

January 2003 Calendar

Wednesday
January 8 7:30 PM
BOARD MEETING
Home of Chris Carson

Saturday
January 18 10:00 AM
PLANNING MEETING
Myer's Coffee House
See flyer on page 2

Saturday
January 25
COUNTY LEAGUE DAY
Health Care in Crisis
See flyer on page 6

Monday
February 10
Last day to register to vote in
Burbank Municipal Election

Wednesday
February 12
BURBANK CANDIDATES FORUM

Tuesday
February 25
BURBANK MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Thursday
March 6
Glendale PTA Council's
**GLENDALE SCHOOL BOARD/
COLLEGE BOARD FORUM**
Co-sponsored by Glendale/
Burbank League

Thursday
March 13
GLENDALE CITY COUNCIL FORUM

President's Message

Chris Carson President LWVGB

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!

This time of year is often a time for each of us to consider life, to see where we are going, to look at what we are doing, even occasionally making those infamous "New Year's resolutions" when we're not happy with where we are going or what we are doing. How about if our League does the same thing?

As a part of the worldwide League, we're pretty comfortable with our organization's mission. And we can all be very proud of our history of accomplishment at the national, state and local levels in fulfilling that mission. But such comfort and pride can combine to make us complacent, self-satisfied and non-energetic. We continue to do what we have always done because it is comfortable, and what we know how to do, and what people expect us to do. Very dangerous!!

Just as each of us considers the broader picture at the beginning of a new year, it is vitally important that all organizations periodically conduct a similar self-assessment. Our League is no different. The League's mission is fine and dandy as a broad concept, but how should that translate into the daily life of our local League? We have grand plans but limited re-

sources, so how do we resolve this tension? How can we recruit new members and keep our current members excited about our League? While we can stumble along and let life happen to us, wouldn't it be better to look ahead and plan for our future?

So we would like to do a strategic plan for our League here in Glendale and Burbank this coming year. We are extremely lucky in having the services of a member who is very experienced with strategic planning, who will help guide us through this process. We want to develop a very specific strategic plan to take us through the next several years, assessing what things we want to accomplish, identifying what resources we will need versus the resources we have, planning to reach out to the diverse people of the communities we live in, developing a coherent membership recruitment plan. But we need our members' input and consent to make it happen.

Intrigued? Join us on January 18th for Coffee, Pastry and League—our Planning Meeting. Sit down over coffee and talk about our future: what Leaguer doesn't like that? Help us chart the future for Glendale/Burbank League. See you there!

Glendale/Burbank League of Women Voters

Coffee, Pastry and League

Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 18, 2003

10:00 AM
Myer's Coffee House
1407 West Kenneth Road
Glendale

\$5.00
Space is limited
Please RSVP by
Monday, January 13



Voter Service Report

AT A RECENT MEETING of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Community Voter Outreach Committee, it was reported that fewer problems were encountered during the November 5, 2002 election than there were during the March election when many poll workers arrived late or didn't appear at all and some polls were not opened on time. The installation of 21 Touchscreen Voting machines throughout the County for early voting was very successful. One thousand one hundred and two people voted at the Pasadena site and those of us who used Touchscreen found it to be really fun.

HR3295, the Help America Vote Act, was signed into law on October 29, 2002. The effects of this 161-page bill on Los Angeles County are still being studied, as it is very complex, and it is difficult to know exactly what it will mean. It gives the state authority to regulate voting and will fundamentally alter the way elections will be run, giving power to states in matters which have been controlled by counties in the past. It will require every state to maintain an interactive official voter registration list at the state level. California is in good condition as we already have statewide information on registered voters and won't need to have voters re-register. It appears to require those registering to vote for the first time to provide identification, such as a driver's license and Social Security number. There are a lot of questions about this provision, particularly how it would affect those registering by mail, and it may be changed. Federal funding will be provided to states and it is hoped Los Angeles will receive assistance for poll worker training and outreach activities. There will be a Federal Election Assistance Commission to which the President will appoint two Democrats and two Republicans and which will include local election officials of the two largest counties in each state. This will be a leadership opportunity for the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to influence the priorities and make-up of the Commission.

