



# THE BEACH VOTER

The League of Women Voters of the Beach Cities

310 / 793-0569 [www.beachvoter.org](http://www.beachvoter.org)

serving El Segundo, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach

## LEAGUE HONORS COMMUNITY ACTIVISM WITH "MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK" AWARD

Susan Grebe, MDW Committee Chair

Saturday May 31, the date of our Making Democracy Work award luncheon, was a special day for our League. The process of finding the recipient for this award began in December when more than 100 letters were sent out seeking nominations from various businesses, school districts, non-profit groups and government representatives. Committee members Irma Cohen, Doris Rosenberg, Jan Nathanson, Maggie Wilkinson, Ruth Hart and Susan Grebe were overwhelmed by the quality of the women who were nominated, so much so that we realized one award was not enough and two honorable mentions were also created.

The luncheon was held at the Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) in Redondo Beach. The recipient of the Making Democracy Work award, Vanessa Poster, has been a Director of the Beach Cities Health District since 1996. She has shown her dedication to her community with a wide spectrum of activities, starting with her very instrumental role in revamping the BCHD into the vital asset to our community it is today. She also exemplifies the spirit of this award by her leadership as a co-founder of the Women's Coalition South Bay and her efforts in support of "greening" our environment, described as her "current passion." (Continued on page 3.)



Vanessa Poster receiving Making Democracy Work award from Janis Hirohama, President of the League of Women Voters of California.

## LWVC Leadership Council 2008 Report

Maggie Wilkinson, LWV Beach Cities Delegate

State Leadership Council 2008, which occurs every two years, was held May 17-18 in Sacramento with 50 local Leagues participating. The theme for this year's Leadership Council was "Our Bridge to the Future." Two members of LWV-Beach Cities, Harriet Chase and I, represented our League and shared a single vote on matters such as the LWVC budget for next year. Our local League was also well represented at the State Board level with Janis Hirohama officiating the meeting as President of the League of Women Voters of California and Wendy Phillips as secretary.

At the opening plenary session on Saturday morning Janis thanked the State Board members, office staff and local Leagues for their support of LWVC and commented on the self-examination process that the State Board is going through as a part of a grant from the Irvine Foundation. This grant has given them the opportunity to ask 'What is important?' and 'What is our future direction?' Local Leagues were invited to provide input to the process by offering suggestions. The questions she posed were evident in the topics discussed in workshops and in the information shared with us by the three speakers we heard at the Council-sponsored meals.

There was a series of three workshop sessions over the two days. The topics for the workshops were selected to provide League leaders with tools and information about ways to strengthen our Leagues plus several workshops that focused on current action issues such as health care and redistricting. The speakers at each of the three Council-sponsored meals also provided important information. (Continued on page 4.)

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

**The Beach Voter**

Co-Presidents:  
Doris Rosenberg,  
Peggy Bartlett

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The League affirms our belief in and our commitment to diversity and pluralism. There shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League 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.

**Welcome!**

Please welcome our newest members: Marilyn Altamura, Vanessa Poster and Sean Renninger of Redondo Beach; Alex Areyan of Torrance; and Eileen Rifman of Manhattan Beach.

An Uncrowded Calendar

Summer's here at last! Time to pause and reflect. This Beach Voter reports on annual League conferences at the national, state and local levels, providing an overview of where we are and where we're trying to go. LWV Beach Cities can be proud of its accomplishments in the past year, thanks to the talents and dedication of its members. Now we have a chance to take a deep breath and gear up for the new challenges that will lie ahead in 2008-2009.

Annual Meeting Recap:

- Doris Rosenberg and Peggy Bartlett are the incoming LWV Beach Cities Co-Presidents for 2008-2009. Other LWVBC officers are Jan Nathanson (1st VP), Barbara Arlow (2nd VP), Susan Grebe (3rd VP), Mignon Thiem-Murphy (Secretary), and Peggy Bartlett (Treasurer). The Executive Committee will consist of the Co-Presidents plus Susan Grebe, Joan Arias and Barbara Arlow. Directors Joan Arias, Irma Cohen and Harriet Chase were elected to two-year terms. Mary Lou Breneman was subsequently appointed for a one-year term. Henrietta Mosley, Maggie Wilkinson and Margaret Thelen will be in the second year of two-year terms.
- Our local program for the coming year will focus on education and advocacy on our General Plan and Land Use position in the communities we serve.

Summer Board Retreat:

Board members will get together on Tuesday, August 12 to make plans for the next year. We welcome your input on future program topics and any ideas you would like us to consider as we strive to keep our organization vital and grow new leadership for the years to come.

