



# *The VOTER*

*Newsletter of the League of Women Voters, San Bernardino Area*

Co-Presidents: Gloria Anderson and Jill Vassilakos-Long

VOTER Editor: Dotti Garcia

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gloria Anderson, Co-President

I want to tell you about several events that took place in March and give you a preview of what's coming up in the next few months.

We participated in two observances of Women's History month. On March 5, we were co-sponsors of the city of Rialto's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual The State of Women honoring women in public service and government. Among them were LWVSB members **Susan Longville**, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Board; **Gloria Macias Harrison**, San Bernardino Community College Board; **Virginia Marquez**, San Bernardino City Council; and **Barbara McGee**, Rialto City Clerk. Congratulations to all! Then on March 11, we had an information table at Senator Connie Leyva's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Young Women's Leadership Conference, a motivational conference for young women from area high schools. We distributed information to them on voting. Thanks to Mary Saxon Hobbs for her help on that.

Another highlight of March was our meeting to get acquainted with San Bernardino's new city manager, Mark Scott. We were especially interested in meeting him because we had been alerted by Tom Carson from the Burbank League that Mark was a member of their League and that he has been a member and supporter of the League for many years. And here's the greatest news – Mark has agreed to be our Annual Meeting speaker this year, so mark your calendars for **June 4<sup>th</sup>**! More information on that in May.

Looking ahead, we're busy preparing for the 30<sup>th</sup> Citizens of Achievement awards on **May 1**, and as always, we will be asking for your help with this, mostly on the day of the event. We will also be contacting you for donations of food and beverages.

As you know, the Charter Review Committee is working very hard to write a new city charter that may be on the November ballot. I recently attended a meeting of the Charter Review Committee to assure them that the League is committed to educating the public about it. We plan to have a speaker's bureau whose members will go out into the community to help explain the proposed charter. Please let us know if you are interested ([gloand@juno.com](mailto:gloand@juno.com) or [jvlong@csusb.edu](mailto:jvlong@csusb.edu)) in being involved in this. Training will be provided.

Finally, in honor of our League's 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary, if you haven't already done so, we hope you will give a contribution to help us continue our work. Whether you donate or not, we appreciate your continuing support of the League by being a member. Thank you!

*Gloria Anderson*

## NEWS FROM COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### WHAT IS THE PROMISE ZONE?

Barbara Sokoloff, the League's Observer at Board of Supervisors' Meetings, usually has questions for the Board based on the printed agenda. In February, she asked about the "Promise Zone." The description of the item on the agenda was: "Approval of the preliminary Memorandum of Understanding will provide a mutual understanding of the agencies that are collectively working to prepare and submit the Promise Zone designation application and if so designated, complete the implementation of the Promise Zone...Within the San Bernardino Promise Zone are two synergistic areas: the Waterman + Baseline neighborhood and the Downtown/Central Business District. In 2013, the Promise Zone initiative was introduced to designate a number of high-poverty urban, rural and tribal communities as Promise Zones, where the federal government would partner and invest in communities to create jobs, leverage private investment, increase economic activity, expand educational opportunities and reduce violent crime."

#### **Barbara's question regarding this item was: "What are the boundaries and jobs of the Promise Zone?"**

On a map provided to her, the boundaries appear to be Highland Avenue on the North to Mill Street on the South; and the 215 Freeway on the West to Waterman Avenue on the East and jutting around the Airport to just west of Tiptecanoe Avenue.

"The purpose of the MOU is to provide a mutual understanding of the agencies, organizations and governments that are collectively working to: 1) prepare a successful Promise Zone application in which the County of San Bernardino in partnership with the City of San Bernardino is the lead applicant with administrative and program management from National Community Renaissance of California (CORE) and 2) complete the work effort under the Promise Zone designation to transform an area of extreme need in the city of San Bernardino into a healthy, sustainable, equitable and thriving place to work, live and play. The positive transformation of this community and its residents is dependent upon physical transformation of the area, linked to a comprehensive and coordinated public-private Promise Zone strategy to reduce violent crime, improve education, access and create jobs, increase economic activity and security and improve health and wellness. The MOU promotes the continued collaboration of public and private sector organizations to achieve shared goals and outcomes in the 10-year Promise Zone designation. Further background on the Obama administration's Promise Zone initiative is provided at:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz).

The City, Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino, San Bernardino City Unified School District, Loma Linda University, Institute of Public Strategies and CORE will serve as implementing partners... In addition, as reflected in the application, various County agencies will play implementing roles as part of the Lead Applicant and particular City departments will also be intimately involved as the local jurisdiction."

