



*Serving the people of El Segundo, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach,
Inglewood, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach*

THE VOTER

December 2025

Visit our [Linktree](#)

[President's Message](#)

[Member Meeting & Holiday Happy Hour](#)

[Nominations are open for LWVBC Board Members!](#)

[OBSERVER CORPS](#)

[LWV/NICD Network](#)

[Looking Ahead: Program Planning 2026](#)

[LA County Winter League Day 2026](#)

[Advocacy & Action - Unite and Rise 8.5 - Action Alerts!](#)

[2025 SUCCESSES!](#)

President's Message

I cannot thank our LWVBC members enough for their energy and tireless support this year. You amaze me! Please know how much you are appreciated - you are making our world a better place. 2026 will hold its own adventures, but for now celebrate well, find joy in meaningful connections and take some time to renew your spirit. I look forward to working alongside you next year.

To all our dedicated LWV members and friends—



**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**



- Teri Neustaedter, President

Member Meeting & Holiday Happy Hour

About 40 LWV members and prospective members gathered on December 3 to share fellowship, food and real information. The festively decorated room buzzed with ideas and energy. If you were there you probably are still feeling encouraged and impressed by everything that is going on with LWVBC. It was so wonderful to see so many new and existing committed people. If you weren't there ***what did you miss?***

President Teri Neustaedter, dressed in holiday attire, welcomed everyone and pointed out the display highlighting our recent successes. She noted last year was busy but in 2026 the League will be even busier. The stakes are high. Everyone needs to figure out how they can participate to help preserve our democracy in a **non-partisan way**. Coming fast are the June primaries and November mid-term elections. She turned over the floor for others to talk about specifics.

Bonnie Yatabe encouraged non-board members to join the Nominating Committee. We need several new Directors for next year. Remember: you can **nominate yourself** - you can do it!

Jeanne Hamilton is looking for Pro and Con Forums presenters who will lay out both sides of state propositions on the ballot. Our goal is an educated electorate - so important! And many local community clubs depend on our forums.

Frankie Gelbwachs hopes for more volunteers at registration events at our local high schools and community locations. Everyone who does these is so inspired!

Penny Markey explained post card writing to Get Out the Vote. Unbelievable organization to distribute names, addresses, postcards and stamps. One can write them individually or with friends. Believe it or not- thousands of postcards have been sent! This will be so important this year.

Roz Fanello encouraged everyone to engage in civil discourse with their neighbors. She emphasized the importance of listening. You may inspire confidence in someone who hasn't been voting!

Grace Peng summarized the opportunities and importance of the Observer Corps. Not just City Councils and School Districts - possibilities are to monitor and report on planning commissions, water boards, Health Districts, recreation boards, South Bay Council of Governments etc etc! What interests you?

Ann Kuhns gave an overview of LWVBC communications and urged everyone to consider where they could help. Newsletters, website, social media, eblasts, email all areas need help! Are you a secret scribe?

Carol Patterson, our Membership Chair, thanked everyone for coming, and everyone who helped put the meeting together. A special part of the gathering was that the new and prospective members gave short introductions of themselves. We are excited to have such a diverse and committed group of individuals willing to help preserve our Democracy!

Teri mentioned other opportunities with Tri-League, LWV LA County ILO, County government, housing and homelessness and association with other local groups. The meeting ended with everyone thanking Teri and congratulating her for an extremely successful year!

- Joan LeSage, Advocacy Chair and Past President







Nominations are open for LWVBC Board Members!

Would you like to meet more members and contribute to our local LWV?

DON'T BE SHY! Nominate yourself!

We want several new members on our Board this year.

Join in the work and get the rewards of knowing you are making a difference.

The term starts at the Annual Meeting in June.

Please send nominations and questions to [Bonnie Yatabe](#) by February 15th.



Coffee with the League

Tuesday, Jan. 13th

9:30 - 10:30am

Please join us!

Mychal's Cafe, 2302 Artesia Blvd. Redondo Beach

NO AGENDA!

**Relax and re-group after the Holidays. We can compare notes on trips,
family and food - and chat about upcoming LWVBC events!**

OBSERVER CORPS

Within Advocacy, there is the Observer Corps, the veritable watchdog of our Beach Cities area. The Corps reports on groups like local city councils, and councils of government, so LWVBC remains current with what is happening in our community— we are not there in this capacity to support or resist any issue; it is just fact gathering. However, once a concern is brought up, our Advocacy arm comes into play, where we take a stand on an issue using LWV positions for support. It is in this role that LWVBC can attend public meetings to speak or write letters to express concern or support. **Please join us! Training session offered in February.**

WE NEED YOU: OBSERVER CORPS!

