



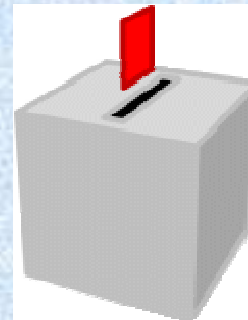
# VOTER

**October - November 2009**

**Volume 50, Number 2**

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*Be an informed voter*

### CALENDAR LWVSLOCO 2009 – 2010

October 27, Tuesday	<b>BOARD MEETING</b> PG&E Community Center	<b>11:30 AM – 1:00 PM</b>
October 29, Thursday	Lunch & Learn- <b>GRAND JURY</b> PG&E Conference Center	<b>11:00 – 1:00</b>
November 12, Thursday	Lunch & Learn – <b>FIRST FIVE</b> PG&E Conference Center	<b>11:00 – 1:00</b>
November 17, Tuesday	<b>BOARD MEETING</b> PG&E Conference Center	<b>11:30 – 1:00</b>
December 5, Saturday	<b>HOLIDAY GATHERING</b> Jan Potter's Home 4844 Caballeros Ave., SLO	<b>3:00 - 5:00</b>

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## Message from the President



**Ann Garfinkel**

October came in with gale force winds and not a drop of the rain we so sorely need; however, John Lindsey is hopeful that this will change as the effects of El Nino are felt. Indications are that we will have a wet fall and winter. This is certainly good news for the Central Coast! Los Osos is classified a Level 3 severity (stringent conservation required), and other communities are also suffering. Let's hope John is right; keep that umbrella handy, and check your car's wiper blades!

Your Board is working hard to plan interesting programs for this year, so it was very disheartening to have to cancel our opening meeting. Julie Rodewald had a super talk planned, and we will try and schedule her for a later date. Perhaps the time has come to rethink having meetings in a restaurant; money is very tight so we will do more BYOBBL (bring your own brown bag lunch) events! Our Grand Jury speaker had to change the date, so the program will be

Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 at the PG&E Center. Hope you will be able to attend.

League continues to offer election monitoring services to organizations throughout the county; many thanks to Sara Horne and Vera Wallen for handling two such events this month. And please extend a warm welcome to Vera, who has agreed

to accept an appointment to the Board as Social Policy Director.

There are several opportunities for member involvement, so if you would like to pitch in and help make our League even stronger please get in touch with me and we'll find just the right spot for you.

Yours in League,  
Ann

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### Membership Memo Sharon Whitney

One of the best things about the League is the network of intelligent people we bring together to learn about and act upon public affairs of common concern. A vibrant network is the key to improving the larger community. That's why we need your help, so if you get a personal call from a member of the Board asking you to renew your dues, please say YES!

We would like to welcome three new members to our "vibrant network" of concerned citizens.

Sharon Hill  
Nipomo, CA

LWVUS members:

Ina Zigelman  
Arroyo Grande, CA

Beverly Freeman  
Nipomo, CA

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### Important New Contact Information

LWVSLO Phone number 805-782-4040

PG&E Community Center  
6588 Ontario Road, Avila Beach  
(Off Hwy 101 and San Luis Bay Drive)

**CAPPS HEALTH CARE FORUM  
ASSISTED BY LEAGUE**

About 250 citizens filled the San Luis Obispo Methodist Church Thursday evening, Sept. 3, to voice their opinions on health care reform. Congresswoman Lois Capps plus two local experts on health care participated in a panel that took written questions from the audience for over 90 minutes. At Rep. Capps' request, the LWVSLO participated in gathering the questions, sorting them by category, and providing synthesis questions to the moderator, Don Marisco of Los Osos. The Forum was marked by a courteous exchange of ideas, facts and opinions. At the end of the evening all the question cards were collected by the legislative staff to receive a personal answer from Rep. Capps in the coming weeks. Participating in the Forum were President, Ann Garfinkel, former Presidents, Sarah Horne and Trudy Jarrett-State LWV Vice President, and members Bill Garfinkel, Boyd Horne, Evelyn Jeys, Charles Archibald, and Pati Dale. On September 2, Congresswoman Capps held a similar forum in Santa Barbara, at which the LWV of Santa Barbara assisted. She also held a Health Care Forum in Oxnard on Sept. 4.

