

The Voter

August 2013

Claremont Area League Celebrates 75th Anniversary 1938 - 2013 (and Beyond) Standing on the Past; Working toward the Future

At its Fall Opening Meeting on Sunday, September 15, our local League will celebrate its 75th Anniversary by illustrating past accomplishments with storytelling led by Barbara Rugeley and by looking toward its future challenges with Table Talks led by Board Members and Past Presidents. The planning committee, made up of Co-chairs Ruth Currie and Jerry Klasik, Board members Anne Bellemin, Katie Gerecke, and Barbara Rugeley are hard at work to build a program that will reflect the hard work of League members of the past and the promise of our Mission that, "encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government ...through action and advocacy." The Ordway Award and the Carolyn Beatty Award will be presented. A display of materials from the archives will be available.

The meeting will be from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Padua Room, Hughes Center, 1700 Danbury. Part of the fun will be the Ice Cream Social with many toppings and some non-sugar desserts. RSVP's are not required but will be appreciated for planning purposes.

Katie Gerecke



LWVC Study of Higher Education

At the state League Convention in May 2013, the delegates voted to do a three-year study of public higher education. Although the study was not recommended by the LWVC Board, a group of enthusiastic League members, led by Lucas Ramirez and Max Beckman-Harned of the Los Altos-Mountain View League, managed to win approval on a vote of reconsideration after the initial tally fell short by one vote. (See LWV of the Claremont Area *Voter* for June/July 2013.)

Proponents of the study argued that our state League positions covered all areas of public education except the California State University (C.S.U.) and University of California (U.C.) systems, and thus prevented LWVC advocacy for or against issues concerning these very important institutions. The study will also include the California Community College System, whose graduates often go on to state universities. Eleven League members have committed to serving on the Study Committee, including Donovan Steutel of our neighboring Pasadena LWV and Helene LeCar, the director of a previous LWVC Community College Study. They are currently looking for funding sources and will also be working on a scope and time schedule for the study. Any donations of seed money or fundraising help will be appreciated. The contact for study-related offers and/or questions is lucas.a.ramirez@gmail.com

B.C.



Co-Presidents' Message

The "Dog Days of summer" will not lure your hard-working Claremont Area board and members into complacency. In July, *seven* Claremont Area League members attended "Popovers in Pasadena" sponsored annually by the LA County League. Two of those members hosted workshops to assist members understanding of issues and the responsibilities of holding an office. Although there was no board meeting in July, the August board meeting began with updates and an accounting of where we were financially and programmatically. (Note the change in meeting time: -- **First Thursday of the month** -- membership is welcome to observe.)

Two committees are busy with upcoming events: The **Fundraising Committee** (Sarah Smizer, Karen Rosenthal, Ginger Elliott, and Barbara Rugeley) will organize *two* "Food for Thought" events similar to our February 2013, Padua Hills international dessert and coffee. At the request of the Claremont League, the city has granted us the use of Padua Hills on **February 8, 2014**. Additionally this committee is arranging an exciting and stimulating event in **early October** at Garner House. Keep your ear to the ground and mark your calendar.

Founded in 1938, the Claremont Area League celebrates its 75th birthday year in 2013. Our Birthday Committee (Anne Bellemin, Barbara Rugeley, Katie Gerecke and your co-presidents) are finalizing a program that culminates with an ice cream social. Volunteer members need only bring sauces, nuts, and fresh fruit to "top off" the event. Call the Claremont League office and let Tressa know what topping you are volunteering to bring. Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 15** from 2-4 pm at the Hughes Community Center. "Standing on the Past, Working toward the Future" is our theme. Funny hats and noisemakers and balloons are optional!

That gives you a taste of the community social calendar. Now to our mission: Voter Education and Advocacy.

VOTER EDUCATION: Freeman Allen and Marilee Scaff, co-chairs of our Water Task Force, have been working all summer with two college interns to produce a trifold brochure entitled "Claremont's Water Future." It updates and reviews briefly our *Water Issues* report (2005, rev. 2006) including the pros and cons of buying the water company.

