

The *Voter*

May 2013

How Can We Build a More Sustainable Society?

The Fun Things

- * Plant trees! Trees sequester carbon, provide shelter and food. If you cannot plant trees, support organizations that do: Treepeople, National Arbor Day Foundation, American Forests, and more.
- * Eat locally and organically. Support local farmers' markets and organic garden efforts, eat fresh, stay healthy, and lower your carbon footprint.
- * Recycle -- and Buy Recycled products. Most grocery and office supply stores now carry recycled paper products. If you cannot find them, ask.
- * Join Sustainable Claremont. You'll meet some wonderful people, share ideas and actions, and feel good that you are on the road to sustainability.

The Easy Things

- * Reduce car use, drive less. FACT: Most cars emit their own weight in CO₂ each year.
- * Reduce electricity use. FACT: Lighting accounts for 1/5 of all electricity consumed in the U.S.
- * Eat lower on the food chain, eat less beef. FACT: It takes 1,232 gallons of water to produce one 8 oz. steak in California.

- * Reduce water consumption. FACT: Low-flow toilets save about 7,300 gals. of fresh water per person per year.
- * Support family planning, and ask politicians to support family planning. FACT: At the current growth rate, it will take only 4 to 5 years for the world to add another U.S. (300 million people).

The More Difficult Things

- * Quit the fossil fuel habit in every way you can think of. Learn what is made from fossil fuels and avoid those products.
- * Love other people's children. If you love children, instead of having more, adopt or work with children.
- * Define what is "enough" and live it. Live locally.
- * Introduce children to nature – spend time outdoors.
- * Reject growth. Think "Better – not Bigger".
- * Support stewardship and restoration of the land.
- * Recognize the cause and effect between what we do & the death of other people and species.
- * Be willing to change.

Marilyn Hempel

LWV at Earth Day, April 20, 2013

Thank you to all who stopped at our League booth on Earth Day. And a special thanks to all who helped set it up, staff it, and take it down: Dave Nemer, Jerry Klasik, Bob Gerecke, Amy Ochoa, Betsey Coffman, Katie Gerecke, Sally Seven, and Tressa Kentner. I enjoyed the companionship, conversation, and service. *Barbara Rugeley*



Co-President's Message

As most of you know, the Claremont Area League is a local LWV – we focus mainly on activities which promote good government practice and policy for our local communities. But we are also the “grassroots” for other levels of the League - the LWV of Los Angeles County, the LWV of California, and the LWV of the United States. We participate in decision-making, financial support, education and advocacy activities, and we sometimes provide person-power for these other LWV levels. One way that we provide this support is by sending delegates to annual or biennial conventions.

On March 30, local LWV members Jerry Klasik, Ruth Curry, Dave Nemer, and Tressa Kentner served as delegates to our annual County League Convention, held at the Rio Hondo Country Club in Downey. Also attending were Sally Seven, Betsey Coffman, and Jack Sullivan, who serve as Directors on the County League Board. Besides taking care of routine business, the Convention heard an Update on Los Angeles County Issues by Supervisor Don Knabe. The good news is that L. A. County is holding its own financially -- it has regularly put money aside, now has slight growth in property and other taxes, will not have to lay off any of its 100,000 employees, and has received a raise in its rating by Standard and Poor's. Problems discussed by the Supervisor include lack of affordable housing, realignment of prisoners from state prisons to county jails, adjusting to the Affordable Care Act, maternity hotels, and pollution from storm water runoff. (See article elsewhere in this Voter on clean water fee.)

And, on the state level, the LWV of California will be holding its biennial convention in San Jose in mid-May. Claremont League will send 4 delegates -- Jerry Klasik, Ruth Curry, Sally Seven and Ellen Taylor -- and Betsey Coffman will attend as an observer. We will give you a report on state League activities in our next Voter.

