

President’s Message

By Sharon O’Hara

VOTE EARLY (but not often) Election Day, Nov.3, 2026

Our Kickoff speaker, Registrar of Voters Bob Page, provided a wide overview of the functions, precautions, security, and systems which protect our Orange County elections. His charts and details were reassuring and educational. But how many of us have visited our easiest source of information: **ocvote.gov** ?

For our November 3rd election, we’re being urged to **VOTE EARLY** and to use the convenient drop boxes or visit a vote center rather than use the US mail. (I’m sure you’ve been following the news-the Sept. 14th SCOTUS ruling on LWV of Mass. v. Trump blocking the suppressive new voting rule that would have severely restricted voting by mail.)

When you check out **ocvote.gov**, you can learn about the life cycle of Vote by Mail Ballots, including all the steps involved in keeping vote by mail ballots secure. Perhaps there’s someone in your circle feeling uneasy about the DROP BOX plan. **Then this website is a terrific source of easy-to-understand explanations and your first “stop.”**

As you scroll through the site, look for **Your Ballot Return Options**. Track your ballot from start to finish. Using Ballot Express, you can view the status of your ballot through the entire drop box/vote center/mailling process and see the status of your returned ballot. You can also sign up for updates through text and email. If you opt for text or email, you’ll know the time your ballot is picked up from the drop box, when it’s in the ROV system in Santa Ana being scanned for your signature and following all the processes Bob described. And those early vote tallies are publicized right after the polls close at 8pm.

However, if you’d rather vote in person, then the VOTE CENTERS are a great choice. Once the ROV website opens, click on VOTING and scroll down to Voting Options for complete information about the vote centers, many of which open on Oct. 24th.

Inside This Issue	
President’s Message	1
Advocacy	3
Observer Corps Reports	4
Read With The League	6
No Kings	8
No One Can Do Everything But Everyone Can Do	
Something	10
(Nearly) October Surprise	11
Prop 4 Rally Pictures	13
Current Officers and Directors	14

Finally, please make a plan to vote on that ballot and encourage everyone to do the same! Your LWVNOC will email all members the two-page **VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE** list of the LWVC suggestions for each ballot proposition on Oct. 3rd-ready for your ballot to arrive.



ROV Bob Page received his Community Impact award. Gerri McNenny originated our yearly award but was very busy with our fundraising auction and unable to pose with Bob.

Advocacy in September 2026

Richard Larsen, LWVNOC Advocacy

On September 8 we received a request from LWVUS asking for a petition to our Senators to oppose the SAVE Act before they leave for October recess. The SAVE Act requires citizenship documentation to register to vote.

Also on September 8 we received a request from LWVC for a petition to Governor Newsom to sign AB2599. AB2599 sheds light on California operating businesses' historic ties to slavery and the slavery trade.

On September 17 we received a request from LWVC for a petition to Governor Newsom to sign SB1414 which had passed the Legislature. SB1414 establishes an independent citizens redistricting commission in San Bernardino County instead of the elected officials. Then on September 24 we received a second request from LWVC to petition SB1414 again.

Then on September 22 we received a repeat request of the September 8 request to our Senators to oppose the SAVE Act again.

Repeat petitions are common since the number of petitions for or against an action are the most important count.

Standing Firm for Democracy!

The 2026 elections are a defining test of whether our democracy works for the people it is meant to serve. Voters are navigating changing rules, attacks on trusted election infrastructure, misinformation, and efforts that could make participation harder. The League of Women Voters is meeting this moment nationwide, helping people register, understand what is on their ballot, protect their freedom to vote, and turn out in every election. We will continue working with voters, election officials, partners, and our state and local League network so that every eligible voter can participate and every ballot is counted.

Observer Corps Reports

October 2026

By Sherlan Neblett, Ruth Zemke, Pam Berg, Pat Davis, and Karen Bender

We're happy to report that LWVNOG has a new observer who will be monitoring the Brea City Council meetings--Pat Davis.

