



League of Women Voters

North County San Diego

VOTER

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

MAY 2020

ALL LWVNCSD PHYSICAL MEETING IN MAY HAVE BEEN CANCELLED

For everyone's safety, we will conduct all business by email, phone or other electronic method of communication. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call President Anne Omsted at 760-753-6970 or a Board Member.

Watching City Council or Board of Supervisors' Meetings

By Connie Ulrich, LWVNCSD Observer Corps Chair

What's happening in your city?

While we're sheltering in place we have the time to learn how our cities are managing with the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic and what assistance they're able to provide for their citizens.

Do you know:

- Which city services are open?
- Is your city in regular communication with its citizens?
- Has your city initiated programs to contact the elderly who need assistance, donate computers for school children, partner in a food distribution program or provide additional shelter and aid for the homeless?
- Is the city council continuing to meet? How often?
- What issues are before the city council?
- Do they have a process that allows for public comment on non-agenda & agenda items?
- Can questions be asked in real time or must they be submitted in advance?

If you take the opportunity to observe the council meetings, please remember, that as League members, we're not just interested in the issues before the council; we're interested in how these public meetings are conducted.

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**Message from
President
Anne Omsted**

Your Board is trying to adapt to a no-meetings world! We have regretfully cancelled two General meetings, one about climate change and one about behavioral health in North County. We are trying to figure out how we will do Pros and Cons and Candidate and Issues Forums during the remnants of a pandemic (we hope!). We are going to have some sort of a video conference Annual Meeting. We will get the details to you as we learn more about what is allowed by June 6th. And we continue to try to stay on top of the various issues that arise. You have been invited in one of our Monday morning eblasts to tune into your own city council video conference meetings and to let us know if there is anything happening that you feel the League needs to note and respond to. I hope that some of you are doing that very thing and learning a lot about what is going on in your own city.

I also hope that all of you and your family and friends are being very conscientious about isolating themselves, being careful when needing to leave your home, and generally following good advice.

Anne

April 10, 2020 Board Meeting Report

At its Zoom Board meeting on 4/10/2020, the Board:

* Learned that the Executive Committee had approved sending a letter to the Oceanside City Council recommending more transparency during video city council meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Discussed having video meetings for the June 6th Annual Meeting and any other meetings that units or interest groups might want to hold.

*Learned that Schools and Communities First collected over 1.7 million signatures to qualify the initiative seeking regular reappraisal of commercial businesses for the November ballot. It will definitely be on the ballot.

*Were told by Nancy Telford that Census 2020 had collected 49.9% of San Diego County responses by 4/8/2020. Very impressive as the effort started on 4/1/2020.

*Discussed impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the November election. Too many unknowns to make any decisions, but options appear to be limited.

*Were told by the Nominating Committee representative that Roni Seay, Officer, and Bill Loftus, Director, were willing to continue for two more years in those positions. Treasurer Jennifer Lonbom will serve one more year. The Nominating Committee is looking for an Events Coordinator.

LWVNCSO Officers & Directors 2020

Officers

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| President | Anne Omsted |
| 1st VP Administration | Nancy Telford |
| 2nd VP & Advocacy | Veronica Seay |
| Secretary | Jennifer White |
| Treasurer | Jennifer Lonbom |

Directors

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Membership | Rita Soza |
| Natural Resources | Carol Parker |
| Social Policy | Bill Loftus |
| VOTER Editor | Veronica Seay |

Unit Chairs

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Carlsbad Unit | Nita Rodriguez |
| Oceanside Unit | (Chairs rotate monthly) |
| San Dieguito Unit | Katie Wheeler |

Committee Chairs

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Behavioral Health | Liz Kruidenier |
| Candidate Forums | Karen Vanderwerken & Dawn Guendert |

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Civil Engagement | Mary Thompson |
| Education | Claudine Jones |
| Health Interest Comm. | Jane Dunmeyer |
| Observer Corps | Connie Ulrich |
| Press Releases | Jane Schatt |
| Pro/Con-Ballot Measures | Karen Sutton & Mary Thompson |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Social Media | Suzanne Carneiro |
| Voter Registration | Blaze Newman |
| Webmaster | Susan Connell |
| Community Safety & Gun Violence Prevention | TBD |

Board Meeting of April 10, 2020

*As directed by the members at the Program Planning meeting in January, the existing positions were reformatted for our League. The Board approved the excellent work done by Connie Ulrich and Carol Parker, and this will now go to the Annual Meeting for review and, hopefully, approval by the membership.

