



Voter

www.lwvpalosverdes.org

(310) 784-7787

November/December 2016

Calendar 2016

November:

Wed. Nov 2	County Board Meeting		
Tues. Nov 8	Election Watching Party	Pat Rome's Home pjwrome@yahoo.com	6 - 9 PM
Wed. Nov 9	PVP Board Meeting	Nell Mirel's Home	noon
Fri. Nov 18	Elected Officials' Party	Pt. Vicente Interpretive Center 31511 PV Dr. W, RPV 90275	5:30 PM

December:

Wed. Dec 7	County Board Meeting		
Wed. Dec 14	PVP Board Meeting	Nell Mirel's Home	noon

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This Month's Co-Presidents' Message

Welcome to our mid-fall issue. The election is almost here and Nancy with the help of Jo-Anne has been very busy with presentations for the election. They deserve our thanks along with the others who presented "Pros and Cons" and Candidate Forums. These activities are core to our organization and have been greatly appreciated by the public.

This year, Pat Rome is offering her home for an Election Watching Party and what an Election Year this has been! It is hard to remember a year with more surprises. As the year comes to an end, we are trying to put together programs for you that will be of interest—if you have any subject area you would like to explore—it is not too late to send in your suggestions. Please send them to Vi or Pat Rome- our program chair. Harriet Chase is putting together a program on mental health for April. This will be a tri-league effort and you are all invited to be on the committee if you so choose. Contact Vi for information.

Now we are approaching the holiday season and will be having the Elected Officials' Party on November 18th this year. We hope many of you will be able to attend. This is our chance to greet our local officials informally and thank them for their service as well as hear about issues that may be of common interest. As usual, our local PVP Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring this event with us.

We want to wish all of you a most Happy Holiday Season and hope that you will be ready to join us in January as we do our annual program planning. This is the time to consider any issue you would like to see as an "action item" or as a new study. Although we have many positions—many of which we can adapt to the issues of today—there are still gaps --as technology is quickly changing and impacting our lives. For example, I read today about an experimental machine that can take plant cells and in a week form a dinner- using three-D technology. This sounds a little "far out"—but much of today is rushing into a new world. Just the intrusion of hacking is presenting a threat that most of us are only beginning to feel personally. Our League positions worked for our "old lives"—but will they be useful for the future?? Something to think about. Let us know what you think.

In the meantime—we wish you all a very Peaceful Holiday and a Happy New Year.

Katy Watkins (310-408-6211) and *Vi Jungerich* (310-541-5092)
Co-Presidents

Homeless Update

By Pat Colby and Vi Iungerich

Proposition HHH on the November 2016 ballot, a \$1.2 billion bond measure for homeless housing, reflects legislative and community concern for an alarming increase in the homeless population: locally--over 1,000 homeless in the Lomita, Wilmington, San Pedro area alone.

In the meantime the county and city continue to release funds for the homeless population. Most recently county funds were released for new homeless housing. Much of the county's initial overall plan for the homeless is being implemented including service centers to provide information about available housing and small grants to stabilize those about to lose their housing.

But solving the homeless problem is not easy. In this political season of "meanness" -- the homeless have not been left out. In San Pedro there is a billboard that says "SEE THAT PERSON ON THE OFF-RAMP—YEAH THAT ONE! Don't give them a dime! They refuse any real help!" As most of the League knows this complicated problem is interconnected with a multitude of economic and social issues that are not popular.

Some recent changes in the homeless population for 2016 are as follows:

- The homeless numbers in Los Angeles are up 11% from last year.
- The number of encampments and people living in vehicles increased by 20%.
- There is an increase in the number of women—currently about 14,000 women (about a third of the homeless and an increase of 55% since 2013.)

Homeless women face staggering levels of violence in shelters and homeless housing as well as on the streets, yet officials in the recent past did not target women with the kind of concerted effort that has helped homeless veterans and families.

More than 60% of skid row women are over 50 and the hardest to place in housing. Interviews with this population show some sad statistics. These are women who have been working in low-paying jobs and who have not been homeless until recently. Typical causes are being unable to keep up with the physical work they had been doing (due to an illness or accident etc.). A significant portion has signs of dementia. Also about 2/3 have histories of being abused as a child which impacted their adult working life. These are women who do not qualify for family shelters as they are without families or children.

Included in the increased statistics are also a significant number of pregnant women who are showing up on the street and seeking shelters. Once their baby is born, housing then becomes available to them as a "family".