Springtime is election season for the Student Governments at two of our area Community Colleges, and Claremont LWV has traditionally provided assistance to these organizations. A group of us (Ruth Currie, Dave Nemer, Katie Gerecke, Sally Seven, Beth Smith and Betsey Coffman) counted the votes at Chaffey College on April 6th. Another Claremont League contingent monitored the voting booth at the Mt. San Antonio College student elections on April 24th. Mt. SAC is now using internet voting, but Chaffey is sticking with paper and pencil ballots (which, they say, is characteristic of their thrifty ways). It is fun to help out with these student activities – plus we get a great overview of current young adult fashions.

Claremont League Co-Presidents Sally and Betsey had another opportunity to visit a local campus when we spoke recently at the University of La Verne foreign students' group. We were asked to talk about the LWV, its history and its current programs. The students seemed genuinely interested in hearing about the long, hard struggle for women in the United States to win the right to vote, and about our present day efforts to promote informed voting and public policies that lead to the common good.

The local League Observers were treated to lunch in April at the home of their current leader, Barbara Rugeley. After partaking of a delicious and healthy meal, we had a great discussion about various aspects of observing government agencies --- e. g., maintaining our objectivity and whether to send our reports to the agencies we observe. Differing opinions were shared, we listened to one another, and it was refreshing to participate in such a straightforward exchange. Kudos to Barbara, who has expanded our “Observer Corps” and instilled a sense of mission in the group. The Observers will be presenting their annual reports at League unit meetings on May 23th – 9:30 AM at Mt. San Antonio Gardens, Bldg. D, 3rd floor, and 7:00 PM at the home of Barbara Rugeley, 1436 Mural Drive, Claremont. (Please note these changes in date and place.)

For many years our local League has held a dinner-auction in late Spring to raise money to cover our various expenses. Unfortunately our membership dues do not cover our expenses – by the time we share our member payments with the other levels of League we have very little left to pay our local League bills. Over the years, the idea of fundraising meals and auctions has spread to many other organizations in our area, and we have not realized the results we achieved in the past. In addition, as our members grow older, it grows harder and harder to face the commitment of time and energy that putting on the event requires. This year Claremont Area League formed a fund-raising committee with hopes of coming up with new and productive ideas. We decided to try mailing a fundraising appeal to Claremont residents, and this is now being done. We also further plan to hold smaller “food for thought” events, such as the dessert and Ed Haley lecture we sponsored at Padua Hills in February. We are hopeful that we will be able to establish an annual giving list through our mailing effort, and that we can continue with smaller events, and that together these efforts will supply our funding needs.

BC

Daily Bulletin Endorses LWV Position on Purchasing Claremont's Water System

The *Daily Bulletin* Opinion Editorial Board invited representatives of our League to meet and discuss the proposed acquisition of Claremont's water system. (They had already met with Golden State Water representatives.) The interview lasted 90 minutes. Shortly after, on April 11, the *Bulletin* published a 700-word editorial titled *Claremont ought to buy out water firm*.

As we all know, Golden State Water Company has commissioned and published several studies in an attempt to convince the public that it would be foolhardy to go ahead with acquisition. Most recently, on April 16, Vice President Denise Kruger sent a letter to Claremont residents quoting their studies published in the *Courier* and *Daily Bulletin*. The label side of the mailer claims "Your annual cost increase for the next 30 years" would be "\$469.73 additional If City Pays: \$54 million", and "\$2,361.41 additional" at \$204 million. There is no mention of very real cost savings, no recognition of the net difference, and no acknowledgment of the *Daily Bulletin* editorial.

In the Editorial Board interview the League compared the municipal water system in La Verne with the privately owned system in Claremont. The *Bulletin's* Editorial Board concluded "the logic put forth in the League of Women Voters analysis makes sense: Ignore all that back-and-forth, and simply compare the water rates in La Verne and Claremont".

Here are some of the facts that led to that conclusion:

Claremont and La Verne are similar in water quality, typical water use per customer, age of the water infrastructure, elevation and location, water sources (imported from the Delta and pumped from local wells), and population.

