



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF VENTURA COUNTY

# VOTER

April 2011, Volume 53 No.7

## PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

In January of this year Mary G. Wilson, the President of the League of Women Voters of the US, sent a letter to members of the U.S. House of Representatives on the topic of climate and energy policy. What follows are some of the important points that she made in that letter and other LWVUS documents.



Based on the best available science, she urged the representatives to support a cap on greenhouse gas emissions for the year 2020 that is at least 20% below 1990 levels, without loopholes that will undermine the cap. The scientific evidence is clear that climate change, caused largely by human emissions of greenhouse gases, is already causing increasingly severe droughts and heat waves in some areas, intensifying floods and hurricanes in others, and triggering more wildfires.

Without a scientifically-based cap on emissions, other public policies cannot hope to succeed in protecting against catastrophic damage to public health, the environment and economies around the world.

An effective control program must avoid loopholes or any weakening mechanisms that undermine or make the cap unattainable, such as unenforceable offsets or "cost containment" and "safety valve" provisions that would allow sources to continue emissions at dangerous levels.

Global climate change is one of the most serious threats to the environment, health and economy of our nation. We can reduce global warming

pollution by using existing technologies to make power plants and factories more efficient, make cars go farther on a gallon of gas, and shift to cleaner technologies. Cities, states and individuals are adopting many of these solutions, which also reduce our dependence on oil, reduce air pollution, and protect pristine places from oil drilling and mining. The LWVUS urges federal action that reduces global warming pollutants on a national and global scale.

And remember that April 22, 2011 is Earth Day, a day to demonstrate commitment to environmental protection and sustainability. The theme of this year's Earth Day is A Billion Acts of Green, a campaign to encourage millions of individual green acts – one billion altogether – in advance of the global Earth Summit in Rio in 2012.

— Jennifer Matos, President

## A "TAKE ACTION" MESSAGE FROM LWVUS

March 19, 2011: Right now your Senators and Representative are on recess from business in Washington, D.C. When they return to their offices in your nation's capital they are expected to consider legislation that would undermine the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) responsibility to limit health-threatening pollution. A number of bills in both the Senate and the House of Representatives would either destroy or seriously limit the effectiveness of the Clean Air Act and other laws that protect Americans from polluters.

Now is the time to call your Senators and Representative! It is your right to be heard by your elected officials. Tell your Senators and Representative to vote against any legislation that would limit the EPA's ability to regulate pollution. (See your LWVVC Directory for addresses.)



**VENTURA UNIT NEWS**

Thirty or more people, including Ventura Unit Member Supervisor Steve Bennett and many guests, attended the March meeting at which Mayor Bill Fulton spoke about libraries and library privatization. Federal money was used for Ventura's Avenue library. Some cities in the county thought there was an historical imbalance as Ventura had three libraries run by the county. When the formula changed to recognize service levels, Ventura had to add money or cut services. At the same time, the general fund money from the State was drying up and will probably be gone in the new state budget. Two years ago, the County Library Committee adopted a budget that did not include Wright. The Friends of the Library managed to keep it open for an additional five months. The city tried in two elections to have a parcel or sales tax increase passed. Neither measure passed.

If the county can keep providing the current level of library service for Ventura, Fulton sees no reason to change but he argues that strategic planning for the future is critical.

If we wish to withdraw from the county system, there is a window of opportunity in June; if we do not act then, we will be in the system for another year. There are three options: run our own library, but that would take millions of dollars; stay with the county, but there are concerns about whether the current level of service can continue; contract with someone else with the only possible bidder being Library Systems & Services, Inc. (LSSI) under a five-year contract. The pros for this are they can operate more cheaply because there would be a different pension system and they could buy books more cheaply as they run a lot of libraries and have better buying power. Cons are the amount of control and transparency. The city is hiring an expert, at a cost of \$60,000, to begin a short and long term planning process to help with the decisions.