- Are you wondering what you can do to help make Democracy Work??? This is it!
- Are you interested in what is happening in your city? You can attend city council meetings, or Commission meetings - Planning, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Cultural Arts etc!
- Are you interested in education? You can attend School Board meetings (K-12 or community/ state colleges)
- Are you interested in area government? Attend South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) or their Committees - like Transportation!
- Are you interested in Water? The LA Regional Water Control Board or the State Water Resources Control Board need monitors.
- Share important information with the rest of the League. Monthly Zoom meetings of Corps members will review progress and issues.

WHY: Our City Council and other Governmental meetings are an important part of how our government supports, protects and enriches our lives.

The first reason for observing public meetings is to watch their general operations. What issues are being discussed and how is the meeting being conducted? Does the agency comply with the open meeting laws?

The second reason for observing public meetings is to watch for issues on which the League should be taking action - speaking out. If an item that is being discussed is related to one of LWVC's positions then include that in your report. We'll look into it and see whether it's something that the League should be speaking out on.

Finally, and maybe most importantly, observing makes a statement that the community is watching the process of government. The League Observer is the representative of the public at these meetings.

WHAT: Attend or watch a meeting and share important information. We would like all of our cities represented/observed for every city council meeting.

Go to the meeting (or watch it on zoom live, or use the tape afterwards.) Get a copy of the agenda (if possible, check whether it is available in advance online) and any other reports that are available. You don't have to read them all! You may not speak for the League at the meeting. Outside of the meeting you can ask questions of staff and officials. If you can't be at the meeting in person, then watch it online. While the officials may not see you, you can still monitor the meeting.

If you are interested, please contact Grace Peng at gspeng.lwv@gmail.com

LWV/NICD Network



More than 75% of Americans say they now believe that the lack of civility and respect in our country has reached a crisis level.

The League of Women Voters has joined with the National Institute for Civil Discourse (NICD) to promote civil discourse. NICD was founded by the University of Arizona after the shooting of U.S. Representative Gabby Giffords. It is a nonpartisan institute, intended to foster healthier, more civil political debate and discourse across ideological and partisan divides. Its first

co-chairs were former presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. Board members have included Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell. NICD has run workshops for thousands of state and federal legislators and actively facilitates grassroots engagement.

LWV/NICD Network Mission Statement: *The mission is to promote and encourage “Urgent Positive Civic Engagement.” LWV/NICD provides our network members with a home space for collaboration, support, and resource sharing which helps members to take positive actions in their communities and in their personal lives. Sharing ideas, resources, experiences and feedback will help each of us better our own efforts in our own lives to promote civil dialogue, reduce the spread of disinformation and build trust within our democracy.”*

By signing up with the LWV/NICD Network Newsletter you will receive a wealth of information about what is happening around the country and upcoming free zoom presentations with panels of national experts on current topics.

Connect with the League of Women Voters and the National Institute for Civil Discourse (LWV/NICD)

Dedicated to: Building trust within our democracy | Reducing the spread of disinformation | Promoting civil dialogue

[Sign up for LWV/NICD Newsletter](#)

Valentine's Day Service Project



SUPPORT OUR EL CAMINO COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS! DEADLINE: Sunday, February 8th

For Valentine's Day, we would like to assist the housing insecure students at El Camino College once again. There are approximately 30 students that either live in their car, or couch surf among friends. Can you help? We'd like to give each student a Target gift card in a Valentine's bag with a treat. This treat could be anything you like -- just a small item like Hershey Kisses, a fun pair of socks, travel mug, lotion, etc. **Gift cards should be in \$25 increments.**

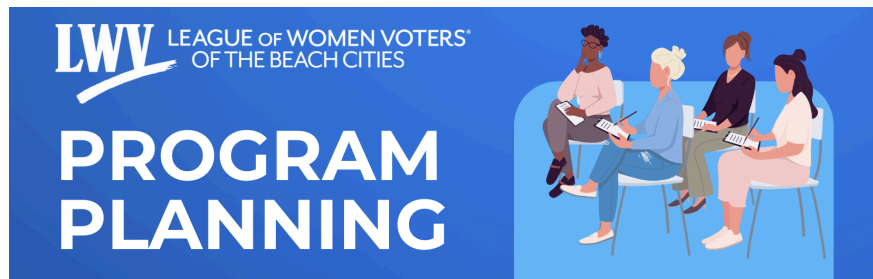
You can bring your donation to the LWVBC meeting Wed, Feb 4, 4:30 - 6 at St. Cross Church in Hermosa. Or, to have your donation picked up, **call or text Laura Fisherman at 201-788-8635.**

Donations via Zelle are also accepted. Please text Laura first to make sure that you have her correct phone number, and she can confirm Zelle payment. Laura 201-788-8635 *Thank you so much for your support. The ECC students are very appreciative and these items make their lives a little brighter. Laura*



Laura Fisherman, Chair of Homelessness Service Projects, together with Sharonda Barksdale, Coordinator of the El Camino Basic Needs Center, at the 2025 donation delivery.

