



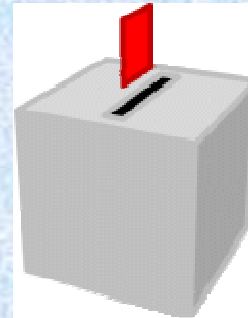
VOTER

February/March 2010

Volume 50, Number 4

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Be an informed voter

CALENDAR LWVSLOCO 2010

January 30 Saturday	Congresswoman Capps: HEALTH REFORM POSTPONED DUE TO SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES	
February 2 Tuesday	BOARD MEETING PG& E Community Center	9 AM – 10:30 AM
February 14 Sunday	NATIONAL LWV, 90TH BIRTHDAY	
February 20 Saturday	CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: Special Program Postponed until Spring	
February 23 Tuesday	BOARD MEETING PG&E Community Center, SLO	9AM – 10:30 AM
March 11 Thursday	Lunch & Learn: EDUCATION PG&E Community Center- BYOBB	11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
March 23 Tuesday	BOARD MEETING PG&E Community Center, SLO	9AM - 10:30 AM



Message from the President Ann Garfinkel

This month I am giving up my space to bring you the following press release from our National President, Mary Wilson. Our democratic process is threatened and we must be vigilant in our efforts to keep the voters, not corporations, the center of every election.

Yours in League,
Ann

CITIZENS UNITED DECISION SETS OFF REVOLUTION IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE Supreme Court Erred, Decision Undermines Basic Pillar of American Democracy

Washington, DC –The following is a statement by Mary G. Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters on the Supreme Court’s decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*. The League filed an [amicus brief](#) in this case:

“The Supreme Court has made a tragic mistake. Their decision announced today in *Citizens United v. FEC* is constitutionally irresponsible and will surely bring about an anti-democratic revolution in how we finance elections in this country. Today, basic pillars of American democracy have been

undermined – that elections should not be corrupted by vast corporate wealth and that the voters should be at the center of our democratic system.

"Justice Stevens had it right when he said, in his dissent, ‘The Court’s ruling threatens to undermine the integrity of elected institutions across the Nation. The path it has taken to reach its outcome will, I fear, do damage to this institution.’

“In creating a new constitutional right for corporations to spend unlimited amounts of their shareholder’s money to determine the outcome in candidate elections, the Court has unleashed into our elections tremendous sums of money from for-profit corporations that cannot possibly be matched in quantity by contributions from ordinary citizens. The only possible outcome of this is that big money and special interests will have an even tighter grip on our democracy.

“Congress and the President enacted campaign finance laws over a series of decades for a reason – to protect our democracy from the perverse influence of big money in our elections. In making this decision, the Court has ignored the best interests of the American public and our representative form of government.”

Important New Contact Information

LWVSLO Phone number 805-782-4040

PG&E Community Center
6588 Ontario Road, Avila Beach
(Off Hwy 101 and San Luis Bay Drive)

Membership Memo

I have two pieces of good news. First, I want to welcome Ronald J. Lapp, of Paso Robles, who joined LWVUS. Second, our membership roster is up-to-date. I up-date it regularly when I learn of new members, or when there is some other kind of change for any individual member.

The bad news is our membership is down.

As the Board prepares to get out a new Membership Directory and Handbook, it is crucial that we have your correct name, address, phone number, and/or email.

There are two purposes of the Membership Handbook and Directory. The first purpose is to inform members of the structure of our local organization—a “who’s who” of Board Officers and Directors, the Presidents’ Council, who belongs to the organization.

The second purpose of the Members’ Handbook and Directory is to inform members of the principles, guidelines, and positions that the League has, at the national, state, and local levels. It is how we determine what actions we can take when we see a government issue that needs to be addressed.

The official dues period is from July 1 to June 30 of each year. Most people like to pay their dues when they come to the Annual Meeting in June. At the same time, they can make corrections to their name and contact information. Of course, we can receive dues at any time. The same goes for other kinds of contributions. The Annual Meeting is also a good time to fill out an Interest Form to help the Board know each member’s areas of special interest.