A Friend of the Library spokesperson said that their volunteers are very much against privatization; they want the funds raised there to go to services, not maintenance. We also learned that Assemblyman Das Williams has introduced a bill which would require a vote of the people for li-

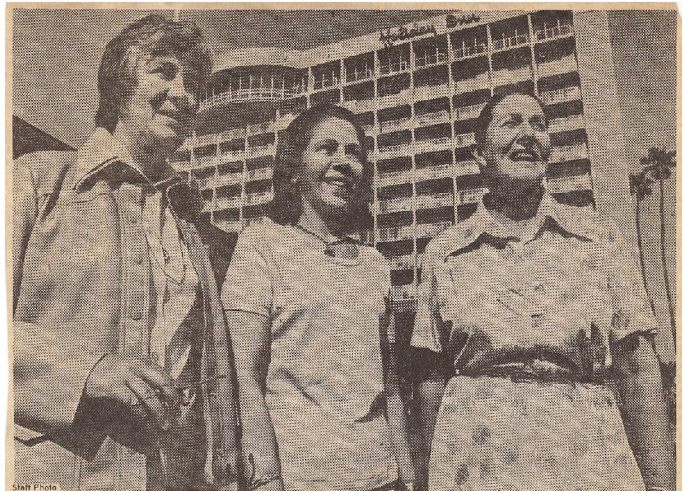
brary privatization. It would, of course, not be retroactive.

— Nell McCombs, Ventura Unit

**LWVVC OPPOSES CANADA LARGA PROJECT**

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, the Board approved a statement to the Ventura City Council opposing the annexation and future development of the Canada Larga project under consideration. Annexation of an area outside of the city's sphere of influence when there are areas within the city for infill and redevelopment is contrary to our local position on land use planning. This annexation and development would also involve a substantial amount of money to do environmental studies and reports. The city is working with consultants to analyze a variety of options and assess the need for executive homes, among other issues. A preliminary report is due in April and LWVVC would consider annexation of areas within the city's sphere of influence should a need be demonstrated.

**From the Archives: Ventura County Star,  
April 22, 1976  
Women Voters Meet in Ventura**



Staff Photo  
California League of Women Voters officials, from left, Ann Rosser, Camarillo, Dorothy Kellner, Los Angeles, and Katie Roberts, Oxnard, get ready to start a four-day conference in Ventura 4/22/76

The League of Women Voters opened its biennial two-day Presidents' Council at the Holiday Inn, Ventura, today.

The presidents of 82 local leagues of California were greeted by Ventura County Supervisor Ed Jones at a luncheon and were to go into workshops ....

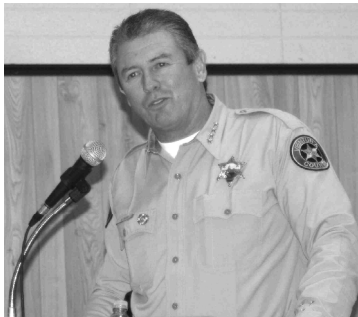
**EXAMINING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM – VALUABLE FORUM FOR VENTURA COUNTY**

The League of Women Voters of Ventura County public forum “*Examining the Juvenile Justice System: Is it Meeting the Needs of Ventura County?*” took place on February 26, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Santa Paula Community Center. Jennifer Matos, President of the LWVVC, welcomed the audience and introduced LWVVC member David Maron, who in turn introduced the speakers. Several LWVVC members provided generous refreshments throughout along with coffee and other beverages.

The program began with keynote speaker Kathy Long, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Supervisor. She provided a comprehensive overview of the county’s juvenile justice system, indicating the role played by each component and placing special emphasis on the Judge Steven Z. Perren Juvenile Justice Complex and its role in helping juvenile offenders to find “the right path.” Sheriff Geoff Dean gave a second keynote presentation and began by observing that Supervisor Long had been so thorough as to leave him little to add. He supplied many details, however, often using statistics to show the gravity of the current system: about 10% of the calls to the Sheriff’s Department involve juveniles; crimes committed by juveniles have become much more serious in nature; the number of homeless juveniles “living in cars, couch hopping” is increasing. There is a race against time, and outreach programs to provide youth with alternatives, at the earliest possible age, are crucial.



Supervisor Kathy Long



Sheriff Geoff Dean



Judge Donald D. Coleman

Four panelists were then seated, each of whom spoke briefly before being joined by the keynote speakers for a lengthy audience Q and A moderated by David Maron. Superior Court Judge Donald D. Coleman, currently Supervising Juvenile Judge, had been alluded to by Sheriff Dean, who suggested that Judge Coleman’s new role had caused him to soften his views on sentencing; Judge Coleman readily concurred. He elaborated on the devastating consequences for juveniles of difficult family backgrounds and concluded that we need to “redefine the family unit.” The next panelist, child advocate Jane LeMond-Alvarez, in turn took up those words and also described her own evolution from a lock-‘em-up attitude as a young police officer. Together with her husband Leo, she has long been tracking children killed by caregivers, looking for ways to save them before this ultimate fate. She noted that crimes of violence against children by their parents or other caregivers are not regarded with sufficient seriousness. Juvenile offenders are often abused children, and we need to work at tracking the abuse when inflicted on infants rather than teens.