ADVOCACY: Our Action Vice President, Ellen Taylor, faithfully writes letters to the Courier and Inland Valley Daily Bulletin about issues the League sees as currently important. However, her letters are not enough! Even though our senators and some of our current representatives may agree with the League's positions on many issues, they need to hear how we as voters feel. **Send a quick email to them and explain your views as an individual** (*not* as a League member.) Congress is on August recess but will return after Labor Day. Among the issues currently uppermost in Washington bubble are

- President's plan to cut carbon pollution (in the Senate)
- Immigration Reform (in the House)
- Protecting funding for the United Nations (in the House).

Contact information for your representatives is on pages 46-47 of the current League directory.

A relatively new partner to League of Women Voters is the **Nonprofit Vote** organization that was founded in 2005. Below are a couple of links to some research they have done about voters and voter turnout. These findings underscore the potential of local nonprofits to reach people missed by campaigns and not expected to vote. Check out the links below for further information.

http://www.nonprofitvote.org/doc_download/522-can-nonprofits-increase-voting-executive-summary

<http://www.nonprofitvote.org/evaluating-the-impact-of-nonprofits-on-voter-turnout.html>

Ruth Currie and Jerry Klasik

Interesting Facts...

Estimated number of jobs created by every \$1 billion spent on the military: 11,000

Estimated number of jobs created by every \$1 billion spent on education: 27,000

~~ Political Economy Research Institute, U. of Massachusetts, Amherst

LWVUS Advocacy on Voting Rights, Immigration, Campaign Finance and Carbon Pollution

Voting Rights: In June of this year the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in its decision in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*. Section 4 specified practices or conditions which resulted in voting discrimination by states or other political subdivisions (*e.g.*, counties). The states or jurisdictions identified by the specifications of Section 4 were then subject to Section 5 of the VRA, which required preclearance of any election law changes by a federal court or the Department of Justice. Some entire states and a number of other jurisdictions were found to have discriminatory practices or conditions and thus subject to preclearance. According to the LWVUS website, the Justice Department blocked over 700 discriminatory voting law changes from 1982 through 2006.

In its decision, the Supreme Court suggested that Congress could redo the part of the VRA which had been ruled unconstitutional by updating the VRA. Both the Senate and House Judiciary Committees held hearings on this matter in mid-July. While the Senate hearing emphasized that “fixing” the VRA is critical because of continuing efforts to pass discriminatory voting laws, the House hearing was more skeptical. Some suggested that Section 2 of the VRA could substitute for the parts of the Act deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, but that would provide enforcement of fairness in voting only after a discriminatory law goes into effect. It is much less expensive and more effective to stop discriminating practices before they begin

According to LWVUS, without specifications for identifying political jurisdictions that need preclearance, it would be a daunting task to track and determine discrimination in the proliferation of new election laws that are currently being enacted. National League will not only be advocating in Congress for fixing VRA, but also has asked state and local Leagues to be active in promoting fairness in elections in their jurisdictions.

Immigration: The United States Senate has passed S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and

Immigration Modernization Act. Action on immigration reform should now move to the House of Representatives. LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara observed that although “there are some troublesome items in the [Senate] bill ...overall it is a positive step forward...[which] provides a path for immigrants to earn citizenship”. National League has asked its members to “tell your Representative that immigration reform must

- Provide a path to citizenship for undocumented persons;
- Promote reunification of families;
- Meet economic business and employment needs of the U.S.;
- Improve safeguards against illegal immigration;
- Provide due process for all persons including the right to a fair hearing.” (lww.org)

Campaign Finance: The LWVUS has joined with Common Cause and seven other non-profit organizations in filing a brief to the U. S. Supreme Court in the case of *McCutcheon v. FEC*. In this case McCutcheon and the Republican National Committee are asking the Court to reconsider a 1976 decision (*Buckley v. Valeo*) which prevented donors from circumventing base limits on contributions to candidates by making huge contributions to a candidate’s political party or undesignated contributions to political committees likely to support a particular candidate. Limits on campaign finances have long been, and remain, a prime concern of the League of Women Voters.