There are important differences:

- La Verne owns its water system; Golden State Water (GSW) owns the Claremont system
- La Verne sets its own rates; the PUC reviews Claremont rates proposed by GSW
- La Verne rates are local; Claremont's rates are regional
- La Verne charges only for water used; GSW bills include a "service charge" and "adjustments"
- La Verne must use about 2/3 expensive imported water, Claremont about 1/3-1/2

- La Verne does not pay for water used by the city, Claremont does
- The La Verne system is not taxed, GSW-owned facilities are
- La Verne has access to state and federal grants not available to GSW
- La Verne's water income stays in the city; GSW (part of American States Water) is guaranteed a hefty profit. Executive salaries are high and not subject to local control.
- La Verne water rates for the average customer were approximately \$52 less per month than the average rate in Claremont last year, according to usage and rate data from GSW and La Verne.

But can we afford to purchase the system? Will rates go up as Denise Kruger would like you to believe?

We *can* afford the purchase, and very likely without raising rates above what they are now to fund the purchase. Let's assume that after Claremont acquires the system local water users could be paying the same rates as they do in La Verne, but instead of lowering rates the city kept them the same as they are now and used the extra income to pay for the purchase of the system. The City's income from its 11,000 water customers would be about \$7 million per year (\$52 x 11,000 x 12), and there would be other savings as there are in La Verne. With this much money the City could purchase a 30-year water bond worth about \$150 million. There would be no need to raise taxes or for water users to pay more than they are now. But will the system cost more than \$150 million? That seems unlikely since the infrastructure was recently appraised at \$54 million. (In 2005, when the League water report was written, the infrastructure was appraised at \$50 million. With water rights included, the total cost then being negotiated was \$88 million.)

GSW has shown they would like to mislead us. Water is a resource we can not do without. It should be under public control.

FA, BC, SS



Affordable Housing, a Work More in Promise than in Progress

Every eight years, California's Department of Housing and Community Development produces growth estimates for each part of the state. Then each of our state's 58 counties must revisit its "housing element." Regional governmental agencies negotiate with their cities to allocate to them responsibility for a certain amount of needed affordable housing. None of these exercises is guaranteed to actually produce housing, but they represent token efforts to show that if someone appears who wants to build affordable units, zoning is already in place to make that possible.

Claremont is currently in the midst of its review. The Planning Commission is working to identify the most appropriate sites in the city on which to apply the city's High Density Residential Overlay (HDRO) designation. To accommodate the city's remaining Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation, one or more sites totaling at least 6.3 acres are needed. Planning Commission staff has prepared a spreadsheet relating Commission-developed criteria to each of a list of properties, an *Inventory of Vacant and Underutilized Sites in the City*. The criteria have been the source of some discussion, so Betsey Coffman reviewed the LWV position on affordable housing for the commission at their 16 April 2013 meeting, and Sally Seven urged the

commission to select sites dispersed throughout the city.

Once the High Density Residential Overlay is applied to a property, its density can be greater than would otherwise have been allowed by the underlying zoning of that property, if it is used for a project that includes housing that meets requirements for serving specified income levels. The designation does not indicate anything other than availability. The city is not required to provide the specified housing but only to show that there are sites within the city that are potentially available that could accommodate the housing needed. Once the sites that will receive the HDRO designation are identified, the revision listing them will become part of the city's updated "Housing Element", a statement of possible availability, not of intent. At the present time, no affordable housing proposals have been submitted to the city for any of the sites listed on the spreadsheet.

S7



The Earth Is One ~ The World Not Yet

"The Earth is one but the world is not," began *Our Common Future*, the famous Brundtland report on sustainable development. What goes up one nation's chimneys or down its drains may come to rest on the trees or beaches of another. That report, written in 1987, continued, "We all depend upon one Earth, one biosphere, for sustaining our lives. Yet each community, each country, strives for survival and prosperity with little regard for its impact on others. Some consume Earth's resources at a rate that would leave little for future generations. Others ... live with the prospect of hunger, squalor, disease and early death."

Population

Add to that litany overpopulation, mostly in the poorest regions and in countries that have dwindling natural resources, countries such as Yemen and Somalia and Pakistan and Afghanistan. The world now faces the specter of a growing list of "Failed States", more than 60 countries that cannot adequately care for their people, places that are a perfect breeding ground for violent unrest and terrorist organizations.

