



# The Voter

December 2012

League of Women  
Voters  
of San Bernardino  
1955-NOW!

December 2012

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## President's Message

The election is over, and the holidays are upon us, so we will be taking a little break from League activities. However, the board has decided that in lieu of having a holiday party this year, we would make the holidays brighter for the children at Sweet Dreams, Time for Change's home for women with children who are making better lives for themselves.

Check out the list of children, their ages, and how to donate.

In case you missed the election aftermath meeting earlier this month, Jill Vasilakos-Long has summarized it for you. Be sure to take a look at that article, because some of our conclusions lead into what we will be talking about in January.

We have scheduled a meet-

ing on January 26 to look at our state Initiative and Referendum Process position to make sure that we will have a basis for supporting or opposing proposals for reforming the initiative and referendum process in California. LA Times writer George Skelton recently pointed out what we in the League have been concerned about when he said,

"The original concept - citizen empowerment to fight moneyed interests— has been turned on its head by vast infusions of cash."

It's broken—let's fix it! Some ideas that have been emerging include submitting initiatives to the state Supreme Court for pre-election review for constitutionality, and

ensuring that the language in initiatives is clear and understandable, and strict interpretation of the single issue requirement. Look for details in January.

We have also been following several local issues - San Bernardino's bankruptcy (we had a meeting on that in October), the county's effort to use eminent domain to rescue underwater mortgages, and the Cadiz water project that involves transfer of water from San Bernardino County to Orange, Riverside, and LA Counties.. We welcome the participation of any of you who are interested in any of these issues. Please let me know what you are willing to do.

Until next year - Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year!—*Gloria Anderson*

## Special points of interest:

- *San Bernardino's Pendency Plan is due at the US Bankruptcy Court by the end of the month.*
- *Save San Bernardino meets Nov. 27.*
- *LWVSB will meet on Jan. 26 to discuss CA's initiative and referenda process.*

## Donating to Sweet Dreams

Making the holidays bright for the children of Time for Change's children has been a League tradition for several years.

This year there are 23 children, ranging in age from a few months to 13 years. There are 14 boys - 9 of them between the ages 3

months and 5 years. and 4 between 7 and 13. There are 9 girls - 2 of them between 1 and 5, and 7 between 6 and 12. If you want to donate clothes, I can send you the list of children and sizes or you can call Eula Charles at Time for Change at 909-886-2994.

Of course, they can always use books, games, and other non-clothes items. You can drop them off at their office at 1255 East Highland Avenue, San Bernardino.

—*Gloria Anderson*



The SB Pendency Plan must be filed with the US Bankruptcy Court on Nov. 30.

### San Bernardino Bankruptcy: Pendency Plan Vote

San Bernardino has received a certain amount of press about its bankruptcy. One thoughtful article was run by NBC; [From Suburb to Basket Case: How California City Traveled the Road to Ruin](#).

It is possible to follow the local news through the [Press Enterprise](#): <http://www.pe.com/local-news/reports/san-bernardino-bankruptcy/>

On Nov. 26 the City Council will vote on the

[Pendency Plan](#) posted Nov. 19. This plan amends the [Pre-Pendency Plan](#). Current financial obligations exceed the current General Fund resources by \$45.9 million in FY 2012/13. Without radical changes that debt will grow rapidly. The documents relating to SB's Bankruptcy (including alternate plans) can be found at: [http://www.sbcity.org/home\\_nav/chapter\\_9\\_bankruptcy/](http://www.sbcity.org/home_nav/chapter_9_bankruptcy/)

[default.asp](#).

Principles include suspension of debt payments and payments for legal claims, continued reductions on pay and benefits imposed under emergency powers, reductions to over market compensation components, transfers of eligible costs to other funds, necessary legal and financial consulting services to pursue the City's interests via bankruptcy and, possibly, via labor negotiations and limited revenue increases.

**A democracy requires accountability, and accountability requires transparency. – President Barack Obama**

### SB County: Cadiz Valley Groundwater

Video of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors meetings is available on the web within a day or two of the meeting at <http://www.sbcounty.gov/main/countyDirect.asp>.

Information at the site includes the agendas and

the videos. The agendas for the meetings include links to the handouts necessary to follow the discussion.

At the SBC Board Special Meeting of Oct. 1, 2012 the Cadiz Valley Groundwater Conservation, Recovery, and Storage Pro-

ject was discussed. The documents discussed can be found under the "Discussion Items; Land Use" section of the Agenda. The video is the public hearing (including the presentations).

### Eminent Domain

One of the issues of local concern to our League is San Bernardino County's involvement in finding a fix to the foreclosure mess. Last April, San Bernardino and the cities of Ontario and Fontana formed a joint powers authority to explore the use of eminent domain to rescue underwater mortgages. There have been

several meetings, but nothing definitive has happened, so there is still time for the League to weigh in on this issue, but we need members who are interested in keeping track of what the Authority is doing, and reporting to the board on what is observed. The web site is [www.homeownershipjpa.org](http://www.homeownershipjpa.org). Meetings are held at

the County Government Center and the next one will be on January 24, 2013. Other meetings are scheduled for April and July. If you are interested in observing, please let me know.