On a larger scale, the practice of certain L.A. area hospitals dumping homeless patients on Skid Row has been a problem for years. The issue garnered national attention in 2006 after a surveillance camera at a Skid Row rescue mission recorded a 63-year-old woman with dementia wandering around the crime plagued area in a hospital gown and slippers. The next year, a paraplegic man in a soiled gown was seen sliding along Skid Row sidewalks with his hands, dragging a broken colostomy bag behind him. Police said the man was dropped there by a van driver from a Hollywood medical center. Since 2014, four L.A. area hospitals have settled law suits over patient dumping and agreed to protocols to properly release homeless patients. The amount of such settlements with L.A. area hospitals amounted to \$1.9 million.

The most recent suit of hospital "dumping" illustrates the current "lose-lose" pattern for all of us. This suit against the Gardena Regional Hospital and Medical Center was won for dumping a woman in skid row with no identification and wearing only paper pajamas. The history of this case shows the social dilemma of all parties. This woman had been taken into

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their emergency room 5 times previously-- (it turns out she had a relative working there). She was diagnosed with depression, hearing voices, amphetamine and alcohol abuse, and uncontrolled diabetes. Although the relative had notified authorities that she was missing--- the hospital did not check for that. And although the hospital had listed her as homeless in their records they had previously discharged her to "home". The hospital's defense stated that she had been treated to "the standard of care". Unfortunately it has become the "standard of care" of many hospitals to release these types of patients by driving them to skid row and leaving them there. In this case the city "won" about \$142,000 from the hospital driving the hospital to declare bankruptcy and forcing it to be sold.

Blaming, dumping or ignoring the homeless does not address citizen concerns and the plight of the homeless. Most League members understand that homelessness is a complex matter interconnected with the economy, mental health and affordable housing. The League further understands that without collective solutions to homelessness, this population will continue to increase.

So what are the potential solutions to this overwhelming challenge? Aside from the city suing hospitals for patient dumping, local elected officials are responding strongly to the homeless women crisis. A new women's dorm opened downtown recently at the Weingart Center and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority has put out a call for more shelter space for women. The city has put up \$2 million, and the county \$1 million to provide beds for women with histories of domestic violence.

A multiagency effort to close gaps between domestic violence and homelessness systems is underway, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is helping L.A. study the shortfall for women. Yet, nonprofit providers say the resources are insufficient. Officials and advocates say the situation would improve with the passage of Proposition HHH (the \$1.2 billion

city bond initiative) along with expanding funds promised from county and state.

Proposition HHH will not eradicate homelessness in Los Angeles. It is not a panacea for the 42,000 homeless, many of them mentally ill. That said, Proposition HHH is potentially an important part of the regional solution to homelessness. The measure, if passed, would fund the creation of up to 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing in the city, make available facilities for mental health, drug and alcohol treatment and provide strict oversight and independent auditing of funding. This measure could get some of the people who most need apartments, as well as those who are resistant to accepting help, off the streets. That in turn could lead to cleaner sidewalks, reduced crime and better living conditions for both housed and homeless Angelenos.

Welcome Our New Member!



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Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

by Vi lungerich, Bill and Barbara Ailor

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC) was founded in 1988, and the Conservancy has since preserved 1,600 acres of open space on the Palos Verdes Peninsula for historical, educational, ecological, passive recreational and scenic purposes. Residents from all four cities on the peninsula have worked tirelessly over the past 28 years to restore habitat and provide nature walks and various activities for all ages and walks of life.

The Land Conservancy has a wonderful web site (pvplc.org) for you to explore that includes maps and information on the reserves, research and educational activities, events, volunteer opportunities, news and more.

One of the “jewels” of our local area is our land conservancy citizenry people who have worked for the last few decades to preserve and maintain “natural open space” in our community. For those of you who have not availed yourself of walking some of the many trails in these areas, I encourage you to get a map and do so. These properties, some actually owned by the cities in which they reside, are the result of countless hours of volunteer time to obtain and are now maintained and preserved by both paid conservancy and city staff and a large cadre of volunteers.

As some of you may remember, in the seventies much of the hill that is now RPV was county land and was at risk of becoming developed into high density and high-rise buildings by developers who wanted to take advantage of the spectacular views around the hill. Ladies of the League and other individuals worked hard to establish the city of Rancho Palos Verdes and get control of how this area would be developed. These people also worked at the state level to establish a coastal commission, pass legislation to protect the coastline and eventually worked to pass legislation that allowed open land to be purchased for public benefit.

