

Conservation Voter

July 2005

LALCV-Endorsed Candidates, Villaraigosa and Rosendahl, Victorious

By Mitchell Schwartz

The Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters helped play a significant role in the elections of Los Angeles' new Mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, as well as its newest City Councilmember, Bill Rosendahl. Our group expressed its support through monetary contributions to the campaigns directly, independent expenditures on behalf of the candidates, as well as logging impressive numbers of hours walking the precincts and calling up voters from phone banks across the city.

CAMPAIGN FOR MAYOR

Parke Skelton, who helped direct the Mayoral campaign, expressed his appreciation for our efforts, stating, "LALCV played a crucial and much appreciated role in mobilizing critical environmental support for Antonio Villaraigosa and assisting the campaign in developing and promoting a comprehensive set of environmental policies. LA is truly fortunate to have such effective environmental leadership at the local level fighting for environmental justice."

The LALCV board began the process of deciding who to endorse for mayor in late 2004. LALCV sponsored a mayoral

debate, held at the LA County Museum of Art's Bing Auditorium that was carried extensively by broadcast media including KABC (tape delay of the entire debate), KCET (abridged version of the debate) and Channel 36 (shown repeatedly) as well as on local National Public Radio stations. The debate was the first step in the endorsement process and was followed up by a questionnaire that posed very specific questions to the five leading candidates. Based on information provided at the debate, in the candidates' answers to the LALCV questionnaire and their political track records, LALCV voted to endorse Councilmember Villaraigosa.

In support of Villaraigosa, the LALCV board contributed \$1,000 to both the primary and general elections. In addition, we supported the campaign indirectly through independent expenditures to the tune of \$7,000. Also, LALCV Board members filled two GOTV phone banks, walked precincts on the weekend before each election, and helped formulate environmental positions for the next mayor.

Antonio Villaraigosa defeated Mayor Hahn by a 59% to 41% margin. Did we really help? Contacted by this writer for comments about the campaign, Mayor-Elect Villaraigosa was effusive in his

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May Day - Calling All Enviros!

By Andi Liebenbaum

We put out the call, and you came, you ate, you donated and you helped us march on to victory in two critical City of LA races. The LA League of Conservation Voters held its annual Smith-Weiss Environmental Champion Awards on May 1st, and, as always, the event was a success. Nearly 200 of our nearest and dearest (that's YOU!) pledged and partied on a lovely spring afternoon in Hancock Park. The house was new (to us) but you all managed to make it around the corner! We were very pleased to have you.

This year's honorees were special to us, too. State Senator Alan Lowenthal has done incredible work to clean up the ports, and among his greatest allies has been the International Longshore and Warehouse Union - we were pleased to honor you both! And, the City of LA continues to show strong leadership and

LALCV is pleased to continue to identify outstanding environmental champions from among your illustrious ranks - Eric Garcetti and Jan Perry are not only friends to the environment, they are smart, strong leaders with integrity and passion for the work they do. What a pleasure to recognize you for your work, not just on Prop. O (though that's a biggy), but on many issues pertaining to LA's environmental health. And our



Senator Alan Lowenthal with LALCV president, Andi Liebenbaum & Assemblymember George Nakano

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The Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters

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Antonio Villaraigosa, event keynote speaker

keynote speaker, Antonio Villaraigosa, fired us up and got us ready for a hard-fought handily-won election a week later.

This year's event was made extra special by the donation of a new venue, the wonderful home of Marjorie and John Nielsen, and by the incredible food from Whole Foods-West Hollywood. That will be hard to top, so we might just do it again next year!

We are always happy to boast an incredible number of our region's most illustrious leaders - not just environmental leaders, though you are all great voices for environmental issues, but all-around impressive and valuable political leaders. Thank you for sharing your Sunday with us.

Enjoy the pictures, peruse the impressive and generous sponsor list and start thinking about who LALCV should honor next year - it's never too early to look for, nurture and select true environmental champions! And please consider a late pledge to our event. The enclosed remittance envelope shouldn't go to waste, and every donation helps us research, endorse and support the strongest environmental candidates running for local office in the County. For a look at what races we're considering for the fall, please see Joan Satt's article called Making a Difference in the Future. Thank you, as always, for supporting the LA League of Conservation Voters. While we like to think we are doing a great service, we certainly wouldn't be nearly as effective without your continued generosity and support. Thanks.



Representatives of ILWU with LALCV president, Andi Liebenbaum and Assemblymember George Nakano



LA City Councilmember Antonio Villaraigosa with fellow councilmembers Wendy Gruel and Eric Garcetti and Assemblymember Cindy Montanez and Senator Debra Bowen. Also pictured are: Senator Alan Lowenthal, LA City Councilmember Jan Perry, Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, Monterey Park Mayor Michael Eng, Assemblymember George Nakano, Assemblymember Paul Koretz, Assemblymember Carol Liu, Duarte City Councilmember Lois Gaston, Torrance Councilmember Ted Lieu, West Hollywood City Councilmember Abbe Land, La Canada-Flintridge Mayor Anthony Portantino, San Fernando City Councilmember Steve Veres, LA City Councilmember Jack Weiss, Manhattan City Councilmember Jim Aldinger, Assemblymember Lloyd Levine, and Santa Monica City Councilmember Kevin McKeown

Photos by Ettenheim Enterprises

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praise for LALCV, and grateful for the support we lent to his campaign saying that he wanted to "thank all the members of LALCV for all your support. Together we can make LA a greener, cleaner, more environmentally conscious city for all to enjoy. I look forward to our continued partnership".