We look forward to seeing you at our next Lunch and Learn in March!

Sharon G. Whitney, Membership Director

Learning Opportunities Available

The Nominating Committee has begun its work of gathering a list of candidates for the 2010 – 2012 open board positions. We are eager to include new members in board participation. If you are interested in learning more about what is involved in serving on the board please give one of our members a call or e-mail. We are happy to give you information so that you can make an informed decision. It's time to mark “Becoming more active in LWV off your 'bucket list'”. Members of the committee are Lee Chivens, Dotty Conner, Sara Horne, Sharon Whitney and chair Colleen Ehrenberg. We look forward to hearing from you!

Transportation Assistance

If you are a member who could use assistance getting to one of our events you may call one of our board members living nearby and they will be happy to provide transportation. If you would be willing to volunteer to take someone to an event, please contact Arlene Powers at aaupowers@charter.net or call the league office at 805-782-4040. We want to make every effort see that everyone who is interested is able to attend. Those board members to contact for rides are Vera Wallen, Cayucos, Pati Dale, Morro Bay, Arlene Powers, Los Osos, Ann Garfinkel, Los Osos, Sara Horne, Avila Beach, Eve Jeys, Nipomo and Sharon Whitney, San Luis Obispo.

Constitutional Convention Program Postponed

The Constitutional Convention program scheduled for February 20 has been postponed until later in the Spring. Our Program Chairman, Arlene Powers, continues to work on securing a knowledgeable speaker on this topic and hopes to schedule a Lunch & Learn program before the end of the League's year. There are several statewide groups focused on initiating a constitutional convention and the LWVC website www.LWVC.org is tracking their progress if you would like more information on this subject.

L&L Planners Set Agenda For Year

At the January Lunch & Learn Program Planning session our members stated they would like to see our local League place an emphasis on Social Policy: in particular Public Health and our continued support for First Five SLO. They also felt we should maintain our focus on Environmental Health, especially Air and Water.

While discussing national LWV positions covering Citizen Rights, Congress and the Presidency, the Election Process and the Election of the President, it was agreed that we need to emphasize our continued support for Civil Liberties. Our members requested LWV review their position on Agriculture, specifically on the ethics of genetically engineered crops. In addition, unanimous support was indicated for securing national health care reform.

OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS

Agency: Nacimiento Project Commission

Date: November 19, 2009 4:00 PM

Location: Templeton Community Services
District Offices

Report filed by: Barbara Weymann and
Dorothy Byles

Members Present: Dave Romero, Chair, City of San Luis Obispo, David Brooks, Vice Chair, Templeton CSD, Grigger Jones, Atascadero MWC, John Hamon, City of El Paso de Robles

Members Absent: Frank Mecham, SLO County Flood Control,

Also attending was John Hollenbeck, Chief Executive of the project

One of the main things that came out in this meeting was that Paso Robles will not get any of this water at this time, but are still obligated to pay back the bonds for construction of the project. The vote turning down the water rate increase prevents them from building the treatment plant that is necessary to have before they can use the water. Now they can't do anything about it until at least the 2010 election when they will try to persuade the public of the need for the treatment plant. And then, they are at least 2 years away from having it built, whenever it is approved.

Construction Status

Overall construction is about 95% complete. One of the 5 construction contracts was completed on Sept. 22, 2009. Another is expected to be complete by Dec. 15, 2009. Minor work remains on the Cuesta Tank, Rocky Canyon Pump Station and Tank, Santa Ysabel Pump Station and Camp Roberts Tank. The Intake Pump Station construction will be finished by January 2010.

The Pipeline-North contract has about 1,200 feet of pipe to install, but should be completed by the end of November 2009. Pipeline-South is expected to be complete by the end of January 2010.