Supervisors at the **Sept. 15th** meeting of the **Orange County Board of Supervisors** seemed uncertain whether they needed to approve a Grand Jury Report titled: "California Housing Mandates: The Unintended Reshaping of Orange County Neighborhoods." The motion to approve didn't pass (Nguyen, Sarmiento, and Foley voting No.) The item was continued to 9/29.

Also on **Sept. 15th**, Chief of Police Radus presented at the **Fullerton City Council** meeting a report on the Auto License Plate Reader (ALPR) which has been replaced by Flock brand cameras with AI support as an upgrade in the system. Public comment suggested more technical information needed to be provided and requested agendaing the issue for further discussion.

Sept. 15th was a busy night, with an excellent State of the City presentation by **Brea City Council** mayor Cecilia Hupp and city staff. Community and Economic Director Jason Kilibru reported that the Brea Mall reconfiguration includes 377 new housing units, 23 of which are at low-income level (not defined) and 15 units are for moderate income. Completion is expected in 2028.

No mention was made of Costco as a future business attraction to Brea; some have expressed disappointment with the terms of the contract.

Orange Coast League reported that following a preliminary 13-year Financial Sustainability and Investment Strategy report by the City Manager on **Sept. 8th**, **Orange City Council** requested staff to provide a plan in the event the November Sales Tax increase measure fails. The November ballot measure increases city sales tax by 1%; if approved, the tax would last for 13 years and generate approximately \$37 million annually. Orange's current sales tax rate is 7.75%. A ballot measure to increase the city sales tax by 0.5% failed in November 2024.

At the beginning of the **Sept. 15th** meeting of the **Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District**, President Carrie Buck stated that no campaigning or campaign issues should be brought up during the meeting. It was clear, however, that several comments occurred for that reason both from Trustees and from public commenters, including a campaign shirt being worn to the Public Comment podium.

US News and World Report published their list of top ranked High Schools. Four PYLUSD High Schools ranked in the top 9% of High Schools nationally: Eldorado, Yorba Linda, Valencia, and Esperanza.

The student Board member for this semester was seated: Gavin Esqueda.

To access the complete Observer Reports, go to our local League website, Click on “Members Only,” then “Observer Reports.” Choose “County,” “City” or “School District.”

For complete Coast League reports, go to our local League website, Click on “Observer Reports.”

Scroll all the way to the bottom of the page. Click on “Latest Observer Reports – Cities,” Click on “Orange,” choose the date of the report.



Read With the League – *Coming Up Short, A Memoir of My America* by Robert B. Reich

Our Read with the League selection for October is *Coming Up Short, A Memoir of My America* by Robert B. Reich which is his 18th book. Professor Reich has a long history in U.S. government service in both Democratic and Republican administrations including as secretary of labor under Bill Clinton, working in the administrations of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, and as a member of the economic transition advisory board of Barack Obama. After his public service, he had a long career in education at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Brandeis University, and UC Berkeley. A 2025 film documenting his last semester teaching at Berkeley entitled *The Last Class* is available to stream here:

<https://www.thelastclassfilm.com/> and here: <https://thelastclass.substack.com/p/watch-robert-reich-teaching-his-final>. And here is the trailer for his new documentary *A Work in Progress* <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1104582168778408>

Professor Reich started *Inequality Media* with the mission “To inform and engage the public about inequality and imbalance of power.” Here you can find the many short, creative, often humorous videos he and his team have created over the years to illustrate government, societal and economic concepts: <https://www.inequalitymedia.org/>

You can even take his “Wealth and Poverty” course (the same one he taught for years at Berkeley) for free on the Inequality Media website: <https://www.inequalitymedia.org/wealth-and-poverty>

On Saturday mornings you can find Professor Reich reviewing the week's events on his Coffee Klatch discussion on his YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@RBReich>. You can also find his Inequality Media content on this channel.

