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The January Voter Is Here!

1 message

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The Voter

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League of Women Voters,
 Long Beach Area

Serving the Cities of Long Beach, Lakewood, and
 Signal Hill



January 2017

In This Issue

- President's Message
- January Event at the Aquarium
- How 4 Public Radio Stations in California Collaborated to Cover the Election

Calendar of Events

Sun., Jan. 1 - Happy New Year!

Sat., Jan. 7 - Board Meeting

1 - 2:30 pm; Ella Mae
 Marble's home

President's Message

by Kimberly Ritter-Martinez, President

Lately, I've found myself gravitating away from the news and politics and back to music, literature, art, and science. One change I've made is that during my morning workouts, I stopped plugging my earphones into the bank of TVs on the wall at the gym. Instead, I am tuning into podcasts like *This American Life* and the *TED Radio Hour*. Recently, I listened to a TED episode that really resonated with me. It was a series of short talks on reconciliation and conflict resolution. The first segment of the show dealt with how incredibly divided the United States feels right now. No matter what your thoughts on the direction of the country or the many conflicts raging around the world, it feels like it's getting harder to exchange thoughts and ideas with people with whom we disagree. I, for one, find myself holding back from posting

**Mon., Jan. 16 - Happy
Martin Luther King Jr. Day!**

**Sat., Jan. 21 - Climate
Change Symposium**
10 am - 12:30 pm; Aquarium
of the Pacific
RSVP required - [Click here
to RSVP.](#)

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Telephone Tree:

anything on social media that might provoke a backlash, and I long ago gave up reading the comments posted in response to online articles.

The question then is what do we do when just getting to the middle ground seems like an impossible task, especially when we can't even seem to agree on a common set of facts? The first guest, William Ury (you can read more about him [here](#)) pointed out that democracy *is* conflict and that the point is not to get rid of conflict but whether or not we can transform destructive forms of conflict into constructive forms like dialog, cooperation, and democracy. This is a messy process but we have before us an opportunity to come up with new forms of negotiation and conflict resolution. It also affords us a tremendous opportunity to become more creative in settling some of the thornier issues facing our country.

Mr. Ury went on to say that the secret to peace is us – the “us” who act as the community surrounding both sides of a conflict, in effect becoming a third party in the form of family, neighbors, allies. Anyone of us can play that role as long as we care more about the whole, our relationships, and the strength of our democracy, than about winning our point. Our challenge, both as individuals and as members of the League of Women Voters, is to figure out how to include people who are feeling excluded whether it's from the civic life or the modern economy, or even those who would exclude. I think a lot of people are searching for a way to come together. Now is the time to stretch out our arms and show that the League is an organization accepting of all who desire the civil and open exchange of ideas and understand this is the only way we will solve America's economic and social problems.

Ella Mae Marble

Off Board Positions

Local Study Committee:

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[Thelma Teitel](#)

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Internet Resources

[Voter's Edge](#)

LWV California Ed Fund provides information about statewide propositions, local candidates and issues, media links and background materials

[LA County Registrar-Recorder](#)

Election calendar, polling places, absentee voting information, multilingual voting materials

[Easy Voter Guide](#)

Concise faces about statewide propositions; Chinese, Korean Spanish, Vietnamese, English

[Secretary of State](#)

If you are interested in hearing the entire podcast, you can listen to it [here](#).

January's Climate Change Symposium at the Aquarium of the Pacific

by Ron Salk, Membership Chair

Please mark Saturday, January 21st
on your calendar!

Reservations Absolutely Required!

Join us on Saturday, Jan. 21, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific for our first study session of the year, "The New Challenges of Climate Change: Sea Level Rise and Water Conservation -- Local, Regional, and Global Effects." This is our third annual climate-change forum, for the second consecutive time in partnership with the Aquarium of the Pacific. Last year's event was fully booked, so reservations are essential.

IMPORTANT: Admission to the symposium is free, but you *must* RSVP to attend. The event, in the Aquarium's Ocean Theatre, is open to the public and to other LWV chapters, and is strictly limited to 190 attendees. RSVP to: kimberlyritter8@verizon.net or contact Kimberly at 562-930-0573.