*Discussed the need for governmental transparency during the pandemic to allow public comment on items before the various governing boards.

* Budget Committee Chair Karen Vanderwerken invited comments and requests for the 2020-2021 LWVNCSD budget, to be brought to the membership at the Annual Meeting for review.

*Learned that LWVSD has proposed the Transportation Position update that was to have been reviewed in April would instead be a central part of the August, 2020 County League Day agenda.

It is good for members to know the priorities of State and National League. Occasionally you get requests from both of them as well as from our own local League to contact government officials. Please respond to these "Calls to Action."

Explore these websites!

LWV of United States:
www.lwv.org

LWV of California:
www.lwvc.org

LWV North County San Diego:
www.lwvncsd.org

Ask yourself:

- Are the council’s deliberations done in an open and transparent manner?
- Are the public being heard and their concerns addressed?
- Is there a pending issue the league should address?

If you are tired of reorganizing your closets and you want to learn how your city is operating during this crisis and what services it’s providing, the best place to start is their website.

Click on the web address below to access your city’s homepage.

- Carlsbad: www.carlsbadca.gov
- Del Mar: www.delmar.ca.us
- Encinitas: www.encinitasca.gov
- Escondido: www.escondido.org
- Oceanside: www.ci.oceanside.ca.us
- San Marcos: www.san-marcos.net
- Solana Beach: www.ci.solana-beach.ca.us
- Vista: www.cityofvista.com

Please let me know if your city council is discussing an action the league should speak to, if you see something that concerns you, or even better, if you’re impressed by an action your city is taking.

I’ll forward your comments to our board of directors. My email address is: cku2527@gmail.com.

Thank you and Stay Safe,

Connie Ulrich, LWVNCSD Observer Corps Chair



Climate Solutions Corner May 2020

by Carol Parker,
LWVNCSD Natural Resources Director

Is the Coronavirus Pandemic Crisis like the Climate Change Crisis?

Both CO₂ in the atmosphere and the novel coronavirus are invisible. Both issues lead to many deaths per year (but we can test for deaths by COVID-19). Both issues have surprisingly become politically partisan. Both issues are going to change our future.

It is hard to think of how many things will be different because of COVID-19 and climate change, but maybe we can learn lessons from the coronavirus pandemic to better address the climate crisis. One lesson is that preparation for disasters is much easier and cheaper than dealing with crises in real time.

As I write this on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, I am heartened that many people are seeing the pollution-free skies around the world. Nobody wants our schools, factories and businesses to be closed in the future. But wouldn't it be great to have clear skies if electricity and transportation change to use non-polluting renewable energy? Wouldn't it be great if we all would make good choices regarding food and energy use? Wouldn't it be great if our government plans for climate change and makes changes to our energy policy? Wouldn't it be great if 100,000 Americans would not die every year due to air pollution?



Public Comment During A Crisis

By Anne Omsted

During normal times, a member of the public who is concerned about a matter coming before a governing board, such as a city council or a school board, can write an email or a letter or phone in a message about her concern. Or, if she chooses to do, she can attend the meeting when the topic is being discussed and express her concerns and thoughts directly to the board before the board takes any votes on the topic.

During a pandemic, when governing boards meet by video-conferencing, it is still required by state law that public input is allowed. Almost every city in North San Diego County chose to have its City Clerk read aloud all email and phone calls received prior to the actual meeting so that this critical public right is still observed. The City of Oceanside chose to say that all input would be received by 5 PM on the day of the meeting, and the material would be shared on the city's website. No provision was made for actual comment about the item as the council was meeting. Our League wrote a letter to the City of Oceanside's Mayor and City Council, pointed out this discrepancy and recommended that the City Clerk be tasked with reading all phone call messages and emails that came in prior to the meeting. And, I am pleased to report, the City of Oceanside heeded our advice and immediately revised their procedure so that same time public comment can be received by the Council through the City Clerk.