Here is a great discussion between Professor Reich and Professor Heather Cox Richardson on the occasion of his book *Coming Up Short* being released in paperback in August on how we got here (beyond just Trump's rise) with lots of historical perspective from both Reich and Richardson. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjZ9I62I6N0>

Here Professor Reich discusses his book with journalist Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now!*: https://www.democracynow.org/2025/8/6/robert_reich_memoir

Here Professor Reich sits down with his long-time friend of over 60 years, Harvard Kennedy School Professor Richard Parker (also a co-founder of the magazine *Mother Jones*) in discussing a number of topics, including Reich's book:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R9adhYZpMw>

Here on the Commonwealth Club World Affairs Stage Professor Reich engages with Emmy and Peabody Award winning TV host and author Kamau Bell regarding his book and other topics:

<https://www.commonwealthclub.org/events/archive/video/robert-reich-memoir-my-america>



No Kings: Vote Early – Saturday, October 17th!

The next No Kings is coming up very soon on **Saturday, October 17th**. The theme of this one is VOTE EARLY. As of this past Thursday, September 24th, there are about 1,500 events scheduled around the country with more being added every day.

So far, the following events are scheduled in the Orange County area, but please go to www.nokings.org to keep up with new OC locations being added.

- *Seal Beach – PCH & Main, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM
- *Long Beach – Bixby Park between Ocean & 1st Street, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- *Huntington Beach – HB Pier, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- *Newport Beach – PCH & Jamboree Road, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- *Irvine – Trabuco Center, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM
- *Laguna Niguel – Alicia Parkway & Crown Valley Parkway, 10:00 AM to 11:30 PM
- *Laguna Hills – El Toro Road & Paseo De Valencia, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- *Aliso Viejo – Aliso Creek Road & Enterprise, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- *San Clemente – Vote Early Banner Blast, South El Camino Real & San Luis Rey, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM
- *Tustin – 17th Street @ 55 Freeway, 7:30 AM to 10:00 AM
- *La Habra – Beach Blvd & Imperial, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Leah Greenberg and Ezra Levin, the co-executive directors of Indivisible, post a weekly talk on the Indivisible YouTube channel discussing relevant political topics including updates on No Kings events. If this is of interest to you, [here is the LINK to their latest talk](#) where they interview Professor Erica Chenoweth, an American political scientist and professor of public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. They are known for their research work on nonviolent civil resistance movements.

Professor Chenoweth discusses the 3 arenas for nonviolent resistance – the courts, the streets, and the polls (and possibly also the pocketbook). They state that **turnout is most important for a decisive outcome that will be hard to sabotage**, citing the Hungarian election earlier this year ousting authoritarian Viktor Orban as an example. The highest turnout ever in the history of that republic simply couldn't be denied.

They further described the 4 characteristics associated with movements that are able to channel a pro-democracy push as follows:

- They are big and diverse and keep getting bigger and more diverse.

- Because of that they create a permission structure for elites to align themselves with the pro-democracy movement. People from all walks of life begin to think that it is in their best interest to align with democracy vs autocracy.
- They are prepared to be resilient and able to respond powerfully when it gets tough.
- They don't just select one set of tactics, rather they figure out a way to channel actions like protests into political power and transformation. Turning protest power into electoral power.

They also state that there are no guarantees and that it is important to maintain an identity **independent of political parties so as to reach different demographics**. This allows people who are on the fence to see people that they identify with – and gain critical defections.

After talking with Professor Chenoweth, the discussion turned to reiterating that Indivisible is not No Kings but is a participant in No Kings along with many other organizations and individuals. The advantages of flipping power in the House and/or Senate, even though the executive branch would remain the same, were also reviewed as was the prioritization of Supreme Court reform.



No One Can Do Everything but Everyone Can Do Something!

Get Involved Helping with the General Election in November!

Did you know that you can do your part for democracy this November by serving during the election in a Vote Center or maybe at the OC Registrar of Voters offices or warehouse?

Working at a Vote Center is a very rewarding way to help people in your own neighborhood area vote.