Our local land conservancy began with a community meeting in 1988. At this time, there were still large tracts of land that had not been developed, but plans were under way to develop many of these. Under the leadership of the organization’s founder, Bill Ailor, emphasis was placed on negotiating acquisitions of land via voluntary transactions with willing sellers. State and county voters had passed bond acts that provided funds to cities to acquire open space land for preservation of critical natural habitat, and the conservancy often led negotiations where the cities would formally purchase the properties. Several years of persistent efforts were required to develop win-win resolutions for the landowners and the community. Conservation easements were placed on acquired lands to assure their permanence as preserved areas, and cities contracted with the conservancy to manage them as open space areas.

Today the conservancy is a thriving enterprise that focuses on maintaining habitat, replanting native plants, and providing educational and volunteer opportunities for children and adults. It has almost 20 paid staff with an income and budget of around \$2 million. It has a nursery where it grows locally native plants for its habitat restoration projects; it has revived the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly and the protected California Gnatcatcher and Cactus Wren; it has developed a third grade educational program using our native ecosystem as a classroom; and has encouraged research studies in preserved lands by students in local universities.

The preserved areas are open to the public, and the conservancy has active programs that highlight natural features and encourage respect of the creatures and plants that live there. The group leads free monthly nature walks in preserved areas and also has a volunteer-led program that educates preserve users on proper trail use and trail etiquette.

Voter Service Report - November Election Activities

By Nancy Mahr, Voter Service Director, LWV PVP

Voter Service has been busy this fall. We placed Election Guides in the three Peninsula libraries and Easy Voter Guides in Spanish in the San Pedro library.

The Speakers Bureau, headed by Jo-Anne Waller, responded to 14 requests for presentations on the ballot measurers. We distributed Election Guides at every presentation.

We planned 3 candidate forums. The first was at Hesse Park on October 6, featuring candidates for the 33rd Congressional District, the 66th Assembly District, and the 4th District LA County Supervisor. That forum was canceled, as Ted Lieu and Janis Hahn, candidates in two of the three races, were unable to participate. League guidelines do not support holding a forum for a race with only one candidate appearing. As the Assembly District race was also scheduled for the October 12 forum in Torrance, we felt that it would not be productive to hold the forum in PV with only one race.

The second forum was on October 12 at the Toyota Theater in the Torrance Cultural Arts complex. Again, Ted Lieu and Janice Hahn were unable to attend. That left only the 66th Assembly District with candidates David Hadley and Al Muratsuchi. We were able to add a panel of candidates for the Water Replenishment District. We had two of the three candidates participating – John Kennedy and Merill Kruger. Incumbent Rob Katherman was unable to attend. The Water panel was very informative. Barbara Arlow, president of LWV Beach Cities, moderated the event. Over 200 people attended this forum, put on by the LWVs of Beach Cities, Palos Verdes and Torrance.

A third and final forum was planned for the San Pedro area on October 22. This would include candidates for the 44th Congressional District, 34th State Senate District, 70th Assembly District

and 4th District LA County Supervisor. The location was the San Pedro Public Library. Incumbent State Senator Isadore Hall, running for Congress in this election, asked that we change the date due to a conflict with the Legislative Black Caucus annual convention. We changed the date to Thursday, October 20 in the evening. Early on, Steve Napolitano advised that he had a conflict and could not attend. Two days before the forum, Warren Furutani also could not attend due to a conflict. That eliminated the Supervisorial race and the State Senate race. On the day of the forum, Isadore Hall advised that he had been called to a meeting in Los Angeles and could not attend. That left only the Assembly race. Candidates Patrick O'Donnell (incumbent) and Martha Flores-Gibson (a write-in candidate that made it to the top two!) came and were excellent. Candidate for Congress Nannette Diaz Barragan also attended to meet voters. We had a very small audience, but we felt good about holding the forum.

League guidelines do not support allowing only one candidate to address the audience at a debate or forum (see “empty chair” debates on the LWV US website). This works fine in the primaries and in days before the top two process in California. With only 2 candidates on the ballot, if one cannot or will not come, the other is left out and misses the opportunity to speak to the voters and respond to questions. I am hoping that this rule can be reviewed and adjusted for California.



Join The League!

WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS?

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to all men and women who are registered voters.

Our members make a visible difference by serving as community leaders using their experience to create positive, lasting change in our communities.

HOW DO I JOIN?

Just fill out the membership form below and mail it to:

LWV PVP, PO Box 2933, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274.

Please make checks payable to *LWV PVP*

Membership Form

Name _____

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (work/day/cell) _____

Email address _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

\$80.00 one member

\$40.00 additional member in the same household.

Dues are tax deductible. LWV PVP is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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