

# The Sacramento Voter



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# League Women Voters of California Update

By now, all of us have probably received a lot of emails about COVID-19, and you are inundated with information from every side....

We are fortunate enough to live in a time where technology is the great enabler. Like many organizations, we have moved our staff to remote work to allow them to care for their health, and to manage their families as schools are closed. We will be leveraging video conferencing tools, video streaming, interactive digital media and other tools to keep advancing our mission. We are working on updating our phone system to add an automated process for callers to use to reach specific staff members by phone, as we will not have someone in the office to answer calls at all times. We ask for your patience as we are making this transition with our phones, and ask you to consider email as your first way to reach our team, using <a href="https://www.org.if.vou.org">www.org.if.vou.org</a> if you do not know specifically to whom you should speak.

Mr. Rogers, the kind soul that so many of us grew up with or watched with our kids and grandkids, once said, "When I was a boy and would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." We know that League members and supporters are leaders in your communities and that you care deeply about the people in our state. You are helpers. We are helpers. We will continue to help empower voters and defend democracy, even in the face of adversity.

Excerpts from Stephanie Doute, Executive Director, League of Women Voters of California

# **EVENTS**ALL EVENTS CANCELLED

# League Refuses to "Help Perpetuate a Fraud"

If you've been watching the presidential debates, you have witnessed well-known political commentators and reporters moderate the forum and ask questions. Did you know that prior to 1988, the League of Women Voters moderated presidential debates?

According to a press release from October 3, 1988, the "League of Women Voters announced it is withdrawing its sponsorship of the presidential debate because the demands of the two campaign organizations would perpetrate a fraud on the American voter," National League President Nancy Neuman declared.

"It has become clear to us that the candidates' organizations aim to add debates to their list of campaign-trail charades devoid of substance, spontaneity, and honest answers to tough questions," Neuman said. "The League has no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public."

According to the article, the campaigns presented the League with their debate agreement two weeks prior to the scheduled debate. This agreement was negotiated behind closed doors and was presented to the League as "a done deal," its 16 pages of conditions not subject to negotiation.

Most objectionable to the League were conditions in the agreement that gave the campaigns unprecedented control over the proceedings, including demands that they control the selection of questioners, the composition of the audience, hall access for the press, and other similar issues. President Neuman said in response, "Never in the history of the League of Women Voters have two candidates' organizations come to us with such stringent, unyielding, and self-serving demands."

Neuman said she and the League regretted that the American people have had no real opportunities to judge the presidential nominees outside of campaign-controlled environments. She further stated that "on the threshold of a new millennium, this country remains the brightest hope for all who cherish free speech and open debate. Americans deserve to see and hear the men\* who would be president face each other in a debate on the hard and complex issues critical to our progress into the next century."

Neuman issued a final challenge to both Vice President Bush and Governor Dukakis to "rise above your handlers and agree to join us in presenting the fair and full discussion the American public expects of a League of Women Voters debate."

\*The very concept of a women running for president was still in the future. By Nancy Compton

#### 2019-2020 Contact Us

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#### **Board of Directors Officers**

Claudia Bonsignore, President Paula Lee, 1st Vice-President Theresa Riviera, Vice-President Terri Colosimo, Secretary Suzi Bakker, Treasurer

#### **Directors**

Nancy Compton Mahnaz Khazari Nancy Lapp Brenda Main Joan Normington Inga Olson Marge Patzer

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Patricia Pavone, LWVC Children's Roundtable

Claudia Bonsignore, Budget Committee Bernadette Lynch, Nominating Comm. Mahnaz Khasari, Membership Marge Patzer, Voter Services, Voter

Registration

Alice Ginosar, *Voter* editor Eileen Heaser, *Voter* publisher Carol Enns, <u>Webmaster</u> Karen Redman, <u>Facebook</u> Hazel Bergtholdt, <u>Twitter</u> Lana Wong, <u>Instagram</u> Suzi Bakker, <u>Flickr</u>



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#### Web sites to check for League news

LWVC.org LWV.org LWVUS.org

#### **Board Meeting Dates**

April 8, 2020, 5:30 p.m.– 8:30 p.m. May 13, 2020, 5:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Articles for *The Voter* Members are encouraged to write articles relevant to LWV issues, word length up to approximately 350 words. Please provide attribution when appropriate. Email: aliceginosar@yahoo.com

or eheaserlwv@gmail.com

Candidate Forums and Pros and Cons Event 2/20/2020

On 2/20/2020, the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) hosted four forums to meet the candidates for Sacramento City Mayor, as well as City Council Districts 2,4,6 and 8. The evening included a pro/con on Measure G. Paula Lee moderated, Claudia Bonsignore was the timer. A good sized audience, heard what the candidates would do about a myriad of issues, i.e., homelessness, traffic, housing, criminal justice reform, opportunities for area youth, etc. Many in the audience stayed until 9:00 p.m. to hear all the information.

