



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LOS ANGELES

VOTER
VOTER

FROM THE CO- PRESIDENT'S DESK



We are getting all of our ducks lined up for our upcoming Los Angeles County Inter League Convention in March, LWV California Convention in June, and our LWV LA annual meeting in June. Believe it or not, all three are in the LA area this year.

Registration is now open for the LA County Convention in March. You can find a registration flyer enclosed. Attend and participate let us how you can help!

Hot Topics Lunch is our new bi-monthly social. We meet at a local restaurant in Koreatown, order lunch and listen to a guest speaker who talks to the group about a variety of topics. Our *Hot Topics Lunch* in February was very well attended with Professor John Odell speaking about Climate Change. Our next one will be Saturday, April 13 on Immigration. The guest speaker is Brigit Alvarez, Senior Attorney with the Legal Aid Foundation of LA. Don't miss out!

Finally, we have our "A Woman's Voice: The Silence Breakers" wine tasting coming up on Sunday, March 24. We join forces with Five Senses Tastings and V Wine Room to celebrate Women's History Month by recognizing four great women who broke the silence on several issues.

As always please reach out to us if you want to get involved or sign up for any of these events. You can do so via our website. I look forward to hearing from our members.

In League,

Crissi Avila, Co-President

March - April 2019

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Las Virgenes
Valley
Westside Evening

CELEBRATE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AT A WOMAN'S VOICE: THE SILENCE BREAKERS

Bring Women's History Month to life with historic female icons, music, wine, and food.



[Five Senses Tastings](#) and the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles celebrate Women's History Month with "A Woman's Voice: The Silence Breakers," a guided music, wine, and chocolate tasting event at [V Wine Room](#). We will explore the stories of four brave women who, in their own unique ways, broke silence on issues ranging from voting rights to sexual assault, gender equality and gun violence. Our featured Silence Breakers are Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Tarana Burke, Edna Chavez, and Susan B. Anthony.

Please join us for an exquisite music, wine, and chocolate tasting where we will feel the power of women's voices! Featuring the music of women composers and poets, wines by female winemakers, and chocolates by the wonderful Catherine von Ruden of Eos Chocolates, our guests will engage in a truly full-sensory experience.

Sunday, March 24th at 4:30 p.m. and at 6:30 p.m. open to all.
V Wine Room is located at 903 Westbourne Drive in West Hollywood.

Tickets (\$60) can be purchased on Eventbrite <https://silencebreakers.eventbrite.com> and includes four flights of boutique wines, handcrafted chocolates, and live entertainment.

STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINE

Interfaith & Community organized an event called, “Stories from the Frontline,” hosted by the First Congregational Church of LA. They had several nonprofits who displayed their information in the foyer. We were invited to bring our Guide to Supportive Housing, and 25 copies were taken by participants.

Two formerly homeless women told their stories, Emily Martiniuk, became homeless at the age of 59 and Angela Sanchez was evicted from her house with her father at age 16. It brought to reality that becoming homeless could happen at any time due to a bad occurrence in one’s life.

Tommy Newman from United Way’s, “Everyone In” spoke about bridge housing, the temporary housing for three to six months of the un-housed. The goal is to stabilize the long-term homeless with storage, meals, showers, toilets, addiction support and job training, and taking care of their medical and mental care needs. Then they find a placement into supportive housing in the area. The City agencies all work together in a coordinated response to their needs.



Sandra Trutt
Homeless Action Committee Chair

HOMELESS COMMITTEE INTO ACTION

On Saturday, April 6, the LWVLA Homeless Action Committee will lead a training for the Neighborhood Council (NC) Board members on how to handle difficult situations that come up during meetings. The overall topic will be homelessness, which we felt should be addressed, as it draws big crowds at NC meetings. We felt this training would be of use because N.C. Presidents have training only in funding, code of conduct and ethics. We have personally seen the need for NC Presidents to learn how to control meetings.

The trainers are Lex Roman, Fran Lapidés and Sandra Trutt. We will use other members as facilitators at each of the five tables for the 30 participants.

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--Homeless Committee Into Action, Continued from Page 3

Neighborhood Empowerment will secure a location in the San Fernando Valley for the training, will provide refreshments and print all of our handouts. We are looking to doing more of these trainings in other sections of LA and to other community groups who request it.

Sandra Trutt
Homeless Action Committee Chair

WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL?

TAKEN IN PART FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

Neighborhood Councils are city-certified local groups made up of people who live, work, own property or have some other connection to a neighborhood. Neighborhood Council Board Members are elected or selected to their positions by the neighborhoods themselves.

Neighborhood Council participants are empowered to advocate directly for real change in their communities. Neighborhood Councils are answering the need for local engagement and strengthen democracy in Los Angeles by embracing and supporting the diversity of neighborhoods that comprise the City of Los Angeles.

A Neighborhood Council's purpose is to participate as a body on issues concerning their neighborhood in a transparent, inclusive, collaborative, accountable and viable manner. Their mission is to provide an inclusive and open forum for public discussion of issues of interest to the local neighborhood and advise the City on such issues. The NC may initiate, execute and support projects for the physical, social and cultural improvement of the neighborhood and seeks to facilitate communications between the City and Community Stakeholders on issues of concern.

