



The Voter

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of San Bernardino

May 2014

President's Message

May has been a busy month, beginning with our 39th Citizens of Achievement reception and awards on May 4 at the Elks Lodge in San Bernardino - lovely setting and lovely day. Thanks to Jill Vassilakos-Long for her article featuring this year's recipients. Once again, we found a group of outstanding individuals who make a difference in their communities. This year's acceptance speeches seemed to be exceptional, and I think it was because they had been asked ahead of time to prepare something to say beyond the usual "Thank you". They tugged more than a few heart-strings. Those nominating them are asked to give us a one-page explanation of why the nominee is worthy of recognition, focusing on the contributions he or she has made that improve the quality of life in our community, either as a volunteer or how the person has gone above and beyond doing the job for which he or she is paid. It might include the personal qualities of the individual as well as any obstacles the person has overcome. This year we had several honorees who had been motivated by their mothers or other role models. Others who had had difficult situations growing up were motivated to help others who have problems. They were givers of their time as well as their money to the things they are passionate about - all of them truly worthy to be added to the hundreds who have been honored before them.

Then, of course, our annual meeting on May 31 wraps up the League year. This year the decision to give up the office space we were renting at 568 North Mountain View was a huge change that necessitated a huge move of our files to a storage shed at Shirley Harlan's. Large items like a desk, book cases, storage cabinets, and folding tables, and small items like two typewriters (one manual and one electric) were donated to Habitat for Humanity's ReStore in Redlands. You will be voting on two other changes at the annual meeting, though. The board is suggesting two changes to the bylaws, one having to do with changing our League's name, and the other having to do with changing when

dues are paid. You have information about them in the packet that was mailed to you in early May. PLEASE TAKE TIME TO READ YOUR PACKET! And we will be hearing about proposed charter changes at lunchtime. As you know, we have a position on the city charter as the result of several studies we have done over the years since we began in 1955. Be sure to take a look at it on page 5 in your packet.

Finally, there is the June primary election. We have distributed some Easy Voter Guides for voters who may not have internet access. You can check out the League's election information at www.smartvoter.org, www.CAvotes.org, and www.smartvoter.org. You can also find information on the California Secretary of State's at www.sos.ca.gov/elections. And be sure to vote YES with the League on Propositions 41 and 42.

Onward to Summer! Your new board will be planning the coming year's activities, so we are open to your suggestions.

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CITIZENS OF ACHIEVEMENT RECEPTION

For 39 years the League of Women Voters of San Bernardino has recognized people who work to improve our community. This year representatives from Assemblymember Brown and Supervisor Gonzales' office came to add their thanks to ours as we honored a dozen of our citizens.

Jeanette Avila has been active in the San Bernardino Tachikawa Sister Cities Program for over 30 years.

It all began when she herself was a Sister City exchange student from Pacific High School. She learned the value of the program, the way it builds bridges between peoples, cultures, and nations, by becoming part of it! She volunteered to become the treasurer for the Sister City Committee while she was still a student (getting her degree at UCR). Recently she has co-chaired the Committee's 50th Anniversary celebration. She and another honoree, Judy Maculsay, are known as the dynamic duo of the program. Jeanette told us that she is passionate about her community involvement and that she was touched to be recognized for the service that she gives from her heart.



Judy Brewer was honored for her 19 years of work, always going above and beyond the job requirements, to support the San Bernardino Symphony Guild. People say that she is the glue that holds the Symphony together; doing the job of the four employees that the Symphony cannot afford to hire. She supports the patrons of the Symphony. She has been known to arrange transportation for those who can no longer drive. She has provided support for children to attend concerts. She created and funded a program to bring musicians to the Loma Linda Hospital's Children's Ward. She hands out toys from Santa

and the Symphony. Judy invited everyone to the concert being held that night!

Barbara Keough serves on the Board of Habitat for Humanity. (Currently she is the Board's Secretary and in the past she has served as its President.) She has worked tirelessly to raise funds for Habitat. She also donates her time to her church as music director and leads the work for the annual Catholic-Italian dinner. Barbara thanked former Mayor Morris for his work in founding the local chapter of Habitat of Humanity. Habitat has built or rehabilitated 30 homes in San Bernardino. She also helps with legal aide (Barbara is a lawyer) in San Bernardino County. She told us that she loves being part of the community.



CITIZENS OF ACHIEVEMENT RECEPTION (cont.)

Judy Maculsay has a long career of service, including time in the Peace Corps. She now volunteers for the San Bernardino Tachikawa Sister Cities Committee. She has served for three years as the Committee Chairperson, has served on the Selection Committee for ten years. In this capacity she works with the student ambassadors to Tachikawa. Judy has also volunteered countless hours to the National Charity League and Santa Claus, Inc. Judy told us that she is proud to be able to serve the community. She is a third generation San Bernardinian. She told us that Thelma and Lou Press conceived of the San Bernardino Tachikawa Sister City Program in 1959. In 1962 they began sending four students a year to Tachikawa. The students undergo extensive preparation prior to their trip (including 9 weeks of language instruction), then stay with a family in Tachikawa for one month, then host a student from Tachikawa in their home for one month. Last year was the 55th anniversary of the friendship between our cities.



Cheryl Molet serves San Bernardino's distressed families in many capacities. She is a domestic violence counselor, she facilitates batterer intervention groups, she works with runaway homeless youth, and is a San Bernardino County Live-in Home Health Provider Supervisor. Through this formal position she assures that services are provided to families in need. She is also a San Bernardino Valley College Development Teacher Assistant: assisting teachers, students, parents and child care workers. Her work has supported the most vulnerable in our community.