Dues:

By now you should have received your dues notices. Although our assessments for support of the state and national levels of LWV have increased, we will be able to keep our local dues at their current level for at least another year through the generous contributions of our members. Our thanks to all of you.

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The two honorable mention awards went to Amy Santa Cruz of Redondo Beach, who was pivotal in creating and passing the Redondo Beach Unified School District Bond measure, and to Cora Travers of Hawthorne who has served her community as an activist for over 50 years.

The awards ceremony was highlighted by proclamations from the offices of Representative Jane Harman, Mayor Mike Gin of Redondo Beach, Assemblyman Ted Lieu and State Senator Jenny Oropeza. The award was presented by our eloquent LWVC President Janis Hirohama and was followed by an inspiring speech by Vanessa Poster.

Vanessa spoke of living your "passion" and having the belief in yourself to make your vision for a better world a reality. Sometimes making your world better it is something as small as exchanging your plastic water bottle for a reusable Sigg bottle—they can be found at [www.mysigg.com](http://www.mysigg.com) or Whole Foods. It's a small thing if one person does it but imagine the number of plastic bottles that will not have to be thrown away if we can get our friends and family to join us, and they, in turn, pass on the message to the people their lives touch. Vanessa stressed that democracy is a virus (a good one of course) and it spreads from person to person. We all have the ability to change the world if we exercise the power of our convictions.



## Alex Areyan Tells How Mexican-American Families Helped Build the Beach Cities

Joan Arias, LWV Beach Cities Action Chair

At the LWV-Beach Cities annual meeting on Saturday May 10, Alex Areyan, author of *Images of America: Mexican Americans in Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach*, gave us his personal history and some very interesting details of the Mexican American community in our area. A former migrant worker and retired human resources administrator who was educated at the University of San Francisco, Alex reminisced about growing up in North Redondo's "working class area" and the multi-ethnic people (a mix of Greek, Japanese and Mexican families) who built up the Beach Cities.

Alex Areyan, author of *Images of America: Mexican-Americans in Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach*.

Alex's grandfather, one of 12 children, came to this area in 1910 fleeing the difficulties of living through the Mexican Revolution. Alex told us about the flower fields that made Redondo Beach

the "carnation capital" of America! Some of the attendees remembered the flower fields that were replaced by Mira Costa High School. He talked about his book, which is a pictorial history of the contributions of the Mexican American population and illustrates a previously "invisible" community that has been part of the Beach Cities for a century.

*Old Redondo*, a book written by Dennis Shanahan some years ago (now out of print) which did not reference the Mexican American community at all, inspired Alex to write his book. Early Mexican immigrants were agrarian people attracted to our area by agricultural jobs and escaping the chaos of the Mexican Revolution. They also found jobs in the mines of WALTERIA - many of us were surprised to learn of the Redondo area's mining past - extracting diatomaceous earth, a limy substance used in filters, cleaning compounds and many other applications. Later, the Torrance Steel Mill brought other families to our area. As well, the war and the associated aircraft industry attracted workers from around the country to the Beach Cities areas.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Hermosa Beach was the center of life for many of the Mexican Americans and continues to be a focal point for community cultural and religious gatherings. Alex answered questions and reminisced about his own personal story and the stories of the original families who settled and helped build the Beach Cities.

A copy of the Immigration Position adopted by the LWVUS Board in April 2008 is enclosed with this issue of the Beach Voter. The position is based on the consensus responses submitted by local Leagues in February of this year at the end of our Immigration Study.

## LWVC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, continued from page 1

It was especially interesting to hear Mary Wilson, President of the League of Women Voters of the United States speak on how LWVUS is bridging to the future and encouraging all levels of League to continue to work with the Membership Recruitment Initiative, including the next phase: Leadership Development with new members. She also spoke about increasing our visibility with the public by using the media and the new internet technologies to reach out especially to younger voters. Trudy Schafer, our State Board Senior Director for League Program, spoke at the Sunday lunch. The focus of her remarks was Redistricting and Legislative Action.

Overall the Leadership Council for 2008 was well planned and provided opportunities to learn ways to make our local League more effective. Harriet and I were glad we were able to attend and benefit from the important leadership tools and guidance the statewide organization provides to the local levels.

## Reaching New Heights Together

### A report from the LWVUS Convention – Portland, Oregon

Wendy Phillips, LWV Beach Cities delegate

Over 1,000 people, including almost 700 delegates from local and state Leagues throughout the nation, concluded a four-day convention in Portland by updating the LWV Program to address escalating concern about health care and global warming. Although there was vigorous caucusing and debate among several large state delegations on the need for an LWVUS position on redistricting, delegates declined to adopt a more specific nationwide position, leaving Leagues the flexibility to address their concerns on a state-by-state basis. California delegates were, in general, pleased with this outcome in light of the redistricting ballot measure that will be on the November 2008 ballot.