Information tables were hosted by NCNW and LWV (staffed by T. Riviera, N. Compton and M. Patzer). Candidates had table space in the lobby to distribute information to the attendees. Many thanks to NCNW and their president Donna Wood who coordinated the event and confirmed the candidates.

In addition to this event, separate candidate forums were held for Congressional District 7, Council Districts 6 and 8, Board of Supervisors District 3, Assembly District 9 and a pro/con forum on controversial Measure G (dedicated funding for youth programs in the City of Sacramento).



#### **Candidate Forum**

A candidate forum for Assembly District 9 was held 2/21/2020 hosted by the Mack Road Partnership. LWVS volunteers were R. Chamberlin, P. Lee, L. Einspahr. A League table was hosted by T. Riviera. Discussion and audience participation was lively. The candidates (below) are seated in alpha order, Jim Cooper (D), Eric Rigard ®, Tracie Stafford (D) and Mushtaq Tahirkheli (D). Below (L to R)





Mayoral candidates L to R Jrmar Jefferson, Mac Arteaga, Darrell Steinberg

> By M. Patzer Continued on page 3

# **Unit Meetings—April 2020 CANCELLED**

Greenhaven Land Park	Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. Cancelled	Roseann Kerby 916-392-1267	Mary Hopkins 45 Sunlit Circle, Sacramento, 95831, 916-422-6958
Outlier's Folsom	Wednesday, 11:45 a.m.	Nancy Compton	Lunch, Cliff House, Folsom, 9900
	Cancelled	916-600-1992	Greenback Lane. 916-989-9243
Suburban	Tuesday, 9:15 a.m.	Anne Berner	2426 Garfield Ave. Carmichael
	Cancelled	916-944-1042	95608

# **Unit Meetings CANCELLED**

## **Sacramento County History Day**

On March 7, students from schools throughout Sacramento County gathered at Inderkum High School to show off their creativity and hard work as they presented their projects for the annual History Day competition. With posters (elementary students only), exhibits, documentaries, performances, and research papers, students explored this year's theme, "Breaking Barriers in History."

Claudia Bonsignore and I had the honor of representing the League at this year's competition. Our job was to evaluate projects in the Women's History category and present a special award to the work that best exemplified the theme within the specified category. That task proved to be quite challenging. With many outstanding projects to choose from, we ultimately decided to award two students for their achievements: Shruti Sahoo for the paper "Dolores Huerta: Breaking Barriers" and Leena Kaina for her performance "Dolores Huerta: Breaking Barriers in Labor Activism."

With their strong research skills, maturity in conveying the essence of their subject, and passionate presentation, these students shone above all others. We were proud to honor them with cash awards. We are also thrilled that both students will continue to the State Finals!

By Brenda Main

#### Needed: Editor for The Voter

When you serve as editor for the *The Voter*, you can work from home .... go to frig, take a walk, smell the roses in your garden, when you want. The primary responsibilities are to ask members to submit articles, edit articles, and remind members of the Board to send a copy of their monthly reports to the editor by the of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, viz., August to April. *The Voter* is <u>published</u> from September to May.

Publisher Eileen Heaser, formats, arranges photos and does editing.

By Alice Ginosar



From page 2, Candidate Forums and Pros/Cons Event, 2/20/2020

N. Compton, T. Riviera (L to R)

<u>Voters line up to vote at the CSUS Vote Center.</u> 3/3/2020 <u>CBS 13</u>: Vote Center on campus abuzz on Super Tuesday

From: Sacramento State Leader 3/10/2020

#### **Welcome New Members**

Stacy Diamond KaSandra Soto Linda Witzel

# **Count on Census 2020**

For toolkits, videos, jobs, data protections and much more.

By T. Colosimo

#### **Serna Elected Chair**

The Sacramento County <u>Board of Supervisors</u> held their annual vote to elect a new chair and vice chair on Tuesday, January 14, 2020. This year's elected chair is Supervisor Phil Serna of District 1; Supervisor Sue Frost of District 4 was elected vice chair.

"I am grateful for the trust my colleagues have in me to again serve as Chairman of the Board," said Supervisor Phil Serna. "We have much to accomplish this year and I welcome the opportunity to lead several initiatives focused on everything from increasing accountability in county governance and service delivery to protecting the most vulnerable among us, to expanding employment opportunities, to prepare for the ever-increasing threat of climate change. We clearly have lots to do and I plan to use the chairman's post as effectively and proactively as possible." Retrieved 2/10//20. By B. Main

#### Voter Education

On 2/20/2020, Kae Lewis presented voter education and ballot measure information to residents at the Albert Einstein Residence Center. The facility provides quality apartments and assisted living for low-income seniors. Cindy Swartz, the facility's activity coordinator, provided a delicious dinner and prepared the residents for Kae's presentation. The residents were attentive and enjoyed the presentation. Cindy said she will keep "talking up the vote" and help the residents assure their vote counts!