Looking Ahead: Program Planning 2026



ALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

4:30 - 6:30pm

St. Cross Church 1818 Monterey Blvd. Hermosa Beach

Please join us for brainstorming and priority setting!

What issues do we want National and LA County to focus on?

How can we address local issues?

Our Annual Program Planning Meeting is about setting priorities. Members voice their opinions and ideas about proposed LWVUS Priorities for the next two years; they will be voted on at our National Convention in June. We will also discuss how to implement our local priorities: Making Democracy Work, Mental Health, Housing and Homelessness, Climate Change/Low Carbon Local Transportation Networks, Seniors/Aging. Your participation helps us determine where LWVBC energy should be spent — don't miss this opportunity!

Prep if you have time. Review [Impact On Issues](#), focusing on Making Democracy Work.



Where do we stand?

[Impact on Issues](#) [2024-2026: A Guide to Public Policy Positions of the League of Women Voters](#)

The definitive publication on LWVUS positions. — **A paperback version is available for [purchase on Amazon.com](#) for \$6.99.**

Having the print version allows you to quickly research League positions — which apply at all levels — and the history of how they've been used.

The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County
LA County Winter League Day 2026
Saturday, January 31 on Zoom 9:30 - 12:00

Register Here



**2026 WINTER
LEAGUE DAY**

**JOINS US FOR COMMUNITY FORUM
ON OUR LOCAL WATER SUPPLY**

OUR FEATURED SPEAKER

Adán Ortega, Jr., Chair of The
Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California



Adán Ortega, Jr., chair of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California since January 2023 and unanimously re-elected through 2026, has led the board in advancing climate adaptation and long-term water reliability. Under his leadership, the District adopted the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) and reached a landmark settlement with the San Diego County Water Authority, enabling member agencies to exchange surplus water supplies for the first time. A former Metropolitan vice president of external affairs, Ortega has also held leadership roles in state and regional water agencies, advised governors, and championed technical assistance for small and disadvantaged communities. He is the first Latino to chair the Board and holds a B.A. in English and History from Whittier College.

WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2026

Time: 9:30am to 12:00pm (Check
in starts at 9:00am.)

Location: Virtual Event on Zoom. Tickets \$10 to fund
Voter Service activities

Host: League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County

Open to the public. Bring your questions — this is your
chance to learn where your water comes from and where
it's going!

**Join us for an important conversation about how we
get water and how we can protect it for the future.**

Learn how our region's water system works, who
manages it, and what challenges we face with drought,
groundwater, imported water, and climate change.

Topics include:

- How local water agencies deliver water to our
homes and businesses
- The sources of our water — Sierra snowpack,
groundwater basins, and imported supplies
- The impact of drought and climate change
- What policies and infrastructure changes are
needed to ensure a sustainable future



Advocacy & Action

The League takes action on an issue or advocates for a cause when there is an existing League position that supports the issue. There are several ways to get involved: Receive Action Alerts! Join groups at the National, State, and local level. Commit to Unite & Rise! Visit our [website](#) for more advocacy information; [click here](#) for a list of helpful links, and read below.

Unite and Rise 8.5

Take action together to protect our democracy

Unite and Rise 8.5 is a nationwide nonpartisan, non-violent initiative of the LWV of the United States to engage and mobilize 8.5 million voters from now until the 2026 midterm elections.

First thing: go on-line and add your name to the list of supporters.
Be part of the 8.5!

Anyone is welcome to participate in Unite and Rise 8.5. Unite and Rise 8.5 is critical to holding our government accountable for any abuses of power. [Learn More Here](#)



What League members DO locally to support this movement:

Register Voters Help voters register and keep their registration current in a time when federal actions lean toward limiting voting rights.

Get Out the Vote Local elections continue. The League provides useful candidate information and encouragement to participate in all elections.

Observe Election Processes Observe how the county processes voter registrations, counts mail-in ballots, handles recounts, and certifies the count. Inform voters about these processes.

Participate in Observer Corps It is vital to watch and share what the government is doing, especially on the local level. With the [Observer Corps](#), our League monitors local government activities and shares this information with the public.

LWVUS Action Alerts - Act Now!