Carbon Pollution Regulations: LWVUS reports that the Obama administration has promised to issue regulations limiting carbon emissions from both existing and new power plants within the next two years. Elisabeth MacNamara is asking members to send notes to their Senators, reminding them that power plants are the largest source of carbon pollution in the U. S., that carbon emissions are the leading cause of climate change, and encouraging them to support the upcoming regulations.

Betsy Coffman

Choices Matter --

For more than 30 years, there was bipartisan Congressional support for voluntary family planning. In 1960 South Korean women averaged six children, the population was growing faster than the economy, and the country was as poor as sub-Saharan Africa. In the 1960’s and 1970’s the United States provided financial support for South Korean family planning. By 2006 South Korea had two-child families and 15 times the average per-capita income of the African countries.

~~ *San Francisco Chronicle* (27 February 2006)

Natural Resources

LWVUS Agriculture Study: LWVUS has formed an Agriculture Study Committee to look at a range of issues in agriculture in light of the LWVUS position. The study will focus on: “(1) current technology issues in agriculture, including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and (2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process.” (LWVUS) The study committee hopes local Leaguers will hold consensus meetings during the period September 2013 to April 1, 2014. To get Leaguers started, the study committee has published some suggested summer readings, which can be found at <http://lwv.org/member-resources/agriculture-update>

Lester Brown’s recently published book, *Full Planet, Empty Plates: the New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity* (Norton, 2012), is another good source for Leaguers to learn about agricultural issues. Brown identifies three pressures on our food and water resources: (1) population growth; (2) people moving up the food chain (consuming more meat and poultry); and (3) turning grain into ethanol. Brown also notes that around the world, rates of crop yield per acre have increased in the past but recently have begun to flatten out. He also notes the effects of increased agriculture on the water system as over pumping of aquifers leads to land subsidence or compaction (in some cases by as much as 25 feet). One conclusion that can be drawn from his book is that the

world cannot carry on as it has with respect to food production.

Bay Delta Conservation Plan: The BDCP has now been issued and the assessment of it has begun. The plan includes the proposed twin tunnels taking water around the Delta for export to the south as well as ecosystem restoration in the Delta. A formal comment period will be held in the fall and there will likely be much discussion, pro and con, of the plan. Leaguers can get information on the plan from the Water Education Foundation’s *Western Water* (May/June 2013), “Meeting the Co-equal Goals? The Bay Delta Conservation Plan”. The WEF is at <http://www.watereducation.org/> and their blog is at <http://aquaforia.com/>.

California Carbon Challenge: Next Ten, the folks that created the California Budget Challenge game, have now developed the California Carbon Challenge. The context of the game is AB 32, the legislation which commits California to reduce state-wide greenhouse gas emissions. The game is structured in a manner similar to the budget game. The user is given a sequence of choices to make to reduce carbon emissions and the program keeps track of both the amount of reduction and the costs of reduction. The summary page presents the results of the user’s efforts and includes an indication of who pays for the costs. You can find the game at: <http://www.carbonchallenge.org/>

Jack Sullivan

The following is a summary of remarks made at the **LWV/LAC Popovers workshop on the LWVUS Agriculture Study on 7/27/13**. The workshop was led by Fatima Malik. Jack Sullivan was also a presenter. References in parentheses are at the end of the article.

Water is essential to agriculture and to humans. It is important to remember that there is NO SUBSTITUTE for water; that is, without water, crops and people die. This has led some to argue that society cannot let only market forces dictate the allocation of water. Rather, they argue, decisions about water must be made with as much community input as possible.