We will have your name at the LWV table outside the Aquarium entrance. There is a charge for parking, so you may want to carpool.

We will again feature five leading scientists and

Official text of ballot measures, candidates' statements, maps, dates, election returns

[CA Legislative Analyst](#)

Analysis of all ballot measures

[CA Voter Foundation](#)

Voter resource for information on voting and elections

**Get Involved!
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Member Today!**

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your
membership
today!**

About the League

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

We do not support or oppose any political party or

executives in their respective fields. The keynote speaker, Dr. Jerry R. Schubel, is president and CEO of the Aquarium of the Pacific and one of the nation's foremost oceanographers.

He will be joined by Dr. Juliette Finzi Hart, the U. S. Geological Survey's director of outreach for the Coastal Storm Modeling Systems Group; Dr. Timu W. Gallien, of UCLA, an authority on urban coastal flooding; John D. S. Allen, director of District 3 of the Water Replenishment District of Southern California; and Kevin Wattier, former general manager of the Long Beach Water Dept. and a highly regarded authority on urban water management and conservation.

It is of special note that Dr. Hart will be able to include in her talk the long-awaited final report on sea-level rise in the Los Angeles area, which is scheduled to be released only a few days before our event.

Last year's symposium was one of four finalists for a national LWV award for community involvement. You won't want to miss this year's event. And don't forget to invite a friend!

How 4 Public Radio Stations in California Collaborated to Cover the Election

by Kristen Lepore

**originally published in [Poynter](#)*

In March, I started a new role as project manager of elections overseeing a first-time collaboration with four public media organizations: [KPCC](#) in Los Angeles, [KQED](#) in San Francisco, [Capital Public Radio](#) in

any candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.

Opportunities for Service

Write an article, a Letter to the Editor or a book review for *The Voter*. Time commitment: low.

Contact: [Nicole Bennett](#)

Volunteer to join the Board.

Time commitment: moderate.

Open positions: Natural

Resources. Contact: [Kim Ritter](#)

Volunteer to serve as an

Observer at City Council

meetings, or at other meetings

of government or agencies.

Time commitment: variable.

Contact: [Phyllis O'Connor](#)

Volunteer to serve on a

planning committee for a

monthly meeting. Time

commitment: variable.

Contact: [Kim Ritter](#)

Join a Committee: Voter

Service (Renee Simon);

Membership ([Ron](#)

[Salk](#)); Speakers Bureau

Sacramento and [KPBS](#) in San Diego. We called it [California Counts](#); collectively, we set out to boost civic engagement while reporting on election issues that matter to Californians.

It wasn't easy herding more than 20 journalists among from newsrooms during this crazy election season. Naturally, I learned a lot. Here are a handful of problems and solutions we encountered along the way.

Challenge: We have a super-popular voter guide; how do we use it to provide better coverage?

We teamed up with [MapLight](#) and [The League of Women Voters Education Fund of California](#) on Voter's Edge, a [non-partisan voter guide](#). Users could type in their address and find their local ballot, study the candidates/measures and then save their choices. The guide saw nearly 5 million unique page views among our four stations leading up to the election.

When we hit our stride

After the primary, we parsed out that data to find out what pages were most frequented in the guide. We found that people were searching L.A. County Superior Court Judge candidates more than any other race in the state. That's because it's nearly impossible to find thorough info on those candidates elsewhere. Our voter guide was a start but we could do more.

As a result, KPCC's daily magazine show [Take Two](#) produced a series called "[Meet the Judges](#)," in which they profiled each of the eight candidates. The individual segment pages saw 58,901 unique users. That rivals metrics on [KPCC's voter guide](#), which saw 74,238 unique users during that same time period (Oct. 18 to Nov. 8).

What you can take away

We went deeper on the coverage that people were already seeking, and it paid off. Listen to the numbers and find your niche. What is your audience searching? What are other media organizations missing? If you don't have solid analytics, ask readers on Facebook or post a survey to your website.

Challenge: Everyone is focused on the presidential race; how do we engage our audience on local issues?

We knew we didn't want to cover the horse race but we also couldn't completely ignore the national conversation.