If you are looking for a way to participate in your local community, go to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment by visiting their website, Empowerla.org/councils, to see when your local Council meets and show up for their meetings.



Sandra Trutt
Homeless Action Committee Chair



UNITED FOR A FAIR WORKWEEK IN LOS ANGELES

THE FAIR WORKWEEK LA INITIATIVE



The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles showed their proud support at a press conference at LA Trade Tech to bring attention to a proposed ordinance, the Fair Workweek LA Initiative, which will help support retail and service workers of Los Angeles. In attendance were Councilmember's Curren Price, Paul Koretz, City Council President, Herb Wesson, and the Fair Workweek Coalition.

After the press conference, there was a forum on why L.A. needs fair scheduling laws for the retail industry. The forum opened with a panel of workers who shared their own personal experiences with unfair scheduling practices and unstable work schedules. The panelists included workers from different large chain stores, different levels of seniority, and a manager of a retail store. There was a woman named Laura, she has been working at Rite Aid for 30 years, says that it was very hard for her to be a parent when her children were young, there was a lot of instability for them. Now that she is older experiencing health issues, employers are inconsiderate of the medical needs and health check-ups workers may request. Adrian, a team member from Target, stated that every week he worries that he does not have enough money to pay rent, bills, or purchase food. It is a constant stress because he never knows what his next paycheck will look like. One week he may have 40 hours and the next week he's scheduled for 16 hours. His hours are so unstable and cut so low that he faces economic insecurity. He has downsized to one meal a day. Their stories are crucial for leading this campaign.



Later, Janna Sahdduck-Hernandez, professor of the UCLA Labor Center, presented results of a study done to capture the retail sector in the L.A. They collected data from 818 surveys of "frontline staff" (salespersons, cashiers, stockers, and food workers) to explore worker hours and schedules, in addition to analyzing government data and academic literature. Their studies show that unreliable hours are pervasive; half of the workers surveyed are part-time, facing insufficient hours; two-thirds of workers always experience stress due to work schedules and face a work and life imbalance that affects their overall wellbeing. You can read more about this study, in their [Executive Summary](http://www.labor.ucla.edu/publication/hourcrisisreport). (<http://www.labor.ucla.edu/publication/hourcrisisreport>)



There was something very reaffirming about this forum with panelists from Seattle, Philadelphia, and Emeryville sharing with us advice and policy solutions on how their cities adopted a Fair Workweek ordinance. The forum ended with an advocacy training for workers and community stakeholders. The room was filled with a strong sense of responsibility to advocate for retail workers.

As consumers we need to be aware of the labor practices of stores we spend our money at—just as we are socially-conscious about the products we consume. This is a call for respect and dignity of people’s lives, who work very hard to make ends meet—they too should have the opportunity for a more viable work and life balance, and fair labor conditions. The League co-sponsors the Fair Workweek Initiative. To learn more about this proposed city-wide policy please visit Fairworkweekla.org.

Elizabeth Valdivia
Administrative Assistant

UTLA STRIKE OP-ED BY BOARD DIRECTOR, DAVID MEADOW PUBLISHED IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES NEWSPAPER

Picture yourself as a public-school teacher working in an underserved school in LAUSD. You are curious about the world, and plenty of that rubs off on the students. You have strong values, and they respect that even when they do not have all the same ones. But when it comes to the actual tools the district has given you – outdated textbooks, crumbling buildings, a severe shortage of counseling and health support, and nonexistent arts programs – you are coming up short, and you’re finding yourself in trouble with these kids. Whether they love school or hate it, they know inequality when they see it, and they are angry that adults have subjected them to such cruel deprivation. Though you’ve been known to grumble about your measly paycheck, you’re aware that it’s all relative.

The latest deal worked out between the UTLA and the Los Angeles Unified School District is a welcome step away from this deprivation. We applaud the courage and tenacity of the teachers who said that enough was enough, went on strike, and got the district to hire more teachers, nurses, librarians, and counselors. Granted, there was an obvious labor/management angle to the conflict.

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Top administrators are paid much better than classroom teachers, and they are going to fight for their interests just like anyone else is. But let us not kid ourselves here: the two sides were fighting each other over the relative crumbs that a very wealthy city has allocated to education within its borders. We have to stop putting district employees in that position. Our children's future, and the future of our city and whole society, is too important.

At the League of Women Voters, where our mission is to educate the population at large for civic engagement, we recognize that the way our children are educated from an early age has profound effects on civic life. Everyone familiar with ed policy debates has heard about "tomorrow's doctors, lawyers, scientists, CEOs, and politicians." The League, however, has historically been concerned with a much larger group than this: well-rounded citizens who have the civic knowledge to understand society's relationship with doctors, lawyers, scientists, CEOs, and politicians, and who play an intelligent role in that relationship when they go into the voting booth. When you consider how few people overall enter the elite professions above, it is all the more important that the majority of the people, those who don't enter these professions, have the tools to hold to account the people who do enter them, and ideally get those elite actors working for the greater good.