Two other panelists rounded out the picture, with all its difficulties. Deputy Terry Hart of the Ventura County Probation Agency, emphasizing the importance of providing juvenile offenders with the resources that can prevent their recidivism, and described the problems of dealing with a diverse population constantly in flux. Dr. Roger Rice, Associate Superintendent of Student Services for the Ventura County Office of Education, pointed to an analogous situation in the schools: children being prepared

**EXAMINING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM – VALUABLE FORUM FOR  
VENTURA COUNTY** *Continued*



Jane LeMonde-Alvarez    Deputy Terry Hart    Dr. Roger Rice

for life enter the system at every point in the curriculum with extremely disparate educational backgrounds.

On a positive note, the speakers continually emphasized the high quality of collaboration among the various Ventura County agencies; Sheriff Dean indicated that this was exemplified by the very makeup of this group of participants - who repeatedly built on one another's arguments.

Many of the audience stayed in the auditorium for a lunch immediately after the forum, catered by the Garden Market; fortunately, most of the speakers had time to join them, as guests of the LWVVC.

Attendance (the audience included Leo Alvarez and Santa Paula Mayor Fred Robinson) was close to sixty, falling short of the number hoped for. The twenty evaluation forms returned, however, were extremely gratifying. All but one felt that the event "met their expectations," and that they "felt involved and able to participate" (the one found all speakers "excellent" but wanted greater audience participation); the speakers were highly praised. There were suggestions that the program should be presented at other venues, with the same participants. The LWVVC is quite willing to consider this.

— Steve Lattimore, LWVVC Program Director

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**A "CALIFORNIA FORWARD" APPROACH  
TO REFORM**

On March 16, LWVVC members joined the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara in a workshop presented by *California Forward*, a state-wide organization that aims to open the door for government reform. Bruce A. McPherson, formerly the CA Secretary of State (2005-07), a State Senator (1996-2004, and a State Assemblyman (1993-96), presented a timely, informative program which encouraged participants to express their goals for efficient, effective government reform.

McPherson stated *California Forward's* approach to reform is through redistricting, primary process reform, and budget process reform. *California For-*

*ward* and its California Forward Action Fund were strong supporters of redistricting and continue to be involved in assuring its implementation. In 2010 *California Forward* endorsed the top-two open-primary (Prop. 14) on the June primary ballot and is now working to ensure its successful implementation. Finally, *California Forward* has applied the best practices of budget process reform from other states and the private sector to a series of reforms that would streamline California's budget process.

Above all, *California Forward* encourages people to meet and get input from the public about the state-wide reforms we need. This lively discussion at LWVSB's meeting at the Louise Lowry Davis Recreation Center in Santa Barbara offered many well-argued suggestions for government reform.

— Pat Murray, Editor Voter

## **IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM LWVC**

In March, the state league issued an important message about the California budget crisis. Time is running short for an important step toward a balanced California budget. The League urges the Legislature to place a measure on a special election ballot to extend current taxes that will otherwise expire soon. Our legislators are elected to come together and agree on the necessary functions of government. Adopting a budget and the revenues needed to provide for those functions is the single most important thing our representatives can – and should – do.

A two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature is needed to either pass revenue increases or put a measure on the ballot to ask voters to do so. Unfortunately, many members of the minority party have taken a pledge not to support increased taxes under any circumstances, making very real the possibility of even more Draconian cuts than those that are currently on the table.

“If a minority of legislators are unwilling to vote for an honest, balanced budget solution themselves, we urge them to at least let the voters do that job . . . . Allow the voters to have the choice about whether to keep these taxes at their current rate or not,” said Janis R. Hirohama, LWVC President.

The budget being considered by the legislature makes significant cuts in social and human services that show the dire need for more revenue. Even election services that protect voter access and participation in elections could be cut. We as a society should be able to protect the sanctity of our vote and provide for the basic needs of the most vulnerable among us. Californians should have the chance to vote on revenues that would make that possible. “We urge the legislature to work with the Governor to put tax extensions on the ballot so that the voters have a chance to speak on this important issue,” stated Hirohama.