Speak up on the issues that matter:

- [Urge your Members of Congress to oppose interference in DC!](#)
- [Tell your members of Congress to protect the freedom to vote and support the passage of the JLVRAA.](#)
- [Tell your Senators to oppose the SAVE Act.](#)
- [Urge your members of Congress to stand up for our democracy.](#)
- Demand passage of the [Equal Rights Amendment!](#)
- Support [Voting Rights Expansion!](#)

2025 SUCCESSES!

Voter Outreach & Community Presence

Throughout 2025, under the indefatigable leadership of Jeanne Hamilton and Frankie Gelbwachs, we brought nonpartisan voter information to locations across the Beach Cities.

- Pros and Con Forums on ballot initiatives were conducted at numerous community centers and local organizations.
- Candidate forums were held for local elections in Redondo Beach and Hawthorne.
- Students (and others!) were registered and registration materials distributed at local high schools and neighborhood events
- Frequent engagement with residents on topics such as ballot measures, voting options and election deadlines

These efforts helped ensure that more community members were prepared, informed, and confident ahead of each election cycle. This year's programs focused on key topics shaping our democratic landscape:

- Threats to election administration and how communities can support local election officials
- Understanding ballot measures and how to evaluate civic information
- Local governance discussions aimed at improving transparency and civic participation

These events helped equip voters with tools to navigate complex and rapidly shifting political information.

Educational Programs and Forums

Our Health and Wellness Committee was focused this year on elder safety and care. Monthly meetings had guest speakers on a wide range of issues. Coordination with South Bay Cities Council of Governments and LA Department of Aging provided access to information and services. Thanks to Harriet Chase and Bonnie Yatabe for their tremendous contributions.

Our Water Infrastructure Group held monthly zoom meetings which can be found on our website. "Looking at the science" is the focus of this group. Speakers included experts and scholars who provided background and understanding. Incredible leadership and energy was provided by chair Grace Peng.

Housing and Homelessness

Led by Teri Neustaedter, our team collaborated with the County ILO and California State League on policy, advocacy, and education. The April webinar on California's Housing Crisis is available on [YouTube](#).

Member Engagement & League Development

Under the leadership of membership chair Carol Patterson, 2025 also saw growth within our membership and volunteer teams.

- New members joined committee work, voter outreach, and event planning
- Leadership roles expanded as members stepped up to support communications, voter services, and advocacy
- Orientation sessions helped welcome members and introduce the League's structure and principles

This internal growth strengthened the League's ability to serve the Beach Cities community.

Donation Drives – 2025

Throughout 2025, LWV Beach Cities supported several community donation drives in partnership with El Camino College. With inspirational leadership from Laura Fisherman, our members contributed school supplies, gift cards, and hygiene kits to benefit students and families in need across the South Bay. These efforts reflected our League's commitment to strengthening civic well-being and supporting the broader community we serve. Thank you to all who donated items, organized collections, or helped with delivery - your generosity made a meaningful difference. Our results have been impressive: the program received the LWVC Strength In Our Differences Award at LWVC Convention last summer. Congrats on turning our desire to help into action with tangible benefits for those in need.

Scholarships

Our scholarship committee chaired by Mary Dillon presented eleven \$1,000 scholarships to amazing students from Leuzinger High School. Thanks to all our donors and hard working committee members including Jeanne Hamilton, Frankie Gelbwachs and Susan Grebe. Congratulations and best wishes to these deserving students!

LWV Federal Judiciary Study – 2025

In 2025, LWV Beach Cities took part in the LWV Federal Judiciary Study, a national effort to develop a League position examining how federal judges are selected, how lifetime appointments function in practice, and what reforms could strengthen fairness, transparency, and public confidence in the federal courts. Co-chairs Ken Petrulis and Joan LeSage coordinated members' review of national background materials, met to discuss key questions, and provided input to LWVUS as part of the study's consensus process.

Our local League examined issues such as:

- The structure and role of the federal judiciary
- The process for nominating and confirming federal judges
- Judicial ethics, accountability, and transparency
- The impact of lifetime appointments on public trust
- Potential reforms that preserve judicial independence while increasing confidence in the courts

LWV Beach Cities' participation ensured that our members' perspectives contributed to the national League's updated position on the federal judiciary. The study reaffirmed the League's long-standing commitment to an independent, impartial and accessible federal court system.

2026 will be a busy year...

We need your involvement & support as we help save democracy!

Please join us in upcoming events - check out our [online calendar](#)

DONATE



League of Women Voters of the Beach Cities

Email: BeachcitiesLWV@gmail.com

Phone: 310-379-6663

Website: lwvbeachcities.org

Linktree: [LWV Beach Cities Linktree](#)

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.