Today we are watching the reality of unsustainable population growth play out in the Arab Muslim world. Leading the unrest in Egypt, Palestine, Syria and on, is a huge cohort of young people, yearning to make something of themselves. In most of those places, 40% of the population is under age 25. There will not be enough jobs. At the same time, those countries are running out of fresh water and cannot feed themselves. They import vast quantities of grain. Food prices are at an all-time high. Oil prices are at an all-time high. World wars have been started over less.

In 2011 the world topped seven billion people - and kept right on growing. It is true, due to worldwide efforts to provide family planning services, population growth is slowing. But while we're growing more slowly, *we're still growing*. We're still adding about 220,000 people a day. The notion that we might have "only" 9 billion people by 2050 should be alarming to thoughtful people. The question is: what will be left, of civil society and of the non-human world, by the time human population finally stops growing.

Despite the urgency of stopping growth, we don't need "population control" if that means coercion.

Instead of launching a campaign to make everyone worried about overpopulation, we need to pour our efforts into making sure every woman and girl everywhere can get family planning services. Some 215 million women in developing countries want contraception but don't have access to it; give them what they want and you could eliminate 53 million unintended pregnancies a year. Then mix in some cultural shifts (not easy, but necessary) that would make it more socially acceptable to have one child or no kids at all. And there you go—you've brought down population numbers *and* improved millions of lives in the process.

Climate Disruption

The connection between population growth and climate disruption is complex and controversial. There is no doubt that adding more people to the planet only exacerbates the great problems we now face. And there is no doubt that increased investment in voluntary family planning services is cheap compared to the price of war or of coping with climate disaster. But climate change is largely being driven by the industrialized consumption habits of developed nations - led by the U.S. Let's face it: as long as the U.S. is not seriously reducing its carbon emissions, advocating family planning elsewhere appears to blame climate change on "those other people". We must change our own society while at the same time helping others, if we are to achieve a more stable world. And we must do all this within the life-support system of one planet - while leaving habitat for non-human lives.

That means, put simply, fewer people demanding less stuff. Saying it is easy; doing it is hard; not doing it has consequences many of us do not yet comprehend. As Lester Brown exhorts us: "First we need to decide what needs to be done. Then we do it. And then we ask if it is possible."

Changing Society

One of Mahatma Gandhi's most popular quotations is, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." Here is the story behind this quotation.

A young boy had become obsessed with eating sugar. His mother was very upset, but no matter how much she scolded him and tried to break his habit, he continued. Totally frustrated, she decided to take her son to see his idol—Mahatma Gandhi; perhaps her son would listen to him.

She and the boy walked miles, for hours to reach Gandhi's ashram. There, she shared with Gandhi her predicament. "*Bapu (father), my son eats too much sugar. It is not good for his health. Would you please advise him to stop eating it?*"

Gandhi listened to the woman carefully, thought for a while and replied, "*Please come back after two weeks. I will talk to your son then.*" The woman remonstrated, "*but it was a long walk.*" Gandhi remained adamant. So she took her son home.

Two weeks later they revisited Gandhi. Gandhi looked directly at the boy and said, "*Boy, you should stop eating sugar. It is not good for your health.*" The boy replied, "*Forgive me, bapu. I will follow your advice.*"

The mother was puzzled and annoyed. "*Bapu, you could have asked my son to stop eating sugar when we visited you two weeks ago. Why did you ask us to make the long walk back?*" Gandhi smiled, "*Ben (Sister), two weeks ago, I, too, was eating a lot of sugar. You must be the change you wish to see in the world.*"

One of the reasons that Gandhi was an effective leader was because he was an authentic leader. Authentic leaders inspire others because they are true to their core values and purpose.

The core values and purpose of the sustainability movement have been defined: *Value the Earth* upon which we all depend in order to survive. Do not take more than your fair share of the planet's resources. Consider and ensure the health and happiness of future generations when making decisions. Sustainability is deeply concerned with enhancing and preserving quality-of-life opportunities for both current and future generations.