About a week later, an article detailing all of this was in the San Diego Union Tribune. I am delighted that the City listened to our concerns and responded promptly with a correction that meets basic levels of concern, and also happy that this important issue was publicized county-wide. Now citizens of all 18 cities will be more alert to the need to protect the important need and right to make public comment during board meetings. Here is the link to the U-T story, if you missed it.

Anne

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/north-county/story/2020-04-20/public-input-during-the-pandemic>

May Events

Lunch with the League

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY MONDAY,
MAY 4 AT 11:30 AM**

We've Come a Long Way, But We're Not There Yet

Wednesday, May 6 | 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

Join us virtually, register [here](#) by Friday at 3pm
Women have come a long way in the 100 years since we marched for voting rights, but we're still not on par with men. Women in America and across the world take home a fraction of the pay men do for the same job, are the victims of trafficking/forced labor at about twice the rate of men and boys, and are killed by an intimate partner at a rate of more than three women a day.

Come hear experts discuss how far we still have to go to claim equal rights with men. Featured panelists:

- **Bettina Hausmann, M.A.** Chief of Staff, Project Concern International
- **Dee Aker** Former Director, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice
- **Yvette Lopez-Cooper, J.D.** Executive Director, San Diego Family Justice Center
- **Anne Hoiberg, M.S.,** Board President, Women's Museum of California

LWV Book Group

The LWV Book Group will have a Zoom meeting on May 18 from 1-3. We will be reading **No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know about Domestic Violence Can Kill Us** by Rachel L. Snyder. Norelynn Pion-Goureau will be the discussion leader.

On June 16, the LWV Book Group will be reading **Where the Water Goes: Life and Death along the Colorado River** by David Owen. Anne Omsted will be the discussion leader.

If you are interested in participating in either of these meetings, please contact Kathy Anderson at kathsand@sbcglobal.net to be included on the Zoom invitation list.

San Dieguito Unit

TENTATIVELY, we are planning the May 28th San Dieguito Unit meeting via Zoom to focus on how best to increase voter turnout in November.

One issue that will need addressing is how best to counter the false notion that voting by mail increases the likelihood of voter fraud.

Meeting details will be sent to you later in the month.

Carlsbad Unit

There will be no Carlsbad Unit meeting in May either physically or virtually but we want you to keep up on what's happening at City Hall while you hunker down and stay safe.

If you haven't already, sign up for the daily City Manager's Update (Monday thru Friday). He is very concise and gives good info on what the City is doing to keep us all safe from the COVID-19 virus as well as offering other resources to share with family and friends.

Just go to the website carlsbadca.gov and scroll to the bottom of the page and click on *City News*. That will take you to a page with an abundance of information. You can either read the updates from there or click on the link *City Enews email list* where you can sign up for several topics in addition to City Manager's updates. You will then get them right in your email box every day.

As a reminder, the City Council meeting is live streamed on Tuesday night. All the info on that is on the City website.



The Post Office Is In Trouble and We Should Care!

by Kathy Anderson

The US Postal Service (USPS) has been ravaged by the impact of the coronavirus epidemic, increased use of the email versus first class mail, and an onerous debt structure. Postmaster General Megan Brennan, warned that without financial assistance the agency could run out of money by the end of September, possibly resulting in missed payrolls or service interruptions. In this coronavirus world of social distancing, mail-in and absentee voting are critical to insuring that citizens do not have to risk illness or even death to cast their ballots. Additionally, USPS delivers 1.2 billion prescriptions annually and is bringing COVID-19 emergency supplies and household necessities to persons located everyone from mega-cities to the smallest rural address, while providing regular mail service.

The Postal Service, a constitutionally authorized service, has been drawing on a \$15 billion line of credit authorized by Congress nearly 30 years ago; the loan has no terms and low interest rates. Congress has been pushing the USPS to become more self sufficient, although, due the advent of email and wide use of the internet, first class mail volume declines by 50% since 2001. In 2006, under President Bush, the Post Office was required to create a \$72 billion fund to pre-pay for the cost of post-retirement health care costs for its employees for 75 years into the future. This requirement has not been applied to any other federal agency or private corporation. If this requirement were changed to a more typical pay-as-you-go system, the Post office would have had operating profits for the last 6 years. This year, however, the Coronavirus has worsened the USPS financial problems, resulting in a projected 50% reduction in mail volume and accompanying postal revenues.