When we hit our stride

Here's [a Facebook video](#) we produced in January to kick off election crowdsourcing. We used the hashtag [#whatsmyissue](#) to find out what topics are most

(Thelma Teitel); Committee on Homelessness ([Phyllis O'Connor](#)).



Facebook



Website



Email

important to Californians. We collected around 500 responses, [including 100 students who submitted videos via YouTube thanks to a partnership with KQED Education](#). Many listeners also spoke to us via American Public Radio's [Public Insight Network](#).

Over the course of the year, we've chatted with Californians about jobs, the economy, health care, climate change and so much more. We collected photos, written responses, videos and audio postcards. In the end, we felt this was a meaningful way to talk to our audience about issues affecting their daily lives. It was also in line with the national conversation so it didn't sound out of touch.

What you can take away

Ask open-ended, relatable questions. Yet have a plan for what you'll do with the responses. [Here's one example of what KPBS did](#). Will you look for trends to inform your reporting? Will you feature specific sources? Also, think about who you can partner with to elevate the project. What demographics do you want to reach? Who can help you get to them?

Challenge: We want to streamline coverage among four newsrooms; how do we encourage ownership of stories?

We had A LOT to tackle in terms of covering all 17 ballot propositions. And it was important to us that we didn't overlap efforts.

When we hit our stride

We decided to do a deep dive on Proposition 64, the legalization of recreational marijuana. The topic played to our strengths because we had reporters located around the state. We spoke with small growers in [Humboldt](#) and [Trinity](#) counties, we visited the Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research at UC San Diego, and we profiled one of [the most sought-after marijuana cultivators](#) in L.A.

We didn't ignore the other props; each had its own web and radio explainer. The basics are important but these stories on the marijuana industry let us go further and highlight nuances in this huge policy shift.

What you can take away

With collaborative work, it's really important that people take ownership of various projects. Otherwise, nothing will get done. The series worked because one editor at KQED oversaw the planning and assigning of stories.

My advice to you: Encourage your reporters to start thinking about coverage threads early on so they're more

inclined to generate enterprise stories down the line. But more importantly, give one editor authority to manage workflow and hold each of those reporters accountable.

Challenge: We're hosting four live events; what do we cover? And how do we co-produce among newsrooms?

We decided early on that we would host one live event in each of our markets. These would be co-hosted and co-produced among stations. The goal was twofold: To provide town halls where our audience could interact with experts. And to transform those live programs into statewide broadcasts.

When we hit our stride

Our first three events focused on [voter engagement](#), [marijuana](#) and the [death penalty](#). Our final town hall was in L.A. the week before the election. Analytics repeatedly revealed that voters wait until the last minute to cram. Why focus on one topic when we knew our statewide audience needed a wide range of info?

That's why we hosted a [Voter Cram Session](#) with [AirTalk's](#) Larry Mantle. There was a packed audience despite it being scheduled at the same time as the final game of the World Series. The event was easy to promote because it was specific: If you come to this event, you'll leave with an understanding of all 17 ballot props. (And it was only two hours long.)

Angelenos showed up with sample ballots and marked their choices as our panel of journalists swiftly explained what was at stake. One of our attendees told us via a survey after the event that we "moved through all of the ballot measures quickly yet covered them enough ... to make a decision." Also quickly enough to catch the eighth inning of the World Series.

The event was live video streamed; 5,000 people watched it remotely. The program also aired on six public radio stations around the state that week.

What you can take away

There were a lot of moving parts among our newsrooms—content producing, event logistics, audio engineering—and they intertwined at different stages of the planning process.

Here's how you can make co-produced events work:

- Get everyone involved in producing the event on a call to kick off planning (make sure you have at least one content lead and one marketing lead in the mix)

- Create a Google doc that clearly defines each person's responsibilities; make a timeline of slated deliverables
Start an email chain and keep everyone on it throughout the process
- Notify non-producing partners ahead of time on what special content is in the works; ask for promotional support beforehand; and feedback once the content has been distributed

What have you learned from newsroom partnerships? Let's chat. (Over happy hour?). Or, you can tweet me at [@kristenlepore](https://twitter.com/kristenlepore).



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