

The *Voter*

October 2013

Claremont's Water Future *Special Tri-fold Enclosure*

This month's Voter includes a bonus: A copy of the "Claremont's Water Future" new tri-fold. An attractive and informative resource, it is something you will want to keep handy at least until the local water system finally belongs to our residents.

The tri-fold is a joint effort of the local League of Women Voters and Sustainable Claremont, created over the last summer by our infinitely resourceful dynamic duo, Freeman Allen and Marilee Scaff, with the aid of interns Sierra Gibson and Robert Hensley. Production and printing were underwritten by a generous, anonymous League member who understands the importance of getting accurate, pertinent information into the hands of our members and the general public. We are grateful for the gift.

The tri-fold itself reflects years of effort by Marilee and Freeman who have devoted endless hours and infinite energy to gaining a depth of understanding of local water issues that is acknowledged even by

those who do not share their view on who should control the water. The campaign for public control of our local water is now longer than the struggle for women's suffrage, but success finally seems a reasonable hope.

If you attended the League's opening meeting last month, you may have already received a copy of one; don't let it go to waste. Share it somehow. Help more people understand that it is both feasible and important for the public to gain control of one of our most precious and increasingly scarce resources, our water.

Town Hall Meeting
about the Water Company Acquisition
November 6, 2013
6:00 pm
Taylor Hall
Attend! Join the discussion!

Working Together

In light of the accomplishment of the Ojai FLOW group, an observation about Americans made by Alexis de Tocqueville (*Democracy in America*, book I) in 1835 seems surprisingly apt:

"America is, among the countries of the world, the one where they have taken most advantage of association and where they have applied that powerful mode of action to a greater diversity of objects. ... The inhabitant of the

United States learns from birth that he must rely on himself to struggle against the evils and obstacles of life; he has only a defiant and restive regard for social authority and he appeals to its authority only when he cannot do without it... In the United States, they associate for the goals of public scrutiny, of commerce and industry, of morality and religion. There is nothing the human will despairs of attaining by the free action of the collective power of individuals."

Candidates Forum

On Wednesday, **October 23**, there will be a Candidates Forum at Hughes Center for open positions on the Claremont School Board. Five candidates are vying for three open positions. The forum will be held from 7:00-9:00 pm in the Padua room. All five candidates have been invited: incumbent Steven Llanusa, retired teacher David Nemer, college administrator Nancy Treser Osgood, teacher/county lifeguard Joseph Salas, and real estate broker Paul A. Steffen. Please mark your calendars and attend what is sure to be an enlightening evening.

Co-Presidents' Message

In conjunction with the 75th birthday celebration on September 15, our local League has a "reflective glow" emanating from the glass showcase at the entrance of the Claremont library. Through the efforts of archivist Katie Gerecke, highlights of the League's history grace the glass shelves. Events, pictures and even some position papers are tastefully assembled from the 75 years of the League's existence in Claremont. Stop by and browse the robust accomplishments past and present.

The fall election occurs on November 5, 2013, for the Claremont School Board. Although this is an "off" year, as League members we know that local elections are just as important as national ones. The local elections of 2013, have to do with public education. The Pomona Unified School District and Glendora Unified School District both have contested school board elections. The Claremont Unified School District has five candidates running for three seats. In lieu of a unit discussion this month, our Voter Service Vice President, **Cindy Reul**, has organized a **Forum for Claremont Unified District school board candidates on Wednesday, October 23 at 7 pm in the Padua Room at Hughes Center, 1700 Danbury Rd in**

Claremont. Be sure to attend. Public education is a pillar of society, and as such, the League has taken assertive positions at the local, state and national levels.