Thank you Kae and Cindy.



Cindy Swartz, Kae Lewis L to R

This article is condensed due to lack of space.

#### **Jails and Prison Systems and Structures**

According to the Board of State and Community Corrections, an estimated 3,700 persons are in the custody of the Sacramento County Main Jail and its Rio Cosumnes Correctional Facility (RCCC). San Francisco County houses 1,100 inmates. Housing for persons in Sacramento's main jail and RCCC involves shared rooms and pods. The physical structure of the shared room space does not allow for the six feet social distancing order. The physical structure of both facilities does not allow for inmates to humanely isolate themselves if they are sick.

Do Nothing Consequences: The physical structure and limitations within the Sacramento County (SC) jails makes it impossible for SC to comply with CDC recommendations. A spread of COVID-19 within the jail could potentially absorb community resources needed to battle this virus outside the walls of correction and destroy the lives of people working and living inside the jail.

Recommendation: Reduce the incarcerated population to allow compliance with CDC COVID-19 health and safety requirements. Per recommendations of the Sacramento Public Defender's office and as is being done elsewhere in the nation during this crisis; Sacramento County and City of Sacramento should release low level and non-violent offenders who have housing upon release and provide support services otherwise.

By: Norma Nelson. Story Contributed by Lynn Berkley-Baskin, Justice2Jobs Coalition, Organizing Committee

#### In Memory

Sally S. Weinland 6/26/1928—2/18/2020



Sally Weinland was a native of Sacramento and descended from a pioneering family that came to California during the Gold Rush. For more than 20 years, she taught elementary school at the Deterding School and was honored as Outstanding Teacher by the Deterding PTA; from the San Juan School District she received the Teacher of the Year Award.

Sally was active in many organizations including: The League of Women Voters, anti-Vietnam War movement, Grandmothers for Peace, Planned Parenthood, Wellspring Women's Center, Democratic Socialists of America and many others. She helped found Family Promise of Sacramento to aid the homeless and other organizations for the homeless. For over 50 years, she was active in several committees at the St. Mark's Methodist Church including its Peace and Justice Committee.

Excerpted from The Sacramento Bee, 2/23/2020, 9B, by E. Heaser

# Women's History

A women's history event "Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage: Looking Back, Moving Forward" was hosted by LWVSC and the Renaissance Society in the CSUS Student Union on 3/2/2020. LWVSC members participating were N. Compton (planning committee), M. Patzer, A. Andrighetto, I. Olson, O. Aguirre, C. Hart, D. Tibor, D. Paul, R. Chamberlain and R. Barrett. We preregistered four students and provided information to many voters including where to get a replacement ballot, e.g., Modoc Hall and other locations. We pre-registered several high school students who wanted their photos taken with LWVSC volunteers to show their families.

The first session was "Everything you wanted to know about women's suffrage but were afraid to ask." This conversation was well attended and featured Sacramento State Historians, Dr. Rebecca Kluchin, Dr. Beth Slutsky and Dr. Mona Siegel. That was followed by a standing-room-only panel discussion with some of Sacramento's women leaders: California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis, California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, Sacramento Mayor Pro tem Angelique Ashby, and West Sacramento Council member Quirina Orozco, with CSUS political scientist, Dr. Kimberly Nadler. The topic of conversation was "would the world be a better place if women were in charge?" The participants shared many interesting life experiences.

It ended with a book launch: *Peace on Our Terms: The Global Battle for Women's Rights After the First World War* by CSUS Professor Mona Siegel. We heard stories from other countries on how women worked together to get the right to vote.

By M. Patzer



#### Voter Registration and Education Event, 3/1/2020

The event at the Capitol was hosted by Scarlette Bustos of the Women's March. C. Bonsignore hosted the LWVSC voter registration table. Pete Buttigieg supporters had a table, and other candidates paid for tables, but did not appear. Coalition 2020 Sacramento, candidate Cathy Smith (Placer County), and a disc jockey were there. Claudia shared Voter's Edge information and bookmarks with about a dozen passersby.

The event was recorded on a Sacramento social media site. Cathy Smith spoke first and gave some history of women gaining the right to vote, when jobs could no longer exclude pregnant women, etc. Scarlette gave the Voter's Edge information and acknowledged LWVSC participation in the event.

