. On the other hand, the Legislature will have the ability to restore school funding without Prop. 1B, and it is not needed in this package of propositions.

Since the League has no position on setting salaries for public officials, we take **no position on Proposition 1F**, which would prevent pay raises for legislators and statewide constitutional officers during budget deficit years.

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 North Coast San Diego County**
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**LWV of California
 Opposes Propositions
 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E**

(continued from page 7)

The League of Women Voters recognizes that California is facing the worst budget crisis in its history, with the worldwide recession severely affecting state revenues and the need for state services. Moreover, our budget system is broken and in desperate need of reform. This year illustrates the need to abandon the two-thirds vote requirement for passing budgets and raising revenues, and we must also look at other budget reforms. In the meantime, a new tax commission is considering ways to broaden or stabilize our revenues. "There is much that needs to be done," Hirohama stated, "but we are certain that the propositions on the May 19 ballot are not the answer."

Join the League of Women Voters

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Membership is open to all U.S. citizens of voting age . Others welcome as Associate members.

Dues: () \$55 / year (Oct.1 to Sept. 30) with dues prorated at \$4.50 / month for those joining mid-year.

() \$25/ year for 2nd member, same address.

Total Dues \$ _____

Contribution \$ _____

For dues assistance or questions please call Membership Chair, Edie Appel, 760-736-1608

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to LWVNCSDC and mail to:

LWVNCSDC, PO Box 131272, Carlsbad CA 92013