Pressures on water resources: 1. Population growth; 2. People moving up the food chain (consuming more meat and poultry); 3. Turning grain into ethanol. (Brown)

Aquifers: Water naturally occurring below ground and pumped to the surface when needed. There are two kinds of aquifers: fossil (not recharged); not fossil (naturally recharged). (<http://aquapedia.com/>)

Aquifer over-drafted: More water extracted than naturally recharged. (HCN & USGS)

Over draft consequence: land subsidence, which results in land compaction and lost water storage space. (USGS)

Aquifers interact with surface water: if too much water is pumped from an aquifer, the result can be reduced flow in nearby river. This can lead to conflict between pumpers and those using surface water. This tendency for water to flow both below the surface of the earth and on the surface makes differing claims to ownership of the water difficult to resolve.

California: California has very weak groundwater regulation with virtually no restrictions on pumpers. As a result, pumpers tend to overdraft aquifers which results in land subsidence. That is, the land literally collapses on itself and underground storage capacity is diminished. As a result of such over-pumping, there has been much subsidence in San Joaquin Valley, in some cases as much as 25 and more feet.

Much water flows through the Sacramento River/San Joaquin River Delta and is in turn pumped for transport to San Joaquin Valley and Southern California. When pumping from the Delta threatens endangered species, the Endangered Species Act results in reduced pumping. When Delta extractions are reduced, agriculture will likely pump more groundwater.

California agriculture has made efforts to improve water use efficiency. Acreage irrigated by gravity flow and flood was reduced by 16% between 1990 and 2000, while acreage irrigated by drip and micro irrigation increased by 11% in the same time period. (CWP) During this same period, consumers in southern California also reduced water consumption by use of water saving technologies. (Be water wise.)

One solution for groundwater (used mostly in Southern California): In many parts of southern California (e.g., Pasadena, the San Gabriel Valley, the Claremont area), those with groundwater rights attempted to avoid the problems of over pumping by resorting to adjudicated basins. In such cases, pumpers agree with each other to avoid overdrafts and create a water master to oversee the basin.

Recent development: As population grows and the economy develops, there is increasing pressure to

reallocate some agricultural water to urban areas by means of sale by agriculture of water to urban users. For example, Imperial Irrigation District (IID) recently signed an agreement to transfer some of its water to San Diego Water and Power. In order to achieve this transfer, it was necessary for IID to fallow some land and reduce agricultural production. This, in turn, could have a negative effect on the economy of Imperial County.

Resources: Lester Brown, *Full Planet, Empty Plates: the New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity* (W. W. Norton, 2012)

Water Encyclopedia at <http://aquapedia.com/>

USGS on groundwater depletion at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2013/5079/> and at <http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/earthgwlandsubside.html>

Sarah Jane Keller, "Dry news from the water mines," *High Country News*, July 22, 2013

California Water Plan Update 2009, Volume 2, Chapter 2, "Agricultural Water Use Efficiency" at <http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/cwpu2009/index.cfm>

Be water wise: <http://www.bewaterwise.com/>

Another source to check on water and agriculture issues is <http://aquaforia.com/>

Hot Times Ahead

There is an ancient Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times." These are interesting times.

In May Prof. Alex Hall at UCLA's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability presented the latest climate modeling results: *LA's Climate Future. What's Coming and the Choices We Face*. (A video is posted at <http://www.environment.ucla.edu/videos/article.asp?parentid=18324>). If the world continues with emissions "Business as Usual," the number of hot days (over 95 degrees) each year in Claremont will likely go from the present 20 to 68 by mid-century, and to 101 by century's end - with an average temperature increase over seven degrees. Claremont would be a much different place than it is now! If emissions are mitigated over the next couple of decades, by mid-century we will still have about 70% of the now-unavoidable temperature increase, with 58 hot days each year -- but there would be huge benefits by 2100 when the hot days would be slightly fewer than at mid-century (57), and the temperature increase only three degrees rather than seven.

What can we do? As a city, Claremont is already doing well. Our City of Trees is an urban forest that takes up carbon dioxide; the CHERP program is making homes cooler and more energy efficient. We could do more:

for example, a "Cool Roofs" program. We can be a leader and advocate for mitigation beyond Claremont, and support California's emission reduction program that comes close to being what is assumed in the mitigation model.