The recent Federal court decision decertifying punch card voting systems requires replacement of Los Angeles County's system by the March 2004

Primary Election. For a number of reasons, including inadequate available funding, the County cannot fully convert to a Touchscreen voting system in all 5,000 voting precincts prior to that date. However, the County will transition to an optical scan paper-based voting system. The new system will look very much like the current punch card system except that voters will use a pen to mark choices rather than a punching device to poke holes in them. The first use of this system is planned for the November 2003 election and will continue in use throughout the 2004 elections. It is hoped that funding will be available to implement Touchscreen voting by the November 2005 election.

Arline Ames, Voter Service Co-Chair

Oakmont

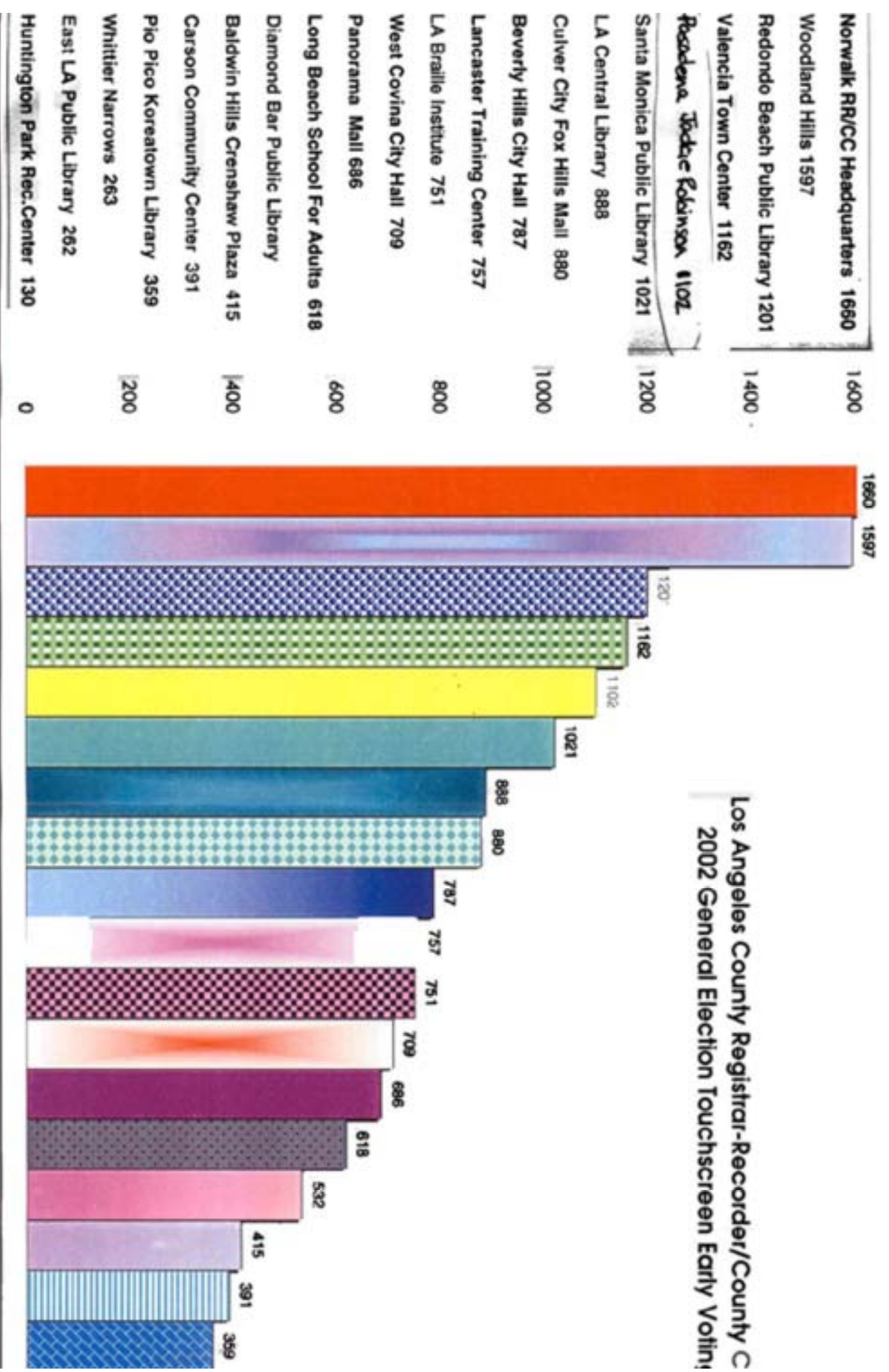
AN END . . . the City of Glendale gave all of us the best Christmas present possible when the Council voted to accept John Gregg's offer to sell the property to the City. Santa came early the day the sale was announced. Georganne Thomsen spoke for the League at the following Tuesday's Council meeting, thanking the Council for their vote. It was especially fitting that she represent League since she has been a moving spirit in this endeavor since 1973.