Did you attend the **October Food for Thought** series on Sunday, the 6th? If you didn't, you missed a grand opportunity to hear an outstanding woman who has had vast experience in the world of Non-Profits. Another **Food for Thought** will be held on February 8, 2014, at Padua Hills and again you will be impressed with a remarkable program. **Mark your calendar!** Kudos for the October event belong to our Fundraising Chair, Karen Rosenthal, for pulling this program together. Ginger Elliot, Sarah Smizer, Carole Harter, Barbara Rugeley, Ruth Currie, and Jerry Klasik ably assisted her. Marshall Taylor was our excellent sommelier. David Shearer and Rachel Pulasky of Claremont Heritage let us use Garner House and its many amenities.

Be sure to drop by our booth at **Village Venture** on October 26, from 9:00-5:00. It should be at its usual place on First Street.

Ruth Currie and Jerry Klasik


Stiglitz on Health Care

On October 1, individuals can sign up for Covered California, for health insurance to begin on January 1, 2014. It seems timely to consider the views of Nobel-prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz on health care, consistent with the LWVUS position that supports single-payer health care as the ultimate goal and the best way to serve the public interest:

"The two most important impediments to individuals' achieving their economic aspirations are the loss of a job and an illness. The two together form a lethal combination, one often associated with bankruptcy. Health care in America has traditionally been provided by employers. This inefficient and antiquated system has contributed greatly to the reality that the United States has the most inefficient and poorest-performing, overall, health care system among the advanced industrial countries. The problem with our health care system is not that we spend too much; it's that we don't get value for our money and

that too many people don't have access to health care. Obama's health care reform partially addressed the latter problem, though court challenges combined with cutbacks in public support may undermine the effectiveness of the reforms. But it did little (at least in the short run) to improve efficiency. ... Other countries not as well off as the United States have managed to provide universal access to health care. Most countries treat access to medicine as a basic human right. But even if one doesn't approach the issue from this principled perspective, our failure to provide access to health care increases the inefficiency of our health care system. In the end, with much delay, we do provide some health care to those who are in desperate need. But it happens in emergency rooms, and costs are often much increased as a result of the delay in treatment.

"Lack of access to health care contributes significantly to inequality, and this inequality in turn undermines the performance of our economy."



Universal and
Comprehensive healthcare must
Be affordable

Polarization
Overwhelming politics
Destroying good will

Current Developments in our Jail and Prison Systems

The U. S. Department of Justice has announced that it is opening an investigation of civil rights violations in the L. A. County Jail System. The case will be separate from the current FBI criminal investigation of prisoner abuse in the County Jails and was filed despite the County's Independent Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence recent encouraging report. In August the head of that Commission told the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors that good progress was being made in changing the "culture of violence" documented in their 2012 Commission report.

The California state prison system has also been an object of interest to the federal government. Four years ago, after determining medical and mental health services to prisoners to be inadequate due to extreme overcrowding, the federal court ordered the inmate population be reduced to 137.5% or less of the "design capacity" of the prisons. (This, in turn, has resulted in overcrowding in county jails, causing the L. A. County system to contract with the city of Taft, California to house 500 long-term inmates in the Taft Community Correctional Facility.) Realignment did not solve the state's overcrowding problem, leaving state prisons with more than 9,600 excess inhabitants.

Governor Brown, who is still appealing the inmate reduction order, came up with a plan to lease cells from incarceration facilities, private or public, both in and outside of California, and received approval of funding for this plan from the state Legislature. However, State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, countered with a request that the court order confidential discussions with stakeholders which would include options besides leasing cells, and the federal court has done so with a report back due by October 27, 2013. Other options could include paroling frail and elderly inmates and facilitating resentencing hearings for prisoners eligible under the provisions of Proposition 36. Steinberg is an advocate for prisoner rehabilitation and succeeded in including funds for such programs in the recent Legislative funding for Brown's plan.