*This message is excerpted from a Release from the LWVC, March 4, 2011. For further information, contact Trudy Schafer, First Vice President at 916-442-7215.*

## **ENCOURAGING TEEN VOTERS**

On Wednesday, February 24, LWV unit members of the Conejo/Simi Valley unit coordinated a Teen Voter project that connects with 18-year-old students, the Thousand Oaks Civic Center, and the high schools in the Conejo district.

This project, the Teen Voter Outreach Program, is designed to encourage 18-year-old students to become registered voters. The program is sponsored each year by the League of Women Voters in conjunction with the City of Thousand Oaks and the Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD).

The Thousand Oaks Mayor’s office provides specially designed birthday cards signed by the current Mayor, which are enclosed in envelopes along with voter registration forms. The envelopes are delivered to the schools to be distributed through student home rooms before the end of the school year. Last year and again this year we added private schools to the program for a total of seven high schools, amounting to over 800 18-year-old senior students.

In order to arrange for printing the Mayor’s birthday card, the League of Women Voters asks each school to provide the number of students who will turn 18 in the next calendar year. Staff from CVUSD and the City Clerk of the City of Thousand Oaks, League member Linda Lawrence, provide the materials for distributing the envelopes. Our unit members prepare the envelopes and label each high school with the student’s name and home room teacher.

The Teen Voter Outreach Program is our opportunity to introduce Conejo Valley teens to the “Right to Vote,” enabling them to have a voice in the community. Next year we hope to plan a way of distributing registration forms to 17-year-old high school students as well as the graduating students. The League benefits from this worthy project and the students benefit from the information from the invitation to become registered citizens. We recommend that other League city units incorporate this or a similar Teen Voter project in their program. *Contact: 522-4231 or [ispy-murray@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ispy-murray@sbcglobal.net) for further information.*

## CALENDAR FOR APRIL 2011 EVENTS

**Attend any meeting; all League meetings are open to all members and the public.**

### CITY UNIT MEETINGS – April 2011

- Santa Paula** Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. – Noon. Favel Jens, communications specialist and SEIU member, will speak on privatization of the libraries. Santa Paula Blanchard Library, 119 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Paula in the FLAIR computer room. For information, contact 525-6088.
- Ventura/Ojai** Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2p.m. Status reports and discussion on Canada Larga, briefing on state league convention and national studies underway, and our League's Annual meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>. E.P. Foster Library, Topping Room, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura. Parking in the Rear. For information, contact 658-0587.
- Camarillo,  
Conejo, Oxnard/Pt. H.** No city unit meetings are planned in these locations. **Members are encouraged to join any other unit and to attend the special events.**

### BOARD MEETING

**Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> — 10a.m. Ventura College of Law**, Conference Room, 4475 Market Street, Ventura. (Parking in the rear). Please be prompt.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> — 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m, Ventura County “Organizing for Empowerment”, Women’s Forum.** CSUCI, Malibu Hall, University Dr. at Chapel Dr., Camarillo. Registration after 3/26 is \$45 (\$20 students). Max=180 attendees, so check at 805-340-3180 or [info@vcwf.org](mailto:info@vcwf.org).

**Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – 8 a.m.– 1:30 p.m., Ventura County Assn. of Water Agencies, Annual Water Symposium.** Speakers include Ellen Hanak from the Public Policy Institute of California, two panels, and closing remarks by Jerry Johns, former Deputy Director of the California Dept. of Water Resources. Registration: [www.awavc.org](http://www.awavc.org) ; fee @ \$125. Open to the public.

# League of Women Voters of Ventura County

P.O. Box 787  
Ventura, CA 93002

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## THE APRIL 2011 VOTER

Volume 53 No. 7

President's Notebook  
LWVC and LWVUS Notices  
Juvenile Justice Forum  
April Calendar  
Local News

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2010-2011 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### League Of Women Voters of Ventura County

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*very important)

Do not include this information in League Directory

#### **Please select your class of Membership:**

A voting member is at least 18 and a citizen.

Annual dues:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$58.00 Individual voting member

\_\_\_\_\_ \$87.00 Two-member household

\_\_\_\_\_ \$40.00 Associate member

\_\_\_\_\_ (under 18 or not a citizen)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 Student member

\_\_\_\_\_ Please contact me; I need to apply for

\_\_\_\_\_ Dues assistance to pay for membership

I've included an additional contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make payment to League of Women Voters of Ventura  
County (LWVC) at P.O. Box 787, Ventura, CA 93002**

**Thank you for your support!**

Membership in the LWVC entitles you to national, state, and local membership in the League. Joining after April 30 of any calendar year extends your membership through August 31 of the next year.