*-Gloria Anderson*



## Report on our “Election Survivors Meeting”

Ten League of San Bernardino members and one guest met at Cocos on November 17, to discuss the General Election results.

The League conducts studies on civic issues and then votes on positions. As these apply to ballot measures the League makes recommendations. Where there has been no study completed, the League does not issue a recommendation.

The League recommended a “yes” vote on [Prop. 30](#), *Temporary Taxes to Fund Education, Guaranteed Local Public Safely Funding*. It passed! There was some discussion of misleading advertising that jeopardized the measure.

The League recommended a NO vote on [Prop. 31](#), *State Budget, State and Local Government*. The measure failed. The consensus was that there were some good elements in the initiative, but there were problematic aspects as well. Someone asked how so many concepts could be in one measure. (Theoretically, each proposition is supposed to address one clearly delineated issue.)

The League recommended a NO vote on [Prop. 32](#), *Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction*, and the measure failed. Those present felt that there should

be less money in politics (the Citizens United decision was discussed briefly) however, since corporations do not use payroll deductions for political contributions, this would have had more of an effect on unions.

The League had no recommendation on [Prop. 33](#), *Auto Insurance Rate*. The measure failed. Discussion centered on the fact that it was a “repeat” slightly re-written from a previous election. There was some discussion about the initiative process and money in politics.

The League recommended a yes vote on [Prop. 34](#), *Death Penalty Reform*, but the measure failed. There was a spirited discussion of the merits of the economic and the moral arguments against the death penalty.

The League had no recommendation on [Prop. 35](#), *Human Trafficking*, which passed. A few of those gathered told stories of how this relates to San Bernardino.

The League had no recommendation on [Prop. 36](#), *Three Strikes Reform*, which passed. One person spoke about how she’d been on a jury where the “third strike” was stealing a bottle of liquor from a grocery store.

The League had no recommendation on [Prop. 37](#), *Genetically Engineered Foods*, that failed. The discussion included the amount of out-of-state money in the election, that giant corporations are more involved in this, and that some smaller businesses voluntarily label their products as GMO free.

The League had a neutral recommendation on [Prop. 38](#), *Tax to Fund Education and Early Childhood Programs*. It failed. Discussion focused on how it related to Prop. 30.

The League had a neutral recommendation on [Prop. 39](#), *Tax Treatment for Multistate Businesses, Clean Energy and Energy Efficient Funding*. It passed. Discussion focused on this being a necessary measure to close a loophole left by the Legislature.

The League recommended a yes vote on [Prop. 40](#), *Redistricting State Senate*, and it passed, so the districts created by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission will stay in effect until the next census.

We also discussed the Top Two Primary. Feelings about the efficacy of the reform were mixed.

When I first started working in politics, as a junior aide on Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign, it never occurred to me that I would one day work in the White House. There were plenty of women among the volunteers who stuffed envelopes and walked precincts. But there were fewer and fewer on each successive level of influence and access.  
Dee Dee Myers



Senators Warren and Baldwin—with binder.

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

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**The League of Women Voters: Because  
Democracy is not a spectator sport.**

**Upcoming events—save the date!**

**Jan. 26: Initiatives and Referenda Update**

**April 28: Citizens of Achievement Awards**

**May 18: Annual Meeting**

**We're on the web: [http://  
lwvsanbernardino.ca.lwvnet.org](http://lwvsanbernardino.ca.lwvnet.org)**

**It's your San Bernardino**



*Save San Bernardino was initially named Save our San Bernardino.*

Save San Bernardino will meet at the New Hope Family Life Center at 6pm on November 27.

They are discussing the SB Charter. There are three possibilities, Save SB could recommend that:

- 1) the Charter be repealed and San Bernardino become a general law city.
- 2) the Charter be reformed.
- 3) Save SB stay silent and wait to see what will happen without intervention.

General law cities fol-

low the laws set forth in the California Government Code commencing with Section 34000. Charter cities develop their own "codes" (charters) for conducting municipal affairs.

San Bernardino's Charter was last ratified by voters in 2004. Its aim was "to promote economic, environmental, and cultural prosperity throughout our community, to enable our City government to meet the needs of the people effectively and efficiently; to provide for accountability and ethics in public service; and to ensure equality

of opportunity for every resident." (from the Charter's Preamble)

There have been some recent difficulties meeting these goals. Save San Bernardino is working on recommendations. This is not an LWVSB event, but we feel it is of interest to League members and that they have experience and expertise that could be valuable to this effort.

Since this is an invitation only event, please call Dotti Garcia at (909)862-3668 if you are interested in attending.