NEW LEADERSHIP FOR LA'S 11TH DISTRICT

The entire coastline of the City of Los Angeles is within the 11th Council District, and the Honorable Cindy Miscikowski, who held that seat, is retiring due to term limits. Understanding that issues pertaining to the expansion of LA International Airport, development in the Ballona/Playa del Rey area and

contamination into Santa Monica Bay are critical to the entire southern California region, LALCV decided to look for a candidate to support in that race. We interviewed the three candidates running for the job and ended up finding a winner - Bill Rosendahl. We gave the campaign \$500 in both the primary and general elections as well as underwrote an independent expenditure (IE) mail campaign.

The IE featured three oversized postcards that were sent to over 2,300 homes in the neighborhoods near Westchester. The IE focused on LAX expansion issues and concerns. As Parke Skelton, campaign manager for Rosendahl noted, "The 11th Council District, containing the Bay, Santa Monica Mountains, LAX and the Ballona wetlands, is at the heart of the environmental

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LALCV at Work in Your Communities

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struggle in Los Angeles. LALCV recognized that there were substantial differences between the two leading candidates for City Council, and became one of Bill Rosendahl's earliest and most active organizational supporters. We particularly appreciated their outstanding work in helping to clarify, in a humorous and effective way, the differences between the candidates on the issuer of LAX expansion. LALCV knows how to craft and deliver a message." Apparently he liked our IE postcards.

Again, you ask yourself if LALCV truly made a difference in this race. Once again, let's hear directly from our endorsed candidate. Said Rosendahl of LALCV's support, " I am deeply indebted to the LALCV for its endorsement, generous support,

and hard work that helped define me as THE environmental candidate. I look forward to working in partnership with LALCV to make Los Angeles the environmental leader it can and should be".

So...dear reader, please note that the candidates take us seriously because they know we produce! Of course, the candidates also know that we expect them to produce - good results, reasonable policies and higher standards for a better environment in Los Angeles!

Unlike other groups, LALCV is an all-volunteer organization. Over 98% of the money we raise from generous donors like you goes directly to support the campaigns of the candidates we endorse. Please continue to help us help the environment by supporting LALCV with your generous contributions.

Making a Difference in the Future

By Joan Satt

With the recent successes in the City of Los Angeles with the election of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the triumphant win of Bill Rosendahl in Council District 11, the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters Endorsement Committee is making plans for other important endorsements in the near future. Among the races we plan to become involved in are two seats on the Los Angeles City Council. These are in Council District 14 (vacated by Mayor-Elect Antonio Villaraigosa) and Council District 10 (when Councilmember Martin Ludlow takes the helm of the County Federation of Labor). As of press time, the special election to fill these seats has been scheduled to coincide with the Governor's special election to be held on November 8th.

In addition to these goings on in the City of Los Angeles, there are other interesting and perhaps critical races throughout the County. LALCV is looking at the following:

- ◆ We hope we can repeat our previous success in Agoura Hills by backing an environmental candidate willing to tackle the issues of development and open space. We supported current Mayor Pro Tem Dan Kuperberg, who has led his City to better planning and community input in dealing with hillside and Old Agoura Hills land development issues.
- ◆ Palmdale is a key player in regional airport expansion plans - we haven't endorsed there before, but there's no time like the present.
- ◆ In 2003, LALCV endorsed two new (and sitting) Duarte City Council Members, John Fasana and Lois Gaston. The 2005 election will make three seats available (incumbents notwithstanding), and important issues like hillside preservation and surface mining expansion are hot button items.
- ◆ Another environmentally sensitive issue is the slant oil drilling discussions going on in Hermosa Beach. As one of the County's beautiful coastal cities, LALCV wants to ensure that the environment is protected and that people are informed about what's going on.
- ◆ In South LA County, the small City of Maywood is having a city council election, and we are inviting ourselves to ensure that issues such as environmental justice, traffic, parks and open space, commercial/industrial development and others are on the agenda and on the ballot.

There is no question that LALCV could work full time identifying and getting involved in local races everywhere in the County. In fact, that's a long-term goal! Keep in mind that our 20-member Board of Directors are all volunteers. We participate in LALCV and interview candidates because we truly care about electing the most thoughtful and dedicated environmental candidates wherever possible. And, while contributions to LALCV are not tax deductible because we are a political action committee, your dollars go directly to the democratic process of identifying, supporting and helping to elect the best possible candidates for office.

For more information about these races and how we proceed, please visit our website at www.lalcv.org.

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LA City Councilmembers Eric Garcetti & Jan Perry with LALCV President, Andi Liebenbaum

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