And a beginning . . . now the Council and the people of Glendale have the happy task of creating a beautiful new park in the Verdugo Mountains that will preserve the unique ecosystem of the area and serve the recreation needs of our citizens for decades to come.

Welcome New Member

Carole Sussman

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
 2002 General Election Touchscreen Early Voting



*RR/CC Headquarter totals reflect Touchscreen Early Voting beginning 10-07-02 and ending 11-05-02.

Health Care

NOT MUCH PROGRESS HAS TAKEN PLACE in discussions between the County of Los Angeles and the State and Federal governments regarding relief measures for the LA County health care system. Neither the County nor the State is offering any more money and both are requesting more funds from the Federal government. Conversations are taking place between the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services and the Centers for Medi-Care/Medi-cade Services. Other states have received funds, yet California has not. The special session that the Governor promised to call to deal with this situation has been folded into a budget session instead. At the Board of Supervisors meeting on January 21, 2003 the Supervisors will reconsider the closures of Harbor/UCLA, Olive View/UCLA and Roybal Comprehensive Health Center. On January 28 there will be a hearing regarding the closure of Rancho Los Amigos Rehabilitation Center. Two options were offered, either closure or a new governance structure. No different governance is being proposed. This rehabilitation facility has no duplicate anywhere else in this region. As with the need for trauma centers, anyone of us could be a victim of a severe injury and require this form of rehabilitation. Many of the patients in this facility are also private paying patients.

The Governor's December 2002 budget proposal to fix a shortfall that is over \$21 billion and growing includes a substantial cut to the health care budget. Included in the proposed cuts are the denial of Medi-Cal eligibility for two-parent working families between 61 percent and 100 percent of the federal poverty level; continued delay in the parent expansion of the Healthy Families program; de-funding of most of the Medi-Cal and Healthy Families outreach, education and enrollment efforts; re-institution of quarterly status reports for adults in Medi-Cal; elimination of certain medically necessary benefits for adult Cal-Cal recipients; 10 percent rate reduction to health care providers, including doctors and nursing homes causing fewer to provide this service; and major cuts in safety-net hospitals.

The League of Women Voters of California is asking that additional revenues be raised to prevent these devastating cuts. You can write your own legislators and request that all citizens of the State, not just the poorest members of our society, share these sacrifices.

Sheila Hoff, LWV/LAC Health Care Director

A REMINDER: Find out what's next for Health Care in Los Angeles County. Register for League Day, January 25 today, Space is limited. See the flyer on page 3 for details.

Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All citizens of voting age are welcome.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters as part of your voice for citizens and force for change. I enclose: (please check one or more of the following)

- \$50.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$70.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

Name/Names _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

- I would like to receive my VOTER by email. My email address is _____

Make check payable to League of Women Voters. Mail to Vera Naylor, 7714 Via Capri, Burbank CA 91504.