**SCOLARI'S DONATES  
TO LEAGUE**

In a recent letter to LWVSLO, Scholari's Food & Drug Company announced the resumption of their "Friendship Fund" in which a donation of 1% of a customer's spending is directed to a civic organization of their choice. However, the files from Scholari's previous program have been deleted and customers will have to enroll again in the "Friendship Fund". League members may obtain the necessary enrollment form at any Scholari's Food & Drug. Enrollees can also obtain the form online at [www.scolaristores.com](http://www.scolaristores.com), or simply update their Scholari's Club Card information online. If the Club Card information is updated online, a separate Friendship Fund enrollment will not be needed.

Evidently, we have several intelligent up-to-date members as our treasurer has already **received a check** for the month of September! If you are a Scholari's shopper we would like to encourage you to designate League of Women Voters San Luis Obispo as your "Friendship Fund" selection. Every little bit helps and this is a painless way to assist the league.

**KNOW YOUR COUNTY  
COMPLETED**

The 2009 edition of Know Your County, a booklet for voters new to the county or interested in knowing more about their county, has been completed. Work is continuing on the Spanish language translation and is expected to be ready soon. The information will be available in two formats, on line at the SLO County website and printed. The printed booklets in both English and Spanish will be distributed at county offices throughout the county. Funding was provided from the 2008-2009 County Budget. Know Your County was last printed was in 2005. New information and revisions were supplied by Ann Garfinkel, with technical support from Bill Garfinkel. Sharon Whitney has generously offered garage space for storage of a portion of the 1500 booklets printed.

**Congratulations SLO County!**

For the first time in history the central coast will host the League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) convention. Mark your calendars for May 13 through May 15, 2011.



The Ventura County League is the main host and the convention site is the Crowne Plaza Hotel Ventura Beach. The location is prime for walking on the beach or shopping. Travel to Ventura can be by carpool or train, as there is an Amtrak station one block away! Make plans to attend with other LWVSLO friends!

*Look for more information in future Voters.  
Trudy Jarratt, First Vice President, LWVC*

### CAN YOU HELP?

We currently have approximately 30 League Members without email. While we will continue to mail a hardcopy of the Voter to each of these members, occasionally changes and or additions occur to our scheduled events and it is important that these members be contacted in a timely manner.

We are seeking to establish a immediate response team so that the entire membership can be contacted within a matter of hours, most by e-mail, but the remaining 30 by phone. Dawn Williams has volunteered to be the "go to person" on the team and Maureen Martin has volunteered to be part of a phone tree. We need just a few members to volunteer to contact a small list. If we can get 5 more volunteers each person would only have to call five other people. Please contact Arlene Powers @ 534-1139 or [aaaupowers@charter.net](mailto:aaaupowers@charter.net). if you can help.

We do not anticipate the need to use the phone tree very often.

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### LWVSLO Holiday Gathering

***It's not too early to mark your calendars***

***When: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2009***

***Time: 3:00PM TO 5:00PM***

***Where: 4844 CABALLEROS AVE,  
SAN LUIS OBISPO***

Plan on attending this year's Holiday Gathering. It is going to be held at the home of League Member Jan Potter. Her home will be decorated with a display of California's 21 Missions this holiday season. Jan's home features architecture designed around silos, which were originally part of a dairy farm.

We ask that you bring a finger food for eight to share with others. Beverages will be provided.

It will be a wonderful time to visit and share some good food with other League Members.

### OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

**Meeting: Nacimiento Project Commission**

Date: August 27, 2009 4:00 PM

Location: Templeton Community Services District Offices

Report filed by: Barbara Weymann and Dorothy Byles

Members Present: Dave Romero, Chair,  
City of San Luis Obispo,

David Brooks, Vice Chair, Templeton CSD,  
Frank Mecham, SLO County Flood Control,  
Substitute for Grigger Jones, Atascadero MWC,  
John Hamon, City of El Paso de Robles

Members Absent: None

Also attending: John Hollenbeck, Chief Executive of the project

The first agenda item was concerning the fatal accident on Camp Roberts, where Mr. Timothy Nelson, a construction worker for Teichert Construction died. This is the third fatality of the project, and with the same company. The various agencies responsible have concluded their investigation and the work has been allowed to proceed. This was an unfortunate accident involving a dump truck that was backing up with its warning sounds active, but not heeded by Mr. Nelson. They discussed adding Mr. Nelson to the memorial already being planned for the other two men. There will be a discussion with the family of this man to see what might be done.

