



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OBSERVER CORPS BEING FORMED

All members of a League in San Diego County are, in addition to their local Leagues, members of the League of Women Voters of San Diego County (LWVSDC). The LWVSDC's Board is also known as the Inter-League Organization or ILO.



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CEAL REPORT

The Caltrans External Advisory Liaison (CEAL) is the advisory committee to the local Caltrans district director. It meets quarterly at the Caltrans offices and last met July 26. Two major items were on the agenda.

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SMART VOTER

The media in San Diego County continues to feature election news, in spite of the fact that there is **no** scheduled election in the county until the June 5, 2012 statewide presidential primary! This early start is more understandable for several reasons: presidential elections in 2012 draw attention from more voters; new redistricting maps for congressional, state senate, state assembly, board of equalization, and the San Diego City Council; and the Top Two Primary election system, which will require congressional and state candidates to run on a single primary ballot, open to all registered voters.

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SOCIAL POLICY

What is going on with the campaign to improve federal food stamps* for needy folks in San Diego?

A higher amount of people are applying for them but San Diego County still remains at the bottom for providing food help for those that qualify.

A report issued April 2011 by *Feeding America* details "food insecurity" in our county. "More than 440,000 people living in San Diego County experience hunger each year," according to the "Map the Meal Gap study" that took a close look at the availability of food and ones access to it.

This continues to support the many other studies especially by SPIN over the past year. League of Women Voters is part of the "Caring Council" and "SPIN" (both voluntary nongovernmental organizations working with the goal to help those in poverty.) These two organizations were invited to serve on a task force the BOS recommended last fall to find out how the Food Stamp program could be improved. This task force (also made up of other community organizations) came up with 69 recommendations to improve the safety net.

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REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE

LWV members ---- this is why we must stay engaged in this issue:

"States Enact Record Number of Abortion Restrictions in First Half of 2011."

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**League of Women Voters
San Diego County ILO
Board of Directors 7/11 - 6/12**

OFFICERS

President.....vacant
 Vice President Administration..... Jeanne Brown
 Vice President Financial Planning.....Nancy Hand
 Vice President Mental Health.....Liz Kruidenier
 Secretary.....Anita Reith
 Treasurer.....Nancy Hand

DIRECTORS

Arrangements.....Marian Zeldin
 County Government.....vacant
 Education.....Adrienne Schere
 Juvenile Justice.....Peggy Dyer
 Natural Resources.....Mary Hanson
 Regional Governance.....Nan Valerio
 Social Policy.....Marjorie Larson
 Transportation.....vacant
 Voter Service.....vacant

ILO LIAISONS

LWVESDC.....Sandy Cavanagh
 (Joan Eisenhower, President)
 LWVNC.....Mary Crowley (President)
 LWVSD.....Jeanne Brown, Mary Jean Word
 (Co-Presidents)

OFF BOARD

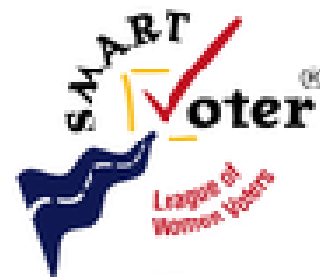
Reproductive Choice, Health Care.....
 Sylvia Hampton
 County GovernmentEddie Cisco
 Smart Voter.....Joyce Joseph
 Voter Editor.....Dolores Nelson
 Webmaster.....Gail Tullao

New Office Hours for Secretary

Beginning Thursday, August 18, the secretary will be in the LWVSD office on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

SMART VOTER

(continued from front page)
 Only the top two vote-getters, regardless of their party, will advance to the general election. CA voters approved this new system in 2010.



While most cities and special districts in the county will not hold their elections until the November 2012 general election, the June primary will include all congressional representatives and some of the following seats: state senate, state assembly, county board of supervisors, superior court judges, county central committees, city councils in Chula Vista and the city of San Diego, and the mayor and city attorney of San Diego. Some seats on the county board of education, San Diego Community College District, and San Diego Unified School District are also on the primary ballot. In some races, if candidates receive less than 50% of the vote in the primary, runoffs will occur in November.

SmartVoter, the League’s award-winning website for election information about candidates and measures, will reopen next spring when the registrar of voters releases the list of certified candidates. As in prior years, the League will invite all candidates to post their own election messages, we’ll add information on all local and statewide propositions, and provide up-to-date links to pertinent material related to the election. A look back at www.SmartVoter.org archives will give you an idea of what is included on the site. I again look forward to assistance and support from many League members throughout the county to help ensure the continuing success of this extremely worthwhile project.

— Joyce Joseph
 Coordinator, SmartVoter Project
 League of Women Voters San Diego County
jajoseph@san.rr.com

SOCIAL POLICY: What is going on with the campaign to improve Federal Food Stamps* for needy folks in San Diego?

(continued from front page) Under the auspices of the Social Services Advisory Board (SSAB), the board of supervisors asked that the Health and Human Services study them and implement as many as they could. We all were delighted that low income people now had a place at the table.

Health and Human Services are slow in implementing the recommendations where resources need to be applied. They must now regularly give updates before the SSAB monthly meetings. (The SSAB reports directly to the board of supervisors.) I attend the monthly SSAB Board meetings and have backed up the concerns of SPIN, Caring Council and the public which bring many of the problems to light using real examples showing barriers that need to be changed. An example is the long phone waits now averaging 37 minutes to get through to a human on the ACCESS system. One no longer has case workers as the Business Practices System (BPS) is now in effect and supposedly any one can answer questions. Scanning in documents is supposed to help, but there have been many problems of lost documents that the client has a receipt that it was turned in. Also, the rules differ and a generic workbook is being written by the Legal Aid Society.