Gifts made payable to "LWV Education Fund" are tax deductible.

Health Care: What's Next for LA County?

WHEN: Saturday January 25, 2003
REGISTRATION: 9:30 AM
PROGRAM: 10:00 AM

LUNCH SPEAKER: State Senataor Sheila Kuehl

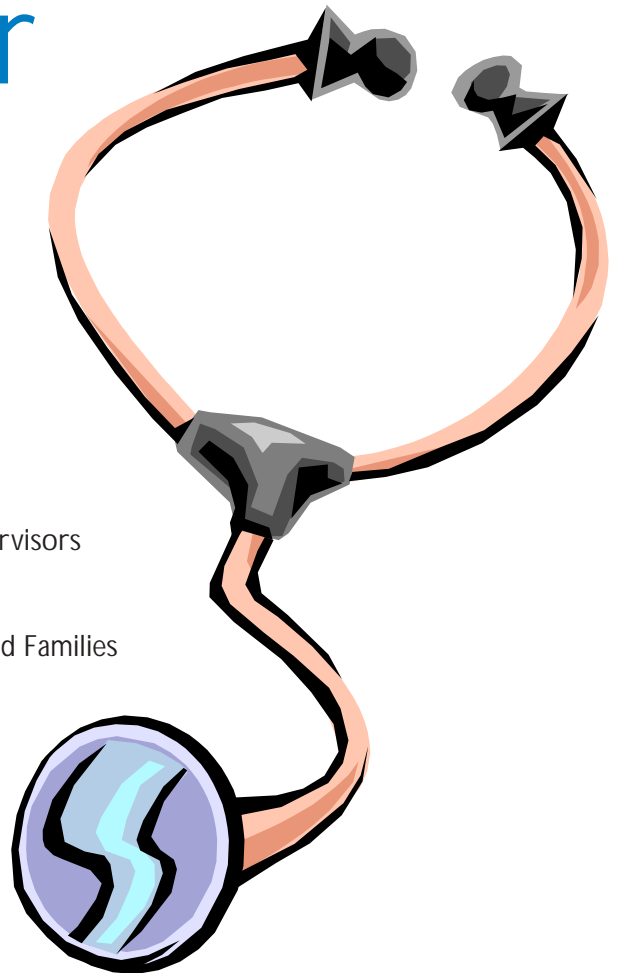
PRESENTATION BY: Representative of the Board of Supervisors
WHERE ARE WE AFTER MEASURE B?

PANEL ON: Health Access Issues for Children and Families

WHERE: Courtyard by Marriott
2100 West Empire Avenue
Burbank California

Free parking Easy access
Adjacent to I-5 (Golden State Fwy)
See directions on back

PRICE: \$30
Includes coffee, lunch and all materials



Space is limited so reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis.

Name: _____

League: _____

Number of persons: _____ Number of vegetarian meals: _____

Send reservation form and check payable to LWV Los Angeles County to
Gwen Cochran
427 East Walnut Avenue
Burbank, CA 91501

Information: (818) 848-8684

Reservation deadline: January 16, 2003

State Budget Crisis

The following is a statement made by Barbara Inatsugu, president of the League of Women Voters of California, to the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services December 17, 2002

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of California appreciates the enormous challenge of addressing the multibillion dollar budget gap between projected spending and revenues for the current and budget years—a gap that may be as large as \$30 billion. The impact of the spending cuts that have been and will be proposed is staggering. In your subcommittee’s purview, for example, Health Access estimates that the proposed cuts in health care will prevent over a million Californians from accessing basic health care, with over half a million persons in low-income working families directly denied Medi-Cal coverage. Low-income Californians will also bear the burden of other proposals, such as the elimination of Stage 3 CalWORKs child care.