With a warmer future in store, our water supply is in peril, especially the imported water we rely on for up to a half of our needs. Claremont is wise to be moving toward local control of our water system. In the next few months we should know the outcome of the City negotiations to replace Golden State Water Company with our own municipal system.

The draft update of our Sustainable City Plan, first adopted in 2008, is almost finished and ready to go to the City Council for approval at the end of the year. It will be in place when the City sets its priorities next January.

For more on what's new in the Sustainable City Plan update, and to join in the discussion, come to the next Sustainability Dialog, 7:00 p.m., Monday, September 9, at the Hahn Building.

Freeman Allen

Ojai Votes on GSW Takeover

Residents of Ojai are tired of paying water rates double or more than those in neighboring cities, just as we are in Claremont. They, too, want out from under Golden State Water Company. Ojai is a town of 7500, with about 4500 registered voters. On August 27 they will vote for or against a property tax to pay for the takeover, with a 2/3 majority vote needed to pass. Mail ballots have already gone out.

GSWC used the same public relations firm and deceptive tactics as they did here to try and persuade voters it would be a foolish venture. Our League has not studied the situation in Ojai, so we cannot take a position

on the vote, but Marilee Scaff (with Freeman Allen, as Water TF Co-Chairs) has written a Letter to the Editor of Ojai news media describing our experiences in Claremont, and our long-standing position that we should have a municipal water system. Ojai FLOW, the organization supporting the takeover, has also bolstered their case for a takeover with a recording of our City Manager Tony Ramos speaking on our water situation. We wish them well, and eagerly await news on the outcome of their vote.

Freeman Allen

Pat Brown Institute Executive Director Appears at Popovers

Dr. Raphael Sonenshein, executive director of the 22-year-old Pat Brown Institute of Public Affairs, was the featured speaker at this year's last-Saturday-in-July LWV/LAC *Popovers in Pasadena*. As those who have heard him speak know, he is both informative and entertaining. He was executive director of one of the two commissions that rewrote the Los Angeles City Charter in 1999 and thus a long-time insider.

Recognizing our concern about the recent Supreme Court decision overturning part of the Voting Rights Act, Dr. Sonenshein offered the suggestion that the action might backfire. With the extra attention and concern being brought to bear, there is the possibility that more people than usual will see a need to make an extra effort to vote. In view of our low turnouts in recent elections, such an impact would certainly be welcome.

Dr. Sonenshein also observed that as the Republican Party as a whole is losing power in the state, individual Republicans are becoming more powerful. He noted that currently it is better to be called a Democrat than a liberal, and better to be called a conservative than a Republican.

Dr. Sonenshein reported that term limits have destroyed state government. He called the change "good intentioned" but with odd consequences. Perhaps he was unaware of the strong LWV stand against term limits. The disruptive results of the implementation of term limits in Sacramento were no surprise to League members.

The recent city election was clearly still on Dr. Sonenshein's mind. Observing that you "can't trust 17 guys to run Los Angeles," he recalled a time when the city council looked like "a branch of the League of Women Voters." As for the county, he summed it up as "reasonably well run, but poorly governed," citing a number of "horrible problems that no one knows how to solve," including the jails and social services.

He reminded us that Jerry Brown is both the youngest and the oldest Governor in the history of California, and that the 9th of September is the anniversary of statehood day in California. With respect to the recent Voting Rights Act changes, he suggested that what we need is a requirement for universal preclearance of any changes in voting requirements, regardless of the state proposing to implement them.

~~SAS

Sustainability Dialog Series #39: The New Sustainable City Plan

What's New; What's in Our Future

The Claremont Sustainable City Plan update, the first in five years, goes to the City Council for approval this month. City Sustainability Coordinator Chris Veirs and Mayor Pro-Tem Joe Lyons will lead a discussion on what's proposed in the update, and the implications for our future.