Status of Project Delivery Team Activities

Right of way - The final easement offer package for the Rocky Canon Road drainage easement has been presented to the landowner.

Design Activities – Black and Veatch continues to work with the construction manager for any requests for information with two full-time design team liaisons.

Environmental Permitting Activities – The Salinas River Crossing north of Paso Robles was completed on October 20, 2009.

Crossing the small stream near the Cuesta Grade also has been accomplished. There was only one discovery of an ancient grave out of 45 miles of pipeline!

Outside Agency Issues

Monterey County Water Resources Agency: Participants have submitted their 3-year projected demand schedule to the District.

PG&E: They are continuing to work on their projects. They are on schedule to complete the Intake Pump Station work by May 15, 2010.

Invasive Species Prevention

An elected officials meeting was held on October 2, 2009, with Monterey County water Resource Agency, SLO District, and Commission members. All agreed to get inspection and decontamination programs in place in time for the 2010 boating season. Start-up is slated to begin March 31, 2010 with full implementation by Memorial Day. There will be an MOU to formalize that goal and to document each parties' roles. There will be public outreach meetings near the lake to better inform the boaters. Emphasis is on

preventative measures for now. There will be signage approaching the lake as well.

Nacimiento Reserve Status

Reservoir status is 16% full as of November 10, 2009. The October storm brought the lake level up 19 feet in 24 hours. The current storage peaked between storms at 74,070 acre-feet.

Schedule and Budget Issues

They are still within budget limits.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2010.

Meeting was dismissed at 5:40PM.

OBSERVATION REPORT

Agency: Board of Trustees, SLO Co.

Office of Education

Date of Observation: January 14, 2010

Note: Prior to the Board meeting, the Board members had visited State Preschool Classes at Grover Beach Elementary School and Special Education, State Preschool, and First 5 Preschool Classrooms at Oceano Elementary School.

All members of the Board were present. The meeting was called to order by President Floyd Moffatt at 1:35 PM, followed by Pledge of Allegiance, adoption of the Agenda, and Consent Agenda. The floor was opened for Public Comments. There were none.

ADMINISTRATION

Reports

Superintendent

1. Dr. Crocker announced that the Annual Report would appear in the Tribune on February 10.

2. He discussed the state budget, in which despite significant shortfalls, the governor professes to "protect education." Dr. Crocker described the state budget process as only

beginning, with an extensive series of hearings and ultimately votes by the legislature and approval or veto by the governor. He indicated that he did not expect any more reductions this fiscal year. He expects considerable reductions next year when transfers of special education services from the County Office to local Districts will take place. Most of those supplied by the County Office will be in South County.

Action Items

- The Board approved a policy regarding "Education of Homeless Youth."
- The Board approved a policy regarding "Education of Foster Youth."

Note: These policies were presented to the Board for review at the December 10 Board meeting. According to a report given at that meeting, "homelessness is defined as just not the family that doesn't have a shelter over their head. It means not having a stable home, families who are doubled up...etc." A count in January 2009 indicated almost 1,000 homeless students, almost one in every classroom of 30 students. There are two areas of work provided by SLOCOE, ie., direct service for students in the Community Schools, and county-wide services for homeless and foster youth. Such services include free or reduced-price lunches, transportation services, and a tutoring program. There are thirteen tutors currently who go to homeless shelters, group homes, homes of foster youth, and after-school programs. There is also professional development for staff. The budget for these county-wide services is \$300,000.

There was also information from last year's Truancy and Dropout Taskforce. The truancy rate last year for the first semester was 15.3%, slightly higher than the State rate of 14.9%. Homeless or foster youth are at risk for dropping out, and poverty, parent substance abuse, and teen pregnancy are

high risk factors. "The biggest risk failure is school failure.....when students have a positive experience in school, they stay in school."