A deficit as large as projected cannot be bridged by spending cuts, loans, and transfers and fund shifts alone. Increased revenues are an essential part of a balanced state budget. As Jean Ross, executive director of the California Budget Project, has pointed out, balancing the budget with only spending cuts is mathematically impossible unless basic functions of state and local governments are eviscerated. We urge you to look to the leadership provided by the legislature and Governor in past years and, like them, to couple spending reductions with revenue increases that will allow everyone to share in the solution.

Since the 1960s, the League of Women Voters of California has had positions on state and local finances that resulted from member study and consensus. We emphasize the need for revenues that are both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services. In addition to adequacy, our system of public finance should ensure equity and fair sharing of the tax burden, with emphasis on ability to pay.

We support an increase in the income tax rates for the highest-income taxpayers and a reversal of the Vehicle License Fee reductions of recent years. We urge you to carefully examine additional tax increases and revenue options outlined by the

Legislative Analyst and others. For example, tax expenditures—exemptions, exclusions, deductions, and credits—should contribute to tax equity and provide social benefits that significantly outweigh the increased tax burden to others. Modifying or eliminating tax expenditures that do not achieve these purposes will give increased revenue as well as contribute to the overall fairness of the system. Increased fees in other areas of the budget, such as charging those who degrade the environment so that they contribute to the associated cost of protecting the public health of all Californians, should be analyzed and, where appropriate, instituted.

We recognize that some budget changes must be made quickly if their full benefit is to be realized. However, many of the proposals before you will need careful cost-benefit analysis, and the legal implications of some may need examination. It is important to look at both current and out-year impacts before decisions are made.

Even as the current economic situation reduces both state and local revenues, the demand for services increases until governments are stretched thin. Before the rubber band breaks, we urge you to take steps to address both the spending and the revenue sides of the budget. We must have adequate revenues to prevent the loss of essential government services. California’s long-term economic potential cannot be realized nor its quality of life protected unless we invest in education, social services, and infrastructure.

Californians have shown their willingness to shoulder the burden, as in the recent passage of Los Angeles County’s Measure B to fund trauma centers and protect the health care safety net, and in the continued passage of state bond measures that make investments in our state and its people. We urge your leadership in finding budget solutions that protect our most vulnerable Californians and maintain our investment in government services and facilities.

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generously support the work of the League—Voter Service, Citizen Education and Advocacy. They make our projects possible. Please patronize them and ask your friends to do the same. And let them know who you are. They need to know that we're supporting them.

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Cell Phone Follow-up

The BBC News (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/2591695.stm>) reported on December 20th that mobile phone manufacturers have agreed to alter their manufacturing processes so that mobile phones will be easier to recycle. The agreement was made at a United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) conference in Geneva and will be put into effect by 2005. This agreement is made under the UNEP Basel Convention, which deals with hazardous waste. While the BBC report is rather vague about the specifics of the plan, it does note "one of the main ways of recycling mobiles is to pass them on to other countries." This form of recycling is important, the report notes, as it is estimated that 80% of communication networks in developing countries utilize mobile phones. The report goes on to suggest that education of mobile phone users will be key in the proper recycling of this product. It is also important to note that phones recycled to developing countries will reach the end of their useful life and many of them will end up in the environment, toxic material and all.

John Sullivan, LWV/LAC Natural Resources Director

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Natural Resources: Two Tales of Water

by John D. Sullivan Natural Resources Director LWV Los Angeles County

WATER ISSUES HAVE BEEN IN THE NEWS the past few weeks and thereby hangs two tales. First, we learned that the Federal government had issued an ultimatum to California about the need for the State to develop further the California 4.4 Plan. This plan describes how California will live within its 4.4 million acre feet (MAF) allotment from the Colorado River. California has been diverting approximately 5.2 MAF. The extra 800,000 AF belong to Arizona and that state has plans for them. This is somewhat old news. The new news had to do with the Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) negative vote on the proposed transfer of 200,000 AF from IID to San Diego.