Consider applying if you can:

- Be able to commit to this position for approximately 10 days spread over a two-month period.
- In addition to multiple days of remote and in-person training, be able to work the following schedule:

4-Day Vote Center

Set up day: TBD (Will be scheduled one of the following): Wednesday, 10/28/2026, Thursday 10/29/2026 or Friday 10/30/2026

All Voting days: Saturday, 10/31/2026 – Tuesday, 11/03/2026

Takedown day: Wednesday, 11/04/2026

- Must be able to work overtime, including evenings and weekends to meet the needs of the department.

For more information go to: <https://ocvote.gov/careers> and click on “Vote Center Customer Service Representative”. If this opportunity is not a good fit for you, please pass it on to friends or family members who may be interested in serving.

For questions about these positions contact the Orange County Registrar of Voters at Recruitment@ocvote.gov or (714) 567-5079.

You Can Observe the OC Registrar of Voters Operations During the Election

You can also observe the OC Registrar of Voters election operations either in person at their facility in Santa Ana or remotely in the comfort of your home via livestreaming. For more information of election observation go to: ocvote.gov/observe. Feel free to pass this information along to anyone who is interested in observing the election process in November.

(Nearly) October Surprise

By Susan Guilford

My husband and I were talking about voting by mail when I looked up vote by mail instructions on the California Secretary of State website. Imagine my surprise and horror when I read that ballots must be postmarked by . . . and there I read the wrong date. Twice. It was nearly 7 PM. I took screenshots, emailed the website administrator at CA_SOS and emailed someone at League of Women Voters of California. The next morning I called the Secretary of State's office — when I explained why I was calling the guy was VERY interested.

We'll probably never know why or how this happened. I also wondered about the website for our own Registrar of Voters, where the language about when ballots must be postmarked doesn't specify a date but rather "Election Day" which is much safer.

There are so many ways anyone can get involved in this election. The League is a partner in state-wide campaigns:

Yes on Prop 4 (Fair Elections Act)

<https://www.yesfairelections.org>

Money in politics has been a League concern going back decades. But this time we have a long list of partner organizations.

Fair Elections Act will allow any jurisdiction within California to establish a system of public funding for elections. The measure includes strict rules to protect against abuse.

No on Prop 39 (Voter ID)

<https://nooncaprop39.com/>

California has no voter ID requirement but everyone who registers to vote is required to swear, upon penalty of perjury, that they are citizens. There is no need for this requirement, which will be very expensive to implement, will disenfranchise many, especially women and minorities. We don't have a problem with noncitizens voting.

Give me a call if you want to do something, anything, but don't know what or how. There are opportunities for anyone who has a little time. You want to wake up on Wednesday, November 4 and know that you were a part of the effort.



Speaking for the LWVNO, Director of Voter Services Sue Guilford and VP Gerri McNenny explained the LWV support for this ballot measure to allow public financing for political candidates at the Prop. 4 rally on Sept. 19th. "Elections should be won, not bought."



Current Officers & Directors

2026-2028

OFFICERS

President: Sharon O'Hara

Vice President: Gerri McNenny

Secretary: Ruth Zemke

Treasurer: Jenny Luzi

Equal Opportunity Officer: Ruth Zemke

OFF-BOARD DIRECTORS

Facebook: Ruth Zemke

Observer Corps: Karen Bender

Read with League: Deborah Vagts & Charlene
Brotman

Student Outreach: Jodi Balma

DIRECTORS

Action/Advocacy Director: Richard Larsen

Lunch w/ League: Betty Hammond

Maggie Lee

Membership: Maggie Lee

Voter Services: Sue Guilford

Speakers Committee: Gerri McNenny

E-mail Blasts: Maggie Lee

Web Host: Ed Smith

Special Events: Gerri McNenny

Voter Editor: Erica Hartsough

Nominating Committee: Barbara Dunsheath

Betty Hammond

Maggie Lee