Dr. Angela Gordon-Nichols is one of the founders of the Women's Leadership Council (affiliated with Arrowhead United Way). Dr. Gordon-Nichols chairs the Education

Committee which created the Next Steps Mentoring program to offer guidance to at-risk young ladies. She also works in the "College Cruise" program which introduces students to local colleges and universities. She's been a social worker with San Bernardino Child Protective Services since 1991. Dr. Gordon-Nichols founded a scholarship in honor of her grandmother to encourage high school students to learn about and document their family history. She thanked the community, telling us that no door had ever been closed to her. She thanked her family, telling us that when she volunteers, she ends up volunteering them also, and that they always come through. She said that as a Christian she regards it as her re-



CITIZENS OF ACHIEVEMENT RECEPTION (cont.)

sponsibility to do her part. She revealed that she had once been an at-risk young lady. She was raised by a single mother who made just enough money to be disqualified for Welfare. Dr. Gordon-Nichols said that it is possible to make too much money to qualify for Welfare, even if you aren't making enough to buy food and pay rent. She quoted Michelle Obama, "... when you've worked hard, and done well, and walked through that doorway of opportunity...you do not slam it shut behind you...you reach back, and you give other folks the same chances that helped you succeed."



Bobbie Perong is serving her second term on the San Bernardino City Unified School Board. She is Vice-President and serves on the Legislative Committee for local school districts. She was nominated for her work with the Women's Club of San Bernardino where she currently serves as Vice President. Bobbie started a P.T.A. at her children's school 45 years ago. She had more than a fear, she had a terror, of public speaking, but that didn't keep her from stepping forward when she saw the need. She mentioned her husband of 43 years, saying that their marriage has lasted a long time, but has been such a wonderful experience that it doesn't seem like that long. She told us that people volunteer because they love what they are doing. They see a need out there and they run to help.

Her mother told her that if you see something that needs to be done, don't turn to the person next to you - you step forward and do it! She told us that together we are going to be the significant group of people who will turn San Bernardino around!

Kate Reed was introduced by Gloria Anderson as someone who, up in the mountains, is the life of the singing sessions! She was nominated by the Women's Club for her outstanding work, her years of dedication to the community and her church. For the Women's Club she initiated the 120 Connection fundraiser, which has been very successful. She chaired the Scholarship Committee for many years, and she spoke to the crowd about that experience. She told us that many of our local students come from difficult circumstances. Despite the hardships that they cope with, they are reaching forward and, at the same time, they are doing community service. She told us that her mother was very involved in the community; that she is just following in her mother's footsteps!



CITIZENS OF ACHIEVEMENT RECEPTION (cont.)



Carrie Rios is the Crime Intervention Partnership Program Coordinator of the San Bernardino Police Department. She works to improve services to youth, diminish gang violence, and support victims of human trafficking. She is an active member of the California Violence Prevention Network as well as several county organizations. She is one of the founders of the Inland Empire Crime Free Collaborative. She told us that everything is possible. Everything is do-able. Everyone deserves a chance. She thanked former Mayor Morris for the opportunity to serve the community and promised to be dedicated and passionate in everything she does for the city. She told us that she believes in partnerships, that relationships are how you get things done. She is excited about making a difference in our community.

Janice Roselius is the Steering Committee Chair of the Arrowhead United Way's Women's Leadership Council. Through this work she has helped hundreds of young women through workshops on education, job skills, financial stability, healthy relationships and healthy lifestyle. She told us that, four years ago, when she retired from the San Bernardino Unified School District, she volunteered, not realizing how involved she would become!



Colleen Sayle has been the President of the Snowline Community Players for 25 years. Through her work on the Senior Follies and the



Talented Seniors Showcase she keeps our talented seniors performing! She told us that we may be going gray and getting older - but we still have a lot to offer! Her pet peeve is people who park themselves, motionless, on stage. She said "what don't you understand about moving across the stage? I'm 86 and if I can move it, you can move it too!" Colleen has performed on television, theater, and in movies. She is also a member of the Prime Time Choraliers, a senior choir in the Inland Empire. As Shirley Harlan said "She could rest on her laurels, but she doesn't."

***League of Women Voters of San Bernardino
1955-NOW!***

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Upcoming Events

May 31 (Saturday) 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: LWVSB Annual Meeting. (You should have received the kit, if you have not then call Gloria or find it on the League of Women Voters of San Bernardino Website.)

***League of Women Voters:
Because democracy is not a spectator sport!***



Moritza Solis is the office manager and volunteer coordinator at Habitat for Humanity and is active in the service activities of her church. She told us that when she was young her ambition was to change the lives of thousands of people. A friend suggested that she focus on one person at a time. Moritza sallied forth to change the world, volunteering for Habitat for Humanity. It was something of a disappointment to arrive at the site and be handed a shovel. She spent her first day digging on the construction site. She felt like she was falling short. Then, weeks later, a lady who had been shoveling dirt beside Moritza spotted her at Stater Bros. and came up and told Moritza that their conversation that day, when Moritza had spoken about a friend who had cancer, had changed her life. Moritza told us that she realized then that everyone is a small part of the puzzle and that wherever you are, that is where you

need to be, even if you do not recognize it at the time. You may never get a big job, but if you can help in one person's life then you are making a difference. She told us all to contribute what we have to contribute.

Thank you to all of our Citizens of Achievement for making our community a better place to live!