The delegates' passion for reforming health care was expressed by adopting new Program language that emphasizes a need to educate members and communities on healthcare issues and options. "This effort was led by 140 delegates from almost all states across the nation, who coalesced in caucuses and submitted a petition to the board," stated Barbara Barker, delegate from LWV Torrance.

After convention speakers on global warming and climate change challenged the League to help lead change, delegates enthusiastically voted to expand the national Program to include education, at multiple levels of League, which will seek solutions for global climate change. On voting systems—a core issue for the organization—delegates adopted a study, proposed from the floor (a 'non-recommended' item, in League parlance), on the advisability of using the National Popular Vote compact among the states as a method for electing the president. On the possibility of sponsoring presidential debates, delegates strongly urged the board to move quickly to seize opportunities to reclaim the League's role in sponsoring the debates; the board, however, while receptive, made no commitment.

With great cheer, delegates re-elected LWVUS President Mary G. Wilson (Albuquerque, New Mexico) to another two-year term. Wilson will lead a new board of eleven other members, four of whom are incumbents. Among the new board members is Norman Turrill, 64, of Portland, Oregon—the first man to serve on an LWVUS board. Turrill expressed his intention "to demonstrate that many men are [League] members and that more men and women should join." He does not, however, intend to force a gender issue (although he does have his own thoughts on issues such as the LWV name); his priorities include continuing his work on issues such as redistricting, campaign finance, clean elections, ethics, and sunshine laws. And while the new board does not include any California members, Robbie Davis (LWV Pasadena Area) was elected to chair the Nominating Committee for a slate of board nominees for the 2010-12 term.

With reservations, delegates approved a new budget and an increase to PMP (per member payment) from \$26.80 to \$28.00 and \$29.20 for fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10, respectively. In the process of considering the PMP increases and the challenges in balancing the organization's budget, many delegates expressed concern about the LWVUS's heavy reliance on expensive mail appeals (in particular, the acquisition costs of mailing lists) as well as confusion with fundraising efforts by state and local Leagues. Many delegates felt the LWVUS should retool fundraising efforts away high-cost mail appeals to other fundraising strategies such as membership recruitment, major gift campaigns, and planned giving. (Continued on page 5.)

## LWVUS CONVENTION, continued from page 4

Delegates also dealt with other business matters, including minor changes to the organization's bylaws. One proposal, for a significant bylaws amendment that would have made it easier for local and state Leagues to advocate directly to their elected federal officials, was extensively debated and narrowly defeated as a result of concern over complexities of federal politics and the need for the organization to speak with one voice.

This altogether enriching experience started with an opening address by the Honorable Barbara Roberts, first woman governor of Oregon (1991-95), who acknowledged the legacy handed down from many Oregonian women starting with Sacagawea (c.1788 – 1812), the Shoshone woman who acted as interpreter and guide to the Lewis and Clark Expedition on their way to the Pacific Northwest; to the pioneer women of the Oregon Trail, many of whom founded Oregon's first schools and churches; to the Oregon suffragists who fought for and, in 1912, won the right to vote (well before the nation's women were enfranchised to vote in 1920). For more details on the four days of convention, go to [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

## Symposium on South Bay Education Showcases Districts' Accomplishments And Looming Financial Challenges

Margaret Thelen, LWVBC Education Chair

"Education in the South Bay," a two-hour symposium co-sponsored by the LWV Beach Cities and the Redondo Beach Library on April 7, featured officials from eight local school districts. Officials from the Centinela, El Segundo, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Wiseburn districts each spoke of the challenges their districts face, while also highlighting each district's unique accomplishments and breakthroughs.

Barbara Inatsugu, moderator and LWVC Director for Education, stated that through working with the state PTA and the state School Board Association the League works for public school reform and will continue speaking out against current budget cuts affecting education. The districts represented at the symposium share a common concern about the looming cuts in state education funding for the coming school year. Most said they were facing job and program cuts.

Pamela Short Powell, Inglewood Unified School District Superintendent, said her school district has 14,000 students in 20 schools and one adult school. She was proud that City Honors High School has been recognized as one of the nation's top schools by *U.S. News and World Report*. Inglewood also has five California Distinguished Schools.