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Report

Teresa Iniguez-Vega, Coordinator of Title III Programs, presented a report on the progress of students identified as English learners throughout the county. In SLO County, over 14% of students are defined as English learners. The goals of the Title III programs are to develop English language skills and increase ability to use the regular English and math curriculum. Students whose first language is something other than English, mainly Spanish in SLO county, are given a language placement test which measures the level of fluency in English. The categories are Non-English speaker, Limited English proficiency, and Fluent English proficiency. Initially a Home Language Survey is made to determine what languages are used in the home by parents. Progress is determined by the Annual Measurement Achievement Outcome (AMAO) instrument which measures improvement in learning English, need for increased English instruction, and how the student is doing in access to the regular English and math curriculum. Teachers in this program need a special credential for teaching English learners.

BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Report

2008-09 County Schools Service Fund Audit

A report was given by a representative of the firm that conducted the required annual outside independent audit. The County Office is given an "Unqualified Opinion", which means that the financial records are all essentially correct. This is the highest rating given.

INTERDISTRICT ATTENDANCE APPEALSAction items

The Board heard two appeals:

(1) The grandmother of the student for whom the appeal is made presented the case. The student is a second semester junior at Morro Bay High School. The family initially lived in Los Osos but has moved to Cayucos. The student has done well academically and is also active in sports. The family wishes the student to remain at MBHS rather than be required to transfer to the Coast USD. The mother can transport him on her way to work. The SL Coastal USD is currently not granting transfers and has denied the request.

The Board granted this appeal.

(2) The second appeal was heard in closed session, and the meeting was adjourned after that.

Submitted by JoAnne Milburn

LWV Celebrates 90th Birthday and Anniversary of the 19th Amendment

On February 14, 1920, with passage of the 19th amendment imminent, suffragists met to transform the movement into the League of Women Voters to help educate women to be responsible voters. On August 26, 1920, just days after Tennessee became the thirty-sixth (and last- needed) state to ratify the amendment, the Secretary of State signed the proclamation enacting the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote. Because of this important history, the League of Women Voters, more than any other organization, "owns" August 26th, Women's Equality Day, and should be celebrating it every year - especially in 2010, the 90th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment. While we will be celebrating the League's 90th anniversary all through 2009 - 2010, we should be giving August 26, 2010, equal importance with our "birthday."

Brief History

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others first seriously proposed women's right to vote at Seneca Falls, N.Y., on July 19, 1848. Prior to this time, Susan B. Anthony was active in the women's temperance movement, but when she met Stanton in 1851, they joined forces and worked together over the next half of the century - and what a force they were. Although they both died before the goal was reached, they lived long enough to see significant progress and were primarily responsible for the ultimate success. Carrie Chapman Catt, founder and early leader of the League of Women Voters, younger than Anthony and Stanton, entered the struggle later and became a leader in the suffragist movement that helped lead it to victory with passage of the 19th amendment in 1920.

League's Mission - Educate Current and Future Generations on the History

The sacrifices these three made to win the right to vote for women are amazing and one that few people recognize today. In most cases, they gave their lives to the movement. Becoming public advocates at the time for this or any movement, meant that they were living lives and playing roles in a totally unconventional, unacceptable, inappropriate manner - to many they were pariahs. It is impossible to even conceive of how difficult their lives were, what hardships they endured - public humiliation, terms in jail, ridicule - and they did it so that the women of yesterday, today and tomorrow can exercise their right to vote.

Recently, a group of college women, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as faculty, attended a showing of *Iron Jawed Angels*. At the end of the film the auditorium sat in stunned silence. When the moderator opened discussion, one after the other of the women said in voices filled with emotion and in a variety of ways, "I had no idea what they

went through.” And they were not alone. Without reminders, such as this 90th anniversary, few of us can really know what they endured throughout their lives. (*Article adapted from LWV website*)

Firsts in Black History

The first Black public official was William A. Leidesdorf, who was named sub-consul to the Mexican territory of Yerba Buena (San Francisco) in October, 1845. In September, 1847, Leidesdorf was elected to the San Francisco town council, receiving the third highest vote. He became the town treasurer in 1848 and served on the three-man committee which established San Francisco's first school.