Two other barriers that the Board has not addressed is the excessive money spent on fraud which requires an investigation of everyone who is applying for cash aid benefits. This home visit is required only in San Diego County. We assume all the poor in need are criminals in spite of the many documents they have already provided

that their need is real. The second barrier has been wasted money requiring fingerprinting of everyone. Happily the state legislature has just passed a law doing away with fingerprinting at this writing and hopefully the governor has signed it.

There is a current Action Alert: to Stop Negative Stereotyping of people in poverty. Please visit the Caring Council site www.caringcouncilsd.org for more information on this campaign and visit www.spinsandiego.org we are following their lead.

Special note: Members of SPIN and Caring Council are looking for places to make presentations on issues that relate to poverty, the people living in poverty, and policies that impact people in poverty.

Please contact: Bill Oswald, Caring Council Chair
858 382 5870 or wtoswald@gmail.com

*footnote to Food Stamps.

There was another change in the name for Food Stamps this year which the federal government provides and California state administers through their counties. It was changed to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) since stamps are not given. Recipients now get an Electronic Benefits Transfer card (EBT card) that they can use like any ATM card at stores that will accept them. California has decided recently to rename SNAP—now calling it CalFresh! The benefit is now called by all three names but refer to the same program.

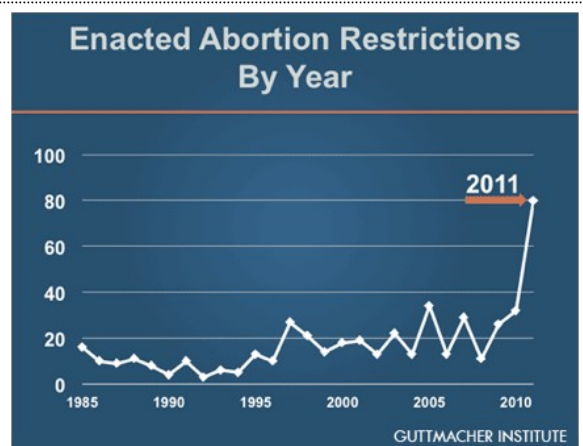
— Marjie Larson, ILO Social Policy Director

REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE *(continued from front page)*

July 13, 2011: In the first six months of 2011, states enacted 162 new provisions related to reproductive health and rights. Fully 49% of these new laws seek to restrict access to abortion services, a sharp increase from 2010, when 26% of new laws restricted abortion. The 80 abortion restrictions enacted this year are more than double the previous record of 34 abortion restrictions enacted in 2005—and more than triple the 23 enacted in 2010. All of these new provisions were enacted in just 19 states.

<http://www.gutmacher.org/media/inthenews/2011/07/13/index.html>

— Sylvia Hampton, Reproductive Choice, Health Care



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OBSERVER CORPS BEING FORMED

(continued from front page) The ILO will focus on county government this program year. In order to do this, the ILO is in need of League members to volunteer to attend and “observe” the meetings of the county Board of Supervisors (BOS). This is a vital component of the ILO program. Training for this County Observer Corps will be provided.



The County of San Diego has a budget of almost \$5 billion and employs nearly 16,000 workers. The decisions of the BOS impact all citizens and communities in the county in the broad areas of law enforcement and public safety, health and human services, land use and environment, community services, and county government administration.

Because the BOS meets (usually) twice a month, the ILO is seeking a group of observers to take turns so that the work is not a burden to any one observer. The BOS does not have committees. The BOS meets at its building in downtown San Diego on Tuesdays, beginning at 9:00 a.m., to address regular budget matters, policy issues, and intergovernmental and legislative matters. The BOS also meets Wednesdays, the same week as the Tuesday meetings, to discuss land use matters for the unincorporated portions of the county, where the county government provides municipal services.

By joining our County Observers Corps, you can help the League meet its goals of encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government, working to increase understanding of major public issues, and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

Please contact the LWVSDC V/P Administration Jeanne Brown at 619-857-1807 or by e-mail at jhis-ten.brown@gmail.com for more information about the Observer Corps.

— Nan Valerio, Regional Governance

CEAL REPORT

(continued from front page)

I-5 Expansion: The decision for how much to enlarge I-5 has been made -- to add two HOV lanes in each direction on I-5 from the “merge” to 78 in Oceanside. The expansion includes bike lanes, rail, and bus transit improvements, takes fewer homes for the expansion from residents than the larger expansion that had been proposed, and provides necessary highway lanes. Caltrans has worked closely with the coastal commission all along in designing the project. Budget: \$3.5 billion for highway construction, \$2.8 billion for coastal rail and transit improvements, \$200 million for environmental protection and enhancement. Construction will begin in 2013.

Complete Streets: Caltrans works closely with local jurisdictions to improve bike lanes and encourage safer bike ridership in a program called “Complete Streets.” A new map of the county’s bike routes is available from Caltrans, SANDAG, and some local city information offices.

Other: The I-15 express lane construction may be completed as early as the end of this year. Information on the highway and bike lanes is available on the website: www.dot.ca.gov/dist11

— Nan Valerio, Regional Governance