In November of 2012, voters approved Proposition 36, the Three Strikes Reform Act, which authorized shortening the sentences of inmates who had been sentenced to life in prison on a non-serious, non-violent third-strike crime (e.g., petty theft, simple drug possession). Eligible inmates must petition the court, and a judge may reduce the sentence, but only if the judge decides that the petitioner would not be an unreasonable risk to public safety. If the Judge so decides, the prisoner may be granted early release. The petition has to be filed in the County where the third-strike crime occurred, and the District Attorney must review each case and may

challenge the release. In cases of a D.A. challenge, a hearing is held, with evidence presented by both sides. So far, 95% (1,011) of these petitions have been granted, and the inmates have been released. The Stanford Law School "Three Strikes Project" has been active in representing these petitioners and following their progress after release. More than 2000 additional prisoners have petitioned for release under Proposition 36, including 850 in LA County, which is processing cases more slowly than other counties, according to Stanford's Three Strikes Center.

Less than 2% of those released under Proposition 36 have been charged with another crime. Although the time since such releases has been short, this recidivism rate is considerably below the state average. In 2003-2004, in California, over 16% of released prisoners were charged with another crime after 90 days, and 40% within a year. The state does not provide reentry services to Proposition 36 released persons, although it does provide such services to other inmates when they are released. A number of private organizations are trying to fill in this gap. (***Progress Report: Three Strikes Reform (Proposition 36), 1,000 Prisoners Released.*** Published by Stanford Law School Three Strikes Project and NCACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.)

The Los Angeles County League has studied the County Jail System and adopted the following position:

Support for reducing overcrowding in the county jail system by improving jail computer systems, routing prisoners more efficiently, expediting pre-trial case management, and studying criminalization standards for possible modification. Oppose using private jails. Support for a variety of sentencing options for low-risk offenders. Support for providing comprehensive health care services for emergency, urgent, and on-going health problems, physical and mental, for all inmates; support for segregating mentally ill inmates. Support for offering basic educational and vocational training programs and social rehabilitation and re-entry programs to all inmates. Support for providing adequate public funding to maintain state standards. Support for effective, continual internal and external oversight of jail conditions and practices and for safe release practices.

The LWVUS has adopted by concurrence the following Sentencing Policy:

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

BC



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 Jerry Klasik

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October 2013

Return Service Requested

Date	Type	Location	Time	Topic	Organizers	Notes
Oct 6 (Sunday)	<i>Food for Thought</i>	Garner House Patio	4 – 6 pm	<i>Reflections on Life in Pakistan,</i> Dr. Marilyn Wyatt	Fundraising Committee	Wine and cheese - \$35
Oct 13 (Sunday)	Civic Forum	Taylor Hall	2-5 pm	<i>Obamacare: How Will It Affect You?</i>	The American Institute for Progressive Democracy	
Oct 23 (Wednesday)	Candidates' Forum	Padua Room Hughes Center	7-9 pm	Claremont School Board	Cindy Reul	
Oct 26 (Saturday)	County League Mtg	1001 W. Riverside Drive Burbank	10 am – 2 pm	<i>Agriculture: The effects to our air, water, soil, and the food we eat</i>	County League	Luncheon - \$30 For info email Nancy Mahr nlmahr@verizon.net
Nov 4 (Monday)	Sustainability dialogue	Hahn Building Pomona College 420 N. Harvard Ave., Room 101	7 pm	Workshop on Transportation And Bike Priorities	Sustainable Claremont and the Claremont Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Group	
Nov 5 (Tuesday)	Election Day	Your polling place	7 am – 8 pm	Claremont Unified School Board		Vote!
Nov 21 (Thursday)	Unit discussion	MSAG Schenk Res.	9:30 am 7 pm	Funding Education	Coffman, Nemer, Andrew	
Dec 8 (Sunday)	Party	Garner House		Holiday Party	Schenk	Potluck: bring appetizer or dessert or drink
Jan 16 (Thursday)	Unit discussion	MSAG Schenk Res.	9:30 am 7 pm	Sustainability Plan Update	Allen, Veirs, Lyon	
Feb 8 (Saturday)	<i>Food for Thought</i>	Padua Hills Theater	2 pm	TBA	Fundraising Committee	
Feb 20 (Thursday)	Unit discussion	MSAG Schenk Res.	9:30 am 7 pm	National study: Agriculture		