#### Construction Status

Work is progressing on schedule for the pipeline construction. They are still confident that all will be done by next summer. Some of the sections have been done well ahead of schedule, and bonuses will be paid for that.

#### Status of Project Delivery Team Activities

**Right of way** - There is only one right of way to be negotiated now.

**Design Activities** – Black and Veatch continues to work with the construction manager for any requests for information.

**Environmental Permitting Activities** – The revised Corps of Engineers 404 permit and the CA Department of Fish and Game Permit for the South Salinas River crossing were received in July. They can now allow for the dewatering system to be installed within the riverbed. The work must be completed by the end of October 2009.

The required conduit run at the Paso Robles 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge segment is aligned and no further environment review is required.

Surveys of the Bell’s vireo bird, near the northern Salinas River crossing concluded that there is no active breeding pair in the area. Thus, construction can proceed.

**Outside Agency Issues**

A Paso Robles proposed amendment to the Health and Safety Code is being sponsored by Assemblyman Blakeslee as Assembly Bill 80. The bill was heard in the Senate Environmental Quality Committee on July 6<sup>th</sup>. There were significant amendments to the text such that Paso Robles no longer supports the bill. Blakeslee’s staff is working to solve this problem.

The invasive mussel inspections report indicates no detection of any invasive mussel species in lakes Lopez and Santa Margarita.

A meeting was held with the Monterey County Water Resources Board on Jun 18<sup>th</sup>. MCWRA has submitted a draft invasive mussel prevention plan, and they are awaiting review comments. They are considering putting up signs at all of the entry points to the lake to warn of the mussel danger. They alerted lakeside property owners about the issue. The MC Board of Supervisors added invasive mussel prevention measures into its legislative platform on July 28<sup>th</sup>. However, the Nacimiento Water Board is concerned that Monterey County is not taking this threat as seriously as they should and won’t go much beyond just a plan. There was considerable discussion on this issue,

Camp Roberts still has not presented a list of in-lieu services it wants in exchange for easements allowed on the property. If they don’t come through with such a list, the project will have to pay them \$125,000.

**Nacimiento Reservoir Status** – Reservoir status as reported by the Monterey Water Resources Agency is 18-percent full, or 69,645 acre-feet as of August 24, 2009. The water surface elevation is 720.3 feet. It is 33 feet away from the level where Monterey County must stop releasing any more water.

**Schedule and Budget Issues**

They are still within budget limits. They still have a contingency budget of \$17 Million.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2009.

Meeting was dismissed at 5:40PM.

**Agency: Board of Trustees, SLO Co. Office of Education**

Date of Observation: September 1, 2009

All members of the Board were present. The meeting was called to order by President Floyd Moffatt at 1:30 PM, followed by Pledge of Allegiance, adoption of the Agenda, and Consent Agenda. The floor was opened for Public Comments. There were none.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Reports

1. Superintendent

Dr. Crocker described a letter he was sending to all staff in the County Office of Education addressing the problems which would result from the transfer of special education classes from the County Office of Education to the separate districts. There are currently 34 special education classes. The pending transfers would involve 25 of these, or 73%, and 185 special education employees, including teachers and classified staff, e.g., aides, and specialists. The funds to support these classes would be transferred from the County to the districts. A change of this magnitude would mean the downsizing of the County Office and relocation of a significant number of personnel. The districts will notify the County of their decisions by October 15. These changes would take place in July 2010 and would last for a minimum of three years.

Dr. Crocker stressed that it would be important for students not to be aware of any differences, and important also that relationships between the Office of Education and the districts not be hurt.

He mentioned that this kind of change is occurring in other counties and is almost entirely a result of financial concerns. Some local concerns involve the maintaining of quality and whether it will actually save money for the districts. They would no longer have to pay the County Office fees for service, but at the same time they would no longer collect rent from the County for housing the classrooms.

2. Board

Gaye Galvan described the “Ropes” program conducted in secondary Title I classes which she observed. The program involves “trust exercises” and a number of physical activities which require the pupils to help each other. Since many of these classes contain gang members, it often means that youth from rival gangs have to help each other. This kind of interaction changes the behavior of students toward each other in a positive way.