Joann Kennelly, Director of Special Education, Centinela Valley Union High School District (and a past president of LWV Beach Cities), explained that this district includes Hawthorne, Lawndale and Leuzinger High Schools and Lloyd Continuation High School. She stated that Lawndale's academic performance index scores have risen from the mid-400s to over 700. She added, however, that the district is losing students, which affects monetary income. This is happening in addition to the many programs and personnel that will be lost due to cuts from Sacramento.

Jeff Yantz, El Segundo Unified School District Superintendent, gave a presentation called "Shift Happens." He stressed the need for changes in education to keep up with the huge technological advances that are being made. He stated that what are predicted to be the top ten jobs in 2010 didn't exist five years ago.

Terry Moore, Hawthorne School District Asst. Supt.-Educational Services, said that teachers work collaboratively, looking at student data to help students achieve. She noted that five Hawthorne schools have been named California Distinguished Schools, and a successful all-day kindergarten has been opened. (Continued on page 6.)



Hermosa Beach School Board Member Greg Breen addresses the symposium. In background, L to R, Hawthorne Asst. Supt. Terry Moore, Inglewood Supt. Pamela Short Powell, Manhattan Beach Asst. Supt. Carolyn Seaton and Redondo Beach Asst. Supt. Nancy Billinger.

EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM, continued from page 5.

Greg Breen, Hermosa Beach City School District Trustee, said he was proud of the district's use of technology to support education. Hermosa Beach teachers have their own web pages to send information to students and parents. He mentioned the parcel tax measure to aid Hermosa's schools that was subsequently voted down in the June election.

Carolyn Seaton, Manhattan Beach Unified School District Asst. Supt.-Educational Services, highlighted a program that pairs general education and special education students to encourage understanding and friendship. She also discussed the district's reliance on the Education Foundation, booster clubs, PTA and other local funding sources to maintain education programs.

Nancy Billinger, Redondo Beach Unified School District Asst. Supt.-Human Resources, stated that the greater diversity of Redondo's population can present the district with challenges not faced by other area districts. She added that Redondo Beach has an aging infrastructure, but has recently passed a \$145 million bond measure that will be used to rebuild Redondo's 100-year-old high school campus.

Matt Wunder, Principal of Dana Middle School in the Wiseburn School District, said that 40% of the district's students come from outside the district, a result of declining enrollment within the district. Wiseburn's Anza Elementary School has eliminated the so-called "racial achievement gap." He noted that Wiseburn's small size contributes to more personalized attention for students.

Harriet Chase, LWV Beach Cities Social Policy Chair who was in charge of the symposium for the League, gave the closing remarks. She thanked the speakers and attending citizens for showing their dedication by coming out to discuss education during Spring Break. The League thanks Harriet for arranging such an informative evening.

### Third Report from your Representative on the Redondo Beach Growth Management and Traffic Committee (GMTC)

By Jim Stewart, LWV-Beach Cities Delegate

Meetings held by GMTC: March 1 (Public Workshop), 17; April 14 (special meeting), 21; May 31 (Public Workshop). Subcommittee meetings: May 10, 19, 29; June 12.

Upcoming meetings: June 23 - Housing Element. July 21 - Circulation Element. August 25 - Circulation Element.  
**September 27- Public Workshop.**

Dates are yet to be determined for discussion of Infrastructure, Open Space, Planning and Development Process and Public Participation Process.

Discussion at the GMTC meeting on April 21 focused on the question: "Does the City have or want a long range plan which addresses our desire to reduce significantly our energy use in both housing and transportation; to increase open space for our progeny; to prepare for the looming infrastructure requirements of area-wide transportation and water supply problems, and so to assist, as a basic principle, in our share of global warming and the increases in population which are overtaking our outdated methods of running the City?" Pros and cons were discussed and a subcommittee was formed to work up a proposal on how this change might be accomplished, including the League's representative.

As indicated above, the subcommittee has been meeting frequently. The six active subcommittee members have each taken on an area of personal interest: Open Space, Sewer and Water Demands, Population Dynamics, Traffic and Overlay Zones, Schools, Mission Statements and Addition of Guiding Principles to General Plan. You will probably guess this last task to be mine. I want to emphasize again that I'd very much appreciate comments, either rosy or vitriolic or just "I read it, so what?" Contact me via e-mail ([jss.sge@verizon.net](mailto:jss.sge@verizon.net)) or by phone (310-406-0915).

**Please! Redondo Beach LWV members, take special note of the date for the next Public Workshop, September 27. This is your chance to be heard on where our community should be headed.**

Although this committee was originally "planned" to disappear on or about June 30, its existence has been extended for three months.