An Action Agenda

How do these grand goals translate into action? How can sustainable communities be created without a general consensus that change is urgently needed? The answer can be found in the old adage that "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." *We* must be the change we wish to see. All of us can become more aware of the forces that motivate or hinder people. Awareness can bring understanding; understanding can bring action. In our many daily decisions and actions - however small, however large - we can be the change we wish to see.

Marilyn Hempel

Marilyn Hempel is the Executive Director of Blue Planet United <www.blueplanetunited.org>, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people make connections between population stabilization, sustainable consumption, and the preservation of wild landscapes and seascapes. For the last 18 years, she has been the editor of a news journal, the Pop!ulation Press <www.populationpress.org>.

Clean Water Fee Update

The L. A. County Supervisors have been struggling with the issue of storm water and polluted beaches. Storm water acts as a cleanser for upland areas, scouring all manner of pollution from streets and sidewalks and taking it out to the beach. Consequently, polluted beaches cause illness in swimmers and surfers. The N. Y. Times notes that L. A. County is "home to 7 of the 10 most polluted beaches in California." (4/8/13) Recently, L. A. Regional Water Quality Control Board issued new regulations that create incentives for the County and cities in the County to deal with storm water before it is sent to the storm drain system.

The County Flood Control District sent a mailer to each household in the County announcing the possible fee and asking whether home owners would oppose it. As Supervisor Don Knabe noted in his address to the LWV/LAC Convention, the way in which the District did the mailing raised serious questions of process. First, the District called the charge a fee instead of a tax, which allowed the County to avoid the 2/3s vote requirement for new taxes. Second, the mailing was only sent to property owners and not all citizens. Apartment dwellers would, most likely, bear some of the fee, as apartment owners would pass the costs along to them. In addition, many complained that the mailing did not seem to be an official county mailing but looked more like an advertisement. Hence, many recipients likely sent it to the trash without looking at it.

Knabe also noted that many homeowners, businesses, and institutions have already invested in developments designed to do something about storm water but would still be assessed the new fee, in effect, paying twice. In addition, the existing proposal contained no project-specific information and had no sunset clause. As a result, the Board of Supervisors essentially tabled the measure, directing the Flood Control District to come back with a reworked proposal for dealing with storm water. Knabe noted that the County and its citizens will have to do something about this problem as beach pollution is very costly from an economic perspective.

The issue of storm water policy raises two interesting questions: One, who is responsible for the pollution?; Two, who will pay to clean it up? The issue of responsibility seems pretty obvious. Since the pollution comes from streets and sidewalks in the County, the citizens and businesses in the County are responsible. There will likely be lawsuits about this, however. If the principle of "polluter pays" prevails, then it seems to follow that residents of the County should pay. As supervisor Knabe pointed out, some way will have to be found to protect schools and those who have already invested in storm water mitigation efforts. In the end, the costs of the cleanup will have to be covered.

*Jack Sullivan,
LWV/LAC Natural Resources*

Update to CEQA Legislation

As of the first part of April, there were 29 bills regarding CEQA in the CA Legislature. You will remember from a recent article in the VOTER that the California Environmental Quality Act is the primary California environmental law. The Planning and Conservation League (PCL) is supporting five of these bills in coordination with several other groups. In general, PCL is supporting measures that will increase the public participation in the process and not undermine its effectiveness. "Reformers" are intent on speeding up the

process, to the detriment of the effectiveness of the law. LWVC's CEQA Committee is following these issues in coordination with PCL and other organizations. PCL is supporting five other bills and opposing ten as they are currently drafted. There will be shifts and changes in bills and proposals in the next 6 to 9 months. The governor is in favor of reform of CEQA, but it is unclear what type of reform. It is important to keep track of these developments in the next few months.

Katie Gerecke

Water Report Update

Our 2005 report *Water Issues in Claremont*, posted on our League web site, will be updated this summer with the help of two interns working with Marilee Scaff and Freeman Allen. One intern, majoring in economics, will be supported full-time by the Roberts Environmental Center at CMC; the other is a freshman law student at

the Western School of Law. The project will include preparation of a brochure to inform the public on the issues surrounding the potential acquisition of the water system.