This transfer was part of the California plan to live within its allotted 4.4 MAF. Other parts of the plan involved water transfers arranged by Metropolitan Water District (MWD) and conjunctive use arrangements (i.e., surface water stored in aquifers in wet years for use during dry years) also developed by MWD. IID directors voted the proposal down for a number of reasons. Some were opposed to fallowing land for fear that it would have negative economic effects in that agricultural region. Others feared that IID would be required to mitigate any negative effects that fallowing might have on the already declining Salton Sea. Some agricultural runoff from IID ultimately goes to the Salton Sea and, if the transfer is approved, less water will in that direction. Given the threats that the Federal government had made before the IID vote, the government's response to the IID vote was predictable: Secretary of Interior Norton indicated that California was at risk of losing the 800,000 AF immediately rather than in the 15 years as originally planned

The second water tale involves the storms that started on December 17th and are the beginning of what is supposed to be a relatively wet winter. The storms are welcome—given that we only had 4 inches of rain this year—but they brought with them accidents and storm related damage. They also mean that water will be available for percolation into aquifers in Southern California. But the storms also produce enormous runoff and that runoff—particularly the first couple of inches—pick up pollutants from streets, parking lots, and

driveways and carry them to the ocean. This runoff is exacerbated by urban and suburban sprawl, which involves paving much land that, in the past, would have transferred water to local aquifers. Now we move it out of the region as rapidly as possible to the ocean and this runoff causes coastal pollution and the closure of beaches. This, in turn, can have negative economic consequences for beach communities. Thus the storms are both a blessing and a curse.

These two tales will likely have future consequences for citizens in the Southland. First, we will likely begin to hear much discussion about using native plants (i.e., plants that require little water) in our gardens. Second, we may begin to see the topography of our gardens become a public policy issue. That is, we may be encouraged to design our gardens so that less storm water flows from them to storm sewers. We also may be encouraged to do this to prevent water from our hoses and sprinklers running off our property and into sewers. Third, the question of future growth patterns in the Southland may appear on the political agenda of local, county and state government. A USC study suggested that we might not have enough physical space left for the type of sprawl we have seen in the past 50 years. This will likely lead to discussion of density as a solution to sprawl. Finally, the issue of cleaning up storm water before it moves to the ocean has already been put on the political agenda and will likely be a contentious issue for some time. Any requirement that local communities and institutions clean up storm water before releasing it to storm drains will be expensive ultimately to the property owner in the form of higher property taxes.

It seems clear that we will have to re-examine the assumption that people can live in Southern California and pretend that it is not a desert. Rather, we will have to face the fact that water, among other resources, may ultimately be a limit to growth in our region. How we deal with this issue will have an impact on the quality of life in this region for years to come. Hopefully we will deal with this, and other resource issues, with the insight that we ought to accept the limitations of the environment in which we live and adjust our life patterns accordingly.

Wassail Bowl

SANTA CAME TO TOWN . . . stopping at member **Mary Lou Howard's** beautifully decorated home for the annual League Wassail Bowl.

A merry time was had by all with the assistance of Santa's Helpers: **Chris Carson**; our hostess **Mary Lou Howard**; **Bonnie Burrows**, photographer; **Doris McKently**, pianist; Santa's bartender **Don Brown**; **Gwen Cochran**, **Dorrie Beaumont**, **Rosa Frommer**, **Florence Dommies** and of course **Lorene Simon's** treasured Wassail Bowl recipe.

The Opportunity Prize raffle earned \$400 for the League.

I thank all our wonderful volunteers for the prizes and the enthusiasm of Santa's Crew.

Connie Wilson

And the rest of us thank **Connie Wilson** for her tremendous effort which made the Wassail Bowl such a wonderful success. She is truly one of our League's Shining Stars.

Chris Carson



The Voter

is published nine times a year by the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank, California.

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Editor: Chris Carson
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The League of Women Voters

is a nonpartisan organization open to citizens—women and men—of voting age. The purpose of the League is to promote political responsibility through informed participation of citizens in government, and to act on selected issues.

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