By C. Bonsignore

Locating Election information www.Elections.SacCounty.net or 916-875-6451

<u>URL</u> to check your voting status

## Primary Election Poll Observers, March 3, 2020

I want to thank all the members that took the time to observe at 19 separate Vote Centers during the primary. The locations covered were from Rio Linda, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, Central Sacramento, South Land Park, Pocket and South Sacramento.

Members who volunteered were Roseanne Chamberlain, Eileen Heaser, Kae Lewis, Joan Normington, Marge Patzer, Gloria Powell, Leslie Watts and C. Bonsignore.

The Sacramento County Registrar of Voters (ROV) permits our League to be "observers." I provide a list of those interested to the ROV contact and she issues a letter of introduction for each observer. If anyone is interested in being a Poll Observer for the November 2020 election, please let me know. We ask you to make notes on a special form for your observations. They were returned to me and I pass them on to the ROV contact.

By. C. Bonsignore

# Punishment Without Crime: How Our Massive Misdemeanor System Traps the Innocent and Makes America More Unequal

Law Professor Alexandra Natapoff explains the Catch-22 maze of the misdemeanor system. Although misdemeanors are supposedly less serious than felonies, the current system bears a remarkable resemblance to the post-Reconstruction southern law enforcement (and vigilante) strategies for keeping African-Americans effectively enslaved.

High volumes of 'order-maintenance offenses' and arrests without probable cause, absence of case screening by prosecution or defense, and the heavy pressures on innocent and naive defendants to plead guilty so they can go home, are key parameters locking the abuse in place. Guilty pleas for petty crimes often entail unaffordable fees and fines rather than initial incarceration, nonpayment of which leads to warrants and incarceration, a vicious cycle.

As in Ferguson, "The power to criminalize behavior in which millions of people inevitably engage lets the state use the criminal system for all sorts of objectives, including the all-important one of collecting money," such as levying fees for jail stays or drugs tests. "US jails are filled with working, poor, and homeless individuals who are there solely because they could not pay a fine or a fee—a new kind of debtors' prison."

Recently, California state senator Holly J. Mitchell, whose district covers a major chunk of the Los Angeles area, supported by over a dozen advocacy and legal groups including the ACLU, the San Francisco Public Defender, and Homeboy Industries, drafted SB144, the Families Over Fees Act. SB144 purpose is to delete many and perhaps most of such fines and fees in California.

The summary in the <u>bill analysis</u> lists 43 fees and fines currently levied on those who become entangled in the criminal justice system. These levies require the defendant pay for their own punishment or represent an economic hardship on many typical defendants, and then enumerates a basically identical list of specific fees and charges for deletion.

According to a staff person in Sen. Holly Mitchell's capitol office, this bill is being actively discussed, and is expected to be brought back for approval in the fall of 2020.

Links to Online videos by Professor Natapoff talking about this book and her earlier book Snitching.

By. M. Strand

# **Homelessness Updates**

On February 11, 2020, \$3 million was set aside for services to homeless individuals and families by the Sacramento City Council and also the County Board of Supervisors.

On February 25, 2020 Sacramento City Council voted unanimously to protect infrastructure, such as levees, enabling police to remove camps of homeless individuals and families near the river. "Sacramento will soon start clearing homeless camps from sections of riverfront levees, but will not ban encampments on downtown streets ..." (e-Sacramento Bee 2/26/2020) By A. Ginosar

#### **Health Care for the Homeless**

The two best steps the Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) community can take now is to implement enhanced infection control procedures and reach out to community partners working in shelters, housing programs, street outreach, food distribution centers, and other venues to discuss how to best mitigate the spread of this virus across the continuum of care.

Currently there are more questions than answers. Information is evolving very quickly while resources are continually being developing and circulated. The National HCH Council will continue to provide updates as they become available and post helpful resources on their webpage influenza webpage. By A. Ginosar

# **Democracy**

"Reimagine Democracy," by Astra Taylor, in *The Progressive*, February/March 2020, pgs. 22-25. The author is a Canadian-American documentary filmmaker, writer, activist, musician and Puffin Foundation/Economic Hardship Reporting Project fellow. She is the author of *Democracy May Not Exist, But We'll Miss It When It's Gone.* The *Reimagine* article begins: "After the fall of the Berlin Wall thirty years ago, liberal democracy reigned triumphant. Understood as one person, one vote, exercised in periodic elections, constitutional rights, and a market economy, democracy spread around the world. Today, the liberal democratic compact appears to be breaking down ..." According to the author citing a report "... seventy-one countries suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties [in 2017] leading to an overall decrease in global freedom" "*The Economist* had warned in early 2018—not long after the magazine's yearly Democracy Index officially downgraded the United States from a 'full democracy' to a 'flawed' one," page 22. Retrieved 2/29/2020

#### **