The first Black elected to public office in a settled community was John Mercer Langston, who was elected clerk of Brownhelm township, Lorain County, Ohio, in the spring of 1855. In 1856 he was elected clerk of the township of Russia, near Oberlin. In 1857 he was elected to the council of the incorporated village of Oberlin.

The first Black diplomat and the first Black to receive a major government appointment was Ebenezer Don Carlos Bassett, principal of the Institute for Colored Youth, Philadelphia, who was named minister to Haiti on April 6, 1869, by President Grant.

The first Black to receive a major government appointment in the United States was Frederick Douglass, who was named U.S. marshal of the District of Columbia on March 18, 1877. After a bitter fight he was confirmed by the Senate, 30-12.

The first Black male to head a major agency of the U.S. government was Robert C. Weaver, who was sworn in as administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency on February 11, 1961.

The first Black cabinet member was Robert C. Weaver who was named secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development by President Johnson. He was sworn in on January 18, 1966.

The first Black to head a U.S. embassy in Europe was Clifton R. Wharton Sr., who was confirmed as minister to Rumania on February 5, 1958. He was later named ambassador to Norway.

The first Black United Nations ambassador was Andrew Young, who was named to the post by President Carter. Ambassador Young was confirmed on January 26, 1977.

The first Black named to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations was Chicago Atty. Edith S. Sampson, who became an alternate delegate on August 24, 1950. She was appointed by President Truman.

The first Black named a permanent delegate to the United Nations was Charles Mahoney, a Detroit insurance executive, who was appointed by President Eisenhower and confirmed by the Senate on August 7, 1954.

The first Black U.S. Senator was Hiram Rhodes Revels, who was elected to the Forty-first Congress to fill the unexpired term of Jefferson Davis. Senator Revels was elected by the Mississippi legislature on January 20, 1870, and was seated on February 25, 1870. He was the first Black in Congress.

LWVSLO 2009 - 2010 BOARD MEMBERS

OFFICERS:

President:	Ann Garfinkel	president@lwvslo.org
1 st Vice President:	Arlene Powers	info@lwvslo.org
2 nd Vice President:	Sara Horne	info@lwvslo.org
Treasurer:	Maggie Higgins	info@lwvslo.org
Secretary:	Evelyn Jeys	info@lwvslo.org

DIRECTORS:

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Communications:	Pati Dale	info@lwvslo.org
Government:	Emily Penfield	info@lwvslo.org
Social Policy:	Vera Wallen	info@lwvslo.org
Natural Resources:	<i>Open</i>	
Planning & Land Use:	<i>Open</i>	
Development:	<i>Open</i>	

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Budget:	Glenn Silloway	
Website:	Carey Marsh	
Nominating:	Colleen Ehrenberg	
LWVC Management Training Advisor:	Beverly King	



Relevant Websites

LWVSLOCO	www.lwvslo.org
LWVUS	www.lwv.org (Click on "members" and create your own password)
LWVC – members	www.lwvc.org/lwvonly
Guide to Government	www.guidetogov.org
Secretary of State	www.ss.ca.gov
Senate	www.senate.ca.gov
Assembly	www.assembly.ca.gov
Easy Voter Guide	www.easylvoter.org
League Easy Web	www.lwvnet.org
Smart Voter	www.smartvoter.org

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BECOME A LEAGUE MEMBER OR GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP!!**

Invite a Friend to JOIN UP!

Membership is open to all citizens of voting age. Associate membership is offered to students, non citizens and individuals wishing to receive the VOTER only.

Membership is for one year, July 1 to June 30

\$60 individual \$85 household membership (2 persons same address) \$25 associate membership

I wish to make an additional CONTRIBUTION in the amount of: \$ _____

I am unable to join at this time, but here is a CONTRIBUTION in the amount of: \$ _____

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