3. CTA Representative

Diane Hunt Roberts provided a handout from the California CTA Legislative Relations Department describing the changes in federal education policy, priorities and funding under the Obama administration. The report concludes that unfortunately the new federal proposal, called Race To The Top (RTTT), “reveals that this administration is repeating the past mistakes of No Child Left Behind, including an over-reliance on test scores as an accurate measure of student achievement and support for interventions that do not have a track record of success, such as unregulated charter schools and compensation tied to test scores.”

The report outlines the position of CTA in six areas:

1. Continuing to link student achievement to success on a test. “CTA supports student assessment systems that use multiple measures instead of a one-day snapshot based solely on test scores.”

2. Balancing Federal mandates with priorities for local control. There is concern from CTA that California may be penalized in eligibility for funding “because the U.S. Dept. of Education does not approve of the way in which California handles its data systems.” The report states that the RTTT proposal involves an “expansion of authority by the federal government into areas of traditional state and local control. CTA supports California’s efforts to develop a statewide data system which can be useful at the local level to improve student and teacher performance.

3. Defining Teacher effectiveness based on student test scores. “The RTTT proposal includes new definitions of teacher effectiveness and proposes that states use those ratings in high-stakes employment decisions such as evaluation, compensation, tenure, and dismissal.” CTA objects to defining teacher effectiveness on the basis of student test scores. Instead, measures of teacher quality “should include multiple sources of evidence that have been validated for the purpose of teacher evaluation.”

4. Raising the stakes: Paying and evaluating teachers based on student test scores. “CTA believes that for.... personnel decision making or compensation, multiple measures should be used in combination.....These measures should include evidence of (1) teacher practices. teacher performance, and (3) teacher contributions to student learning. “ CTA also supports the operation of collective bargaining and therefore objects to the criteria in the RTTT proposal as undermining California’s collective bargaining requirements, which include evaluation procedures, compensation, and discipline.

5. Advocating expansion of Charter Schools without Adequate Quality Control. “The RTTT proposed selection criteria evaluate whether states have laws that ‘prohibit or effectively inhibit’ increasing the number of charter schools.” California guidelines allow expansion of the number of charter schools (100 schools annually) but also requires that “parents must sign petitions to indicate their support of start-up charters and that charter schools must be located in the district or county where the students will be served. The concern of CTA is that these quality-control

requirements could be interpreted under RTTT as inhibiting an increase in charter schools.

6. Using the wrong strategies to turn around struggling schools. Under NCLB, struggling schools have suffered punishing sanctions rather than being provided with supports. The options allowed under RTTT include “replacing the leadership and staff at a school, converting to a charter school, or closing the school entirely.” CTA points out that none of these options is likely to provide positive results. Replacing leadership and staff has been shown to be ineffective; charter schools do not do better than public schools in increasing student achievement; and closing the school disrupts student learning and assumes that there is a better-performing school nearby. CTA believes that “lower-performing schools deserve sustained, intensive support of the right type: a rich common curriculum based on rigorous standards; well-prepared teachers with both content knowledge and instructional expertise; a safe, orderly school environment; adequate fiscal resources; and involvement with parents and the community.”

CTA disagrees with much of the RTTT proposal because it appears only to expand and extend current federal policies. CTA believes that a new philosophy is needed “that involves educators and doesn’t usurp state and local responsibilities for public education.”

**BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

Revised Budget Presentation

Mary Jarvis, Asst. Supt. for Business Services presented a revised budget for 2009-2010. A previous budget approved by the Board at a June 25, 2009 meeting was based on information available at that time from the State. The State budget signed on July 28, 2009 was a revision of an earlier State budget. The following changes in the County Office budget have resulted from the changes in the State budget:

- 1) The deficit for county offices increased from 12.717% to 18.621%.
- 2) Budgets of the Juvenile Court and Community Schools were reduced by 158,000;
- 3) The Average Daily Attendance (ADA) amount was reduced by \$253 by the State to \$90 per

ADA. This particularly impacts alternative education programs. In addition, the districts contracting with the County Office for Special Education programs will be required to pay more for services (approximately \$128,000), because of the smaller ADA payment.

The Board approved the revised budget.