Monday, September 9, 2013
7:00 – 8:30 pm

Pomona College, Hahn Building, Rm. 101
420 N. Harvard Avenue, Claremont
Free and open to all

Thoughts on agriculture...

(excerpted from an article by Dr. Richard Grossman in the Summer 2013 edition of the **Population Press**)

“...The first essential component of social justice is adequate food for all mankind.’ Norman Borlaug, 1970 Nobel Prize acceptance speech ...

“(T)he ‘green revolution’ of Dr. Norman Borlaug and others...is credited with saving over a billion lives by developing highly productive strains of crops... (A)long with its good, the ‘green revolution’ has had several dreadful unintended consequences.

“Growing highly productive plants and animals requires the use of many chemicals that are made from limited resources and are toxic. The chemicals include fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides. They are all derived from fossil fuels and all transported with fossil fuels. Unfortunately, supplies of carbon-based fuels are limited ...

“We are starting to realize the subtle toxicity of many of the agricultural chemicals. The wonder insecticide ... DDT ... turned out to be an ecological disaster and now is banned in most countries. An amazing group of insecticides, neonicotinoids, is probably responsible for the die-off of our honey-bees – ‘colony collapse

disorder’. Since bees pollinate so many crops, this is agricultural disaster.

“We now realize that many agricultural chemicals have endocrine effects, even in minuscule concentrations ... The seeds of highly productive plant strains must be bought from corporations that control their prices. In the past, seed grain was carefully preserved from the prior crop, but now farmers need cash – or credit – in order to buy seeds. This expense, along with the cost of chemicals, has broken many farmers. In a good year they can make a living, but in a bad year their suicide rate climbs.

“Finally, modern agriculture depletes our soil. The use of chemicals exhausts many components that help plants grow. ... As we deplete petroleum and as crop-growing conditions worsen from climate change and drought, can the amazing technology of modern agriculture be sustained? Indeed, some scientists have a terrible vision of severe food shortages with bloodshed and more deaths than Borlaug’s green revolution saved.”

[To receive Dr. Grossman’s monthly column by email, contact him at Richard@population-matters.org.]

Membership form

Please (re)join us!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Membership Dues, July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, LWV/Claremont Area

Select One: \$110+/Suffragist \$90/Household \$60/Regular \$30/Student

Please forward the 2013/14 membership dues to
LWV/Claremont Area • P.O. Box 1532 • Claremont, CA 91711 (or bring to Opening Meeting)

LWV 2013-2014 Program/events **draft**

Date	Type	Location	Time	Topic	Organizers	Notes
Sept 9 (Monday)	Sustainability Dialog	Pomona College, Hahn Building, Rm. 101	7 – 8:30 pm	<i>What's New; What's in Our Future</i>	Sustainable Claremont	The Hahn Building is located at 420 N. Harvard Avenue
Sept 15 (Sunday)	Somefood	Padua Room, Hughes	2-4 pm	Opening Meeting: 75 th Birthday	Committee	Food/drink Set up
Oct 17 (Thursday)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	National study: Agriculture	Needed	
Nov 21 (Thurs)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	Education	Coffman, Nemer, Andrew	
Dec 8 (Thursday)	Hors'oeuvres wine	Garner House		Holiday Party	Schenk	Potluck: bring appetizer or dessert or drink
Jan 16 (Thurs)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	Sustainability Plan Update	Allen, Veirs, Lyon	
Feb 20 (Thurs)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	National study: Agriculture		
Mar 20 (Thursday)	unit	MSAG Sue's'	9:30 am 7 pm	Implementation of Covered California	Seven, Andrew	
Apr 17 (Thurs)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	Water Issues	Sullivan, Scaff, Allen	
May 15 (Thurs)	unit	MSAG Sue's	9:30 am 7 pm	Observer reports	Rugeley	
Jun 7 (Saturday)	Somefood	Padua Room, Hughes Center	10 am- noon	Annual Meeting	Schenk	Food/drink Setup



Claremont Area
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