We can accomplish this, but it will require significantly more money than we're laying out now. LAUSD class sizes are currently on track to go down to the high 30s. This is an improvement from the mid-40s, but even the best teachers are still going to be spending far too much of their scarce time putting names to faces, before they can even think about building real rapport. We are still treating children – yes, even the 17-year-old high school seniors are children – like widgets on an assembly line. Even the most privileged among us remember adolescence being a tough time, and when you consider that 80% of LAUSD students are living in poverty, this kind of treatment is especially scandalous. Poverty is traumatizing in and of itself, and a district with an 80% poverty rate is in the social-services business whether it knows it or likes it. The question is, are we truly going to hire enough adults to help children navigate through the chaos of school itself, of their own depressed neighborhoods, and of family lives strained to the breaking point, so that the children have a fighting chance at learning how a bill becomes a law – and, as adults, can ultimately bring about laws that make their neighborhoods less poor?

There are a number of ways to get to adequate funding, none of them arcane or magical. It's about priorities. It will likely require a combination of changes at the state level. Parcel taxes are a possibility, as well as revisiting the draconian Prop. 13, which ensured that local school funding was only as good as the property taxes on local residences. This, of course, trapped huge swaths of our state in a cycle of inadequate schooling and poverty. Two years ago, the California Budget and Policy Center ranked our state 41st in the nation on educational spending, and it's probably no coincidence that the U.S. News and World Report ranked us 44th in educational quality the year after.

It is true that there have been all kinds of expensive failures in education. But if you think the many expensive failures should dissuade us from spending more money, just look at how few the cheap successes have been. You can probably count them on one hand. Do not be fooled: it requires serious money to do this right, and treating human beings like mass-produced widgets will ultimately make them disinvest in themselves and their futures.

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Since the last VOTER

Civic Society

Barbara Archibald	Fran & Al Lapides
Harriet Borson	Francine Oschin
Thea Brodkin	Joy Picus
Carryl Carter	Hermalee Schmidt
Jean Cohen	Elinor Turner
Marcia Edelman	Cecilia Schlesinger
Sydelle Freeman	Hermalee Schmidt
Judith Jordan	Martha Sklar
Catherine Kaiser	Laurice Sommers
Carrie Hidding	Virginia Wexman &
Ann Reiss Lane	John Huntington

Contributions

Martha Sklar

New Members

Maureen Cruise
Karen Fox
Charlsie Lemons
Wenqin (Kira) Yang

Sustaining Contributions

Crissi Avila
Jodi Doane
Marilu Guevara

Tributes

In memory of Jeanne Liskin Bellman
· From Larry & Barbara Hilburn
In memory of Mary Lou Dudzak
· From friends
In memory of Anna Nofri
· From Sandra Trutt
In memory of Bette Simon
· From Donald Simon

Year-End Appeal

Gail Alcorn
Adele Burke
Renee Chanon
Donna Cole
Audrey Hake
Christine P. Harper
Peggy Kamuf
Marvin Kaphan
Jean Leserman
Royce Menkus
Neil Mitchell
Karen McLean
Steve and David Russell
Joseph Salamunovich
June Sattler
Joyce Tapper
Nancy Joan Wagstaff

--Op-Ed on the UTLA Strike, Continued from Page 7

It comes down to whether we want to have any kind of upward mobility, or fair shot at success, in this supposed land of opportunity and meritocracy. We've gotten to the point where almost any family that can possibly scrape together enough tuition for a private school will get out of the public-school system. To be sure, some exceptionally passionate and driven families will make it their mission to fix the public school they already attend. However, as a general pattern, we can safely assume that this flight of relatively-comfortable families will continue apace, and will continue to worsen the economic segregation of our educational system, until something changes. And what needs to change is that public schools have the funds that allow them to blossom into the kinds of places people want to stay at, not flee from.

Conflicts over resources are inevitable, but we must give the stakeholders in the school system more to fight over than crumbs. When we do, it will send a message to the students that we care what kind of society they're going to live in, and that we are giving them the tools to shape it to their needs as they take on more and more responsibilities in it.

David Meadow
Board Director

A blue banner with a yellow triangle in the top left corner. The text is white and yellow. It reads: "LWV LOS ANGELES COUNTY ILO CONVENTION 2019 Saturday March 23, 2019 9:00 am to 12:00 pm CARSON EVENT CENTER 801 E. CARSON ST., CARSON 90745 Registration includes a Breakfast Buffet FEATURED SPEAKER AND PROGRAM TO BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY".

LWV LOS ANGELES COUNTY ILO
CONVENTION 2019
Saturday March 23, 2019
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
CARSON EVENT CENTER
801 E. CARSON ST., CARSON 90745
Registration includes a Breakfast Buffet
FEATURED SPEAKER AND PROGRAM TO
BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY

Register for the Convention via Check payable to LWV/LAC.

Mail to LWV/LAC Arrangements:

Sandra Trutt, 1508 Greenfield Ave. #207, Los Angeles 90025