**INTERDISTRICT ATTENDANCE APPEALS**

Several interdistrict appeals were heard by the Board. One which required a closed session was scheduled last. At that point the room was cleared of all except for the Board, relevant staff members, appellants, and school personnel representing the denying district. (I was one of those who had to leave.)

Reported by JoAnne Milburn

**Join The Observer Corp!  
Learn About Your County!**

**Reminder! Board Meetings Moved:  
New Time, New Place, New Members?**

In an effort to attract new members to fill vacant positions on the board and to accommodate working members, the LWV Board has voted to switch their monthly meetings to the last Thursday of the month from 11:30 to 1:30. They have also moved their meetings, along with other LWV functions, to the PG&E Community Room, 6588 Ontario Rd., ( just off Hwy 101 and San Luis Bay Drive, Avila Beach.



**LWVSLO 2009 - 2010 BOARD MEMBERS**

**OFFICERS:**

President:	Ann Garfinkel	president@lwvslo.org
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President:	Arlene Powers	info@lwvslo.org
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:	Sara Horne	info@lwvslo.org
Treasurer:	Maggie Higgins	info@lwvslo.org
Secretary:	Evelyn Jeys	info@lwvslo.org

**DIRECTORS:**

Membership:	Sharon Whitney	info@lwvslo.org
Communications:	Pati Dale	info@lwvslo.org
Government:	Emily Penfield	info@lwvslo.org
Social Policy:	Vera Wallen	info@lwvslo.org
Natural Resources:	<i>Open</i>	
Planning & Land Use:	<i>Open</i>	
Development:	<i>Open</i>	

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

Budget:	Glenn Silloway	
Website:	Carey Marsh	
Nominating:	Colleen Ehrenberg	
LWVC Management Training Advisor:	Beverly King	

**Relevant Websites**

LWVSLOCO	<a href="http://www.lwvslo.org">www.lwvslo.org</a>
LWVUS	<a href="http://www.lwv.org">www.lwv.org</a> (Click on "members" and create your own password)
LWVC – members	<a href="http://www.lwvc.org/lwvonly">www.lwvc.org/lwvonly</a>
Guide to Government	<a href="http://www.guidetogov.org">www.guidetogov.org</a>
Secretary of State	<a href="http://www.ss.ca.gov">www.ss.ca.gov</a>
Senate	<a href="http://www.senate.ca.gov">www.senate.ca.gov</a>
Assembly	<a href="http://www.assembly.ca.gov">www.assembly.ca.gov</a>
Easy Voter Guide	<a href="http://www.easylvoter.org">www.easylvoter.org</a>
League Easy Web	<a href="http://www.lwvnet.org">www.lwvnet.org</a>
Smart Voter	<a href="http://www.smartvoter.org">www.smartvoter.org</a>

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[www.lwvslo.org](http://www.lwvslo.org)                      [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)

Dear Members,

Thank you to all who have sent in their renewal checks along with updated information. We are making every effort to reach all of our members quickly and efficiently. The shift to electronic communication continues at every level of League, so having your correct e-mail is crucial. Locally, everything coming from LWVUS is in digital format, and LWVC sends most materials the same way. We will make every effort to keep the information coming your way, but you are urged to learn how to access our website: [www.lwvslo.org](http://www.lwvslo.org) at your local Library if you do not have a computer in your home. Please remember that changes to your e-mail, phone number, or address should be sent to Sharon Whitney, LWVSLO, PO Box 4210, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403

Our next edition will include updated member information, so if you have not had a chance to send in your dues please do so at your earliest convenience. Your very hard working Board appreciates your help!

If you have any questions about when your dues are up for renewal please call me at 805 543-8182.

Sharon Whitney

Membership Director

**JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS... and make an INFORMED difference!  
BECOME A LEAGUE MEMBER OR GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP!!**

Invite a Friend to JOIN UP!

Membership is open to all citizens of voting age. Associate membership is offered to students, non citizens and individuals wishing to receive the VOTER only.

Membership is for one year, July 1 to June 30

\$60 individual  \$85 household membership (2 persons same address)  \$25 associate membership

I wish to make an additional CONTRIBUTION in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to join at this time, but here is a CONTRIBUTION in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions to LWVSLOCO are not tax deductible.  
Contributions to LWVSLOCO Education fund are tax deductible

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to LWVSLOCO and mail to: LWVSLOCO  
PO Box 4210  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93403