Freeman Allen

United Nations Agenda 21

Agenda 21 of the UN (adopted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992) is a non-binding agreement that governments can consider and implement in relation to the environmental impacts on their land of development. It is a vision, a general blueprint for environmentally sustainable growth. The responsibility to use and implement it rests with the individual governments. It encourages rather than compels. It is not a treaty and is not legally binding. There are a lot of rumors floating around that seek to tie

it to 'world government' and encroachment on sovereignty, especially at this time when the US federal budget is being considered. LWVUS was instrumental in the founding of the UN and has strong positions supporting the United Nations and protective of the Environment. If you would like further information from the United Nations Association on Agenda 21, please contact Katie at 909-626-2858 or katieg@surfside.net.

Katie Gerecke

Susan Schenk Named Woman of Distinction by Representative Judy Chu

Rep. Judy Chu recognized outstanding women from the 27th Congressional District during her fourth annual Women of Distinction Awards.

The event honored women entrepreneurs, volunteers, civil servants and a female Olympian, all from the San Gabriel Valley. The 16 honorees represent the 16 cities in the 27th Congressional District. Each honoree was chosen from nominations submitted by members of their communities.

The following is the bio that was included on Rep. Judy Chu's website about Susan Schenk:

Susan was born and raised in Southern California and graduated from UCLA with a degree in botany. She lived in England for a number of years and earned a doctorate in plant physiology from the University of London. In 1982, Susan moved to Claremont to work as the lab lecturer in biology for the Joint Science Department of the Claremont Colleges.

As someone who cares deeply about the community, Susan worked with the local school district to provide an after-school daycare program at all of the elementary schools soon after moving to Claremont. But she didn't stop there. Susan also went on to start the first Daisy Girl Scout troop in the area and has led numerous troops at all levels over the years. In 1997, Susan began to promote the preservation of the Robert J. Bernard Field Station which serves as an irreplaceable educational resource for the Claremont Colleges. To reach her goal, she led the creation of a nonprofit group to preserve and promote the field stations. Since the organization's founding, Susan has served as the chair of the board for many years. Today, she is still serving on the board, writing newsletters, and organizing events.

Susan's passion for the environment has led her to serve in numerous other leadership roles in community and city groups. She has served on the board of the League of Women Voters of the Claremont Area for a number of years, first serving as National Resources Chair and now as Vice-President of Programs. She also served on Claremont's Architectural Commission for eight years and helped to establish an anti-mansion ordinance.

During the most recent update of the Claremont General Plan, Susan led the rewriting of the Open Space Element to preserve more natural areas. She also served on the Mayor's Ad Hoc Committee for Sustainable Development and on the task force that wrote the Claremont City Sustainability Plan. To implement the Claremont City Sustainability Plan, Susan helped to create another organization – Sustainable Claremont – and has already served for three years as its Co-Chair.

Most recently, Susan started and currently serves as the president of the Sustainable Claremont Garden Club. Susan's next project is to work with others in Claremont to maintain the city's urban forests.

To view Susan's Garden Club information, log into the Sustainable Claremont webpage and click on Garden Club.

"The purpose of the Garden Club shall be to increase the beauty, sustainability, and biodiversity of local landscapes, to provide education, and to foster helpful and pleasant interactions among those with an interest in gardens of any type, from ornamental to urban agriculture."

Note the changes in bold for the May Units.

Date	Type	Location/Time	Topic
Wednesday, May 15	LWV of the Claremont Area Board Meeting	Garner House, Memorial Park, 7:00 pm	
Friday, May 17- Sunday, May 19	LWVC Convention	San Jose, CA	Election of officers, approval of budget, adoption of program for the coming year, coming biennium.
Thursday, May 23	Unit/Discussion,	MSAG, D Building, 3rd floor 9:30 am Barbara's, 1436 Mural Drive, 7 pm	LWV Observers reports on local governmental agencies
Saturday, June 1	Annual Meeting	Padua Room, Hughes Center, 10 am to noon	Election of officers, approval of budget, adoption of program for coming year