Another separate but related matter: The Redondo Beach "Green Task Force" report has been submitted. It is 104 pages and is in my opinion an excellent report. You can download it from

[http://www/redondo.org/depts/boards\\_n\\_commissions/green\\_task\\_force/default.asp](http://www/redondo.org/depts/boards_n_commissions/green_task_force/default.asp)

### Why I Joined the League by Maggie Wilkinson

While I was at Pomona College in Claremont in the early 1950's, all the female students were introduced to a view of life called "Gracious Living." At that time, women graduating from college were expected to marry and become the center of the social activities that would support their husbands' careers. As a way to help us learn how to be the hostess for dinner parties, we had sit-down dinners four nights a week in the dining hall where I learned to eat slowly and chat with the women sitting at my table because we couldn't leave until the head table chose to leave. We were also taught how to serve tea to guests and we were introduced to the League of Women Voters of Claremont where we were invited to attend meetings to learn more about the activities of the organization and how much it contributed to local communities as well as to state and national legislative issues.

I married in 1960, and became a stay-at-home mom because I began having children right away. We moved to El Segundo in 1965. I was okay with staying home with the children, but I also realized I needed some outside intellectual activities, so I contacted the Inglewood-Hawthorne LWV and became a member. Jan Nathanson was my mentor, helping me find ways to participate in the League activities while juggling my family responsibilities.

In the late 1970's my family situation changed and I had to go back to work. My level of LWV participation dropped considerably but I continued my League membership, and when the Inglewood-Hawthorne LWV merged with Beach Cities, I maintained my membership. Since I retired from working in 2000, I have been able to increase my participation in League and have been able to continue my interest in environmental issues as a member of the Board. League has been and continues to be an important part of my life and helps me feel I am contributing to my community.

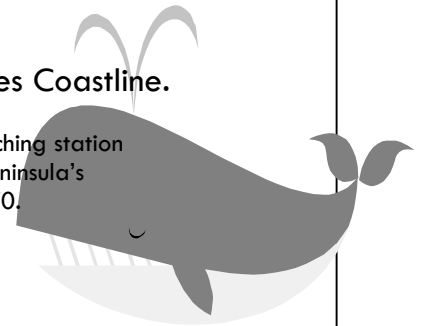
**Why did you join the League? We want to hear from you. Send your story (short or long) to [editor@beachvoter.org](mailto:editor@beachvoter.org).**

TRI-LEAGUE PRESENTS

## GO SEE TRIP!

to the Point Vicente Interpretive Center on the Palos Verdes Coastline.

The Interpretive Center is a small natural history museum and whale watching station located next to the Point Vicente Lighthouse. Exhibits highlight the Peninsula's geology, flora and fauna. More information at 310-377-5370.



Monday, July 21. Brown bag lunch at 12 followed by guided tour. See Calendar for details.

### INVITATION TO JOIN THE LEAGUE:

All citizens of voting age are welcome to join. Associate membership is open to young people and non-citizens. If you can't attend our monthly meetings and special events, please consider showing your support through your 2007/08 annual membership fee of \$50 (which is not tax deductible -- however, donations to the LWV Beach Cities Education Fund are tax deductible).

For more information, contact Susan Grebe ([rgrebe6072@aol.com](mailto:rgrebe6072@aol.com) or 310/545-2097). Or just send your check (payable to the League of Women Voters--Beach Cities), to Peggy Bartlett at 701 13th St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Interests \_\_\_\_\_

July 21 Monday	12:00 PM LUNCH. 1 PM GUIDED TOUR.	Tri-League <b>Go-See Trip</b> to the Point Vicente Interpretive Center on the Palos Verdes Coast. Brown bag lunch at noon followed by guided tour. Call Peggy (310-545-1087 about rides.)	Point Vicente Interpretive Center 31501 Palos Verdes Dr. West Rancho Palos Verdes (¼ mi. south of Hawthorne Blvd. Look for right turn lane leading to Pt. Vicente Lighthouse and the Inter- pretive Center.)
July 26 Saturday	9:30 AM- 2:00 PM	<b>Popovers in Pasadena.</b> League Workshops in morning followed by luncheon speaker: <b>Calif. Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero</b> <b>“Revolving Door—Our Correctional Systems: Rehabilitation vs. Recidivism.”</b>  <u>Reply to Peggy (310-545-1087) by July 13 to receive discounted \$20 price and share rides.</u>	Women’s City Club 160 North Oakland (1½ blks north of Colorado Blvd. Parking in rear off N. Madison Ave.) Pasadena
August 12 Tuesday	1:30-3:30 PM	LWVBC Board Retreat.	Home of Doris Rosenberg.



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