Postmaster General Megan Brennan has requested \$89 billion in assistance for a lost revenue offset, for dealing with the pension situation and for modernizing the service. Without it she is anticipating a 50% decrease in mail service by the end of June. The projected illiquidity in funding by Fall could call into doubt both payrolls and regular mail delivery.

The value of the USPS was apparent to both Democratic and Republican lawmakers who had agreed to a \$13 billion direct grant (not repayable) to the Postal Service as part of the original \$2 trillion Coronavirus CARES Act. However President Trump, who leads the conservatives who want to privatize the Postal Service, threatened to veto the entire CARES Act if this was included. The only funding relief made available to the Post Office has been a \$10 billion repayable loan from the Treasury Department. This amount is seen as inadequate to address financial problems and is coupled with onerous terms increasing Treasury control over the USPS and reducing the authority of the independent Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission. Secretary Steven Mnuchin further signaled that any postal relief funds in the Phase IV Stimulus package would amount to a poison pill.

With the “sheltering in place/social distance” limitations of COVID-19 extending for some of us possibly in the Fall and the General/Presidential Election coming in November, it is important that the Postal Service be able to maintain a robust infrastructure so every citizen can vote safely from home and everyone can continue to receive prescriptions, emergency medical supplies, and household necessities.

Please let the following officials know of your support for adequate government support of a vital institution:

Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, Chair of the House subcommittee in charge of postal oversight;
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, Chair of the House Oversight and Reform Committee
Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin

Find the Latest Updates About Our League Online

With the League's key goal of "encouraging **informed** and active participation in government," we want to make sure that members and the public can find up-to-date as well as archival information in a variety of ways. *The VOTER* has long been the cornerstone of our communication with members and will remain so. But in these days of rapid change and evolving rolls of citizen participation in government, we want to offer a variety of useful information from the local, state and national level in ways that are easy for us to access at any time. As a result, we are capturing an increasing amount of content on our website: lwnncsd.org.

Not only can you find the latest edition of *The VOTER*, you can review a decade's worth of archives in case you're nostalgic for the old days. You'll also have access to the updates on League events and Action Alerts, more detailed sections about our various interest groups, and information about volunteer opportunities. With the November election coming up, our website becomes even more critical. We'll be posting more updates in all of these areas along with our Voter's Toolbox that includes links to useful local, state and federal legislative and ballot information sites as well as to the Voter's Edge California where you can always access the newest non-partisan information on ballot issues and candidates.

Another key initiative that your webmasters will be focusing on this year is working towards providing more video coverage of meetings and presentations so that you won't miss out on important events. We are hoping that this will be especially helpful in this time of social distancing!

So if you're burnt out on bad news or hyper-politicized content, don't forget to check out our own lwnncsd.org for a calm perspective on issues that affect us all.



Editor's Note: Last month we included pictures of different viruses. This month, to be more cheerful, I am adding "May Flowers"—photographs contributed by several League members—Joyce Joseph, Cathy Greene, Anne Omsted, Carol Parker, Liz Kruidenier, Katie Wheeler, and Roni Seay.

Thanks go to all the kind people who are contributing generously to the many organizations that are helping people in dire need at this time.

Stay well, stay happy, and stay engaged!



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

**North County San Diego
Post Office Box 131272
Carlsbad CA 92013-1272**



**LWV North County San Diego
Membership Application**

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Membership is open to all persons who are at least 16 years of age.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

E-Mail _____

Please make check payable to LWVNCSD
Mail to:

LWVNCSD - Attn. Membership
PO Box 131272
Carlsbad, CA 92013-1272

or Join Online at: lwvncsd.org

Dues:

____ \$30 First Year member

____ \$70/year renewal

____ \$50/year 2nd member at the same address

____ \$0/year Students enrolled in accredited Institution

Additional Levels of giving

____ \$100/year Suffragist

____ \$200/year Activist

____ \$300/year Advocate

____ \$500/year Founders Circle

I am interested in:

____ Voter Service

____ Action and Advocacy