A Leadership Council has been formed to implement the Plan. Serving on the Leadership Council since October, 2014 and continuing are: County of San Bernardino (Greg Devereaux, County Executive); City of San Bernardino (Carey Davis, Mayor and Mark Scott, City Manager); SBCUSD (Dale Marsden, Superintendent); Housing Authority of the County (Daniel Nackerman, Ex. Diarector); the Waterman Gardens Partnership of CORE, Hope Through Housing, and The Clancy Company (Steve PonTell and Patrick Clancy); Loma Linda University (Dr. Richard Hart, President); California State University, SB (Tomas Morales, President); San Bernardino Valley College (Dr. Gloria Fisher, President); IVDA (Michael Burrows, Acting Executive Director); Technical Employment Training (Michael Gallo, President); Institute for Public Strategies (Daniel Skiles, Vice President); Dignity Health, St. Bernardine Medical Center (Darryl VandenBosch, President); Neighborhood Housing Services of the Inland Empire (Dawn Lee, Executive Director). There is much more information included in this MOU, including description of progress already made, and what is planned. This document makes exciting reading and gives one a positive view of what can happen to create a bright future for San Bernardino.

## CHARTER EDUCATION

As you undoubtedly know, in addition to the many issues on the November ballot, plus candidates to vote for, the big local issue will be the San Bernardino City Charter proposal. This is not really a revision of the charter, but a new charter, designed for now and the future. The proposal, from the appointed citizens' Charter Review committee, is a result of many months of research, discussion, and community input. Some of the principles on which the committee decided to operate are: 1) Nothing in the current charter is sacred; 2) What do successful cities do--- comparing 17 cities of like size with San Bdn; and 3) It has to be simple.

You may have heard some of the proposals being made. In the final draft, the wards remain at 7, with the Mayor not having a vote, as is the current procedure. The City Clerk, City Attorney and City Treasurer would be appointed, not elected. There would still be a Water Board, Library Board, Civil Service Board (whose function would be only appellate), and Commissions as needed.

The Charter Review Committee has completed a final draft of their proposal, and will hold a workshop with the City Council on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 in the "EDA" conference room at 201 North E Street. This is a public meeting; therefore, it is important that citizens of San Bernardino (and those interested from outside the city limits) attend and listen to the discussion.

The deadline for the City Council to put this issue on the November, 2016 ballot is August 1<sup>st</sup>. And another election to make a charter change cannot be held until 2018.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Core Team, was appointed in February, 2015 by the Mayor, the mission being to develop a suggested governance structure which would work better than the confusing structure under which the city was currently operating. A plan was developed and signed by most of the City Council and Mayor. It delineated responsibilities of all involved: the Council, the Mayor, City Manager and Department Heads. The Team, composed of leading citizens in the community, has continued to meet, receiving updates on the plan's success, the bankruptcy plan and recently on the charter review. LWV member **Shirley Harlan** attended a meeting in January; **Betsy Starbuck** in February, and recently **Shirley, Jill Vassilakos, and Dotti Garcia** attended the meeting where more serious discussion about advocating for the new charter's passage in November took place. **Gloria Harrison**, an LWV member who is on the Charter Review Committee and the Strategic Plan Core Team was also in attendance. Jill has sent all of our members a summary of that meeting.

This Core Team may become an independent committee which would enable them to work toward passage of the new charter. LWVSB looks forward to working with them.

**Citizens of Achievement Reception**  
**May 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Elks Lodge, 2555 Elks Drive, SB**

## HAS THE LWVSB SUPPORTED CHARTER REFORM IN THE PAST?

From Gloria Anderson: “Here is a brief summary of what we have done on the charter in recent years, based on our charter position and board approval. The position in brief: ‘Support measures to secure an orderly and simplified San Bernardino City Charter, with provisions that enable the Mayor and the Common Council to deal with city problems efficiently, flexibly, and with responsibilities and authority clearly defined.’

- Supported Measure M in 2000 which was a previous effort to write a new charter, and we signed the ballot argument in favor of it. It didn’t pass.
- Opposed Measure G in 2004 but we weren’t as involved. It would have shifted day to day oversight of operations from the Mayor to the City Manager. We opposed it because we thought it was a flawed document, with authority not clearly defined, and responsibilities mixed among elected and appointed officials. It also lacked a fiscal analysis and we thought many details should have been relegated to ordinance status.
- --Supported charter changes recommended by the Citizen Review committee. Our statement: ‘LWV urges YES votes on Q and R, long-overdue proposals that will begin the process of providing the Mayor and City Council the flexibility they need to govern effectively. Like a Constitution, a Charter should provide the framework for governing that removes details that inhibit the flexibility of governmental action to meet changing conditions and in this case, still provide overall guidance for dealing with city employees fairly.’ (Reference to Section 186 and collective bargaining which is the proposed change that didn’t pass.)”

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### Opportunity to Assist with Summer Class

Recently, the Fine Arts Commission of the City of San Bernardino recommended approval of a grant request from the Arts Connection, the Arts Council of San Bernardino County. The proposal is for a 10 week class on Political Cartooning to be held during the summer at the Garcia Center for the Arts. The class will be taught by Phil Yeh, the cartoonist who has designed and been in charge of the painting of murals on the historic McDonald’s Museum. He will be assisted by members of San Bernardino Generation Now, and the League has been asked to assist with information on ballot issues and with registration of voters. The City Council must approve this recommendation before the funding is granted and it is scheduled to be on the agenda of the April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

League members who are interested in assisting with providing information to the class can check with co-Presidents Gloria Anderson and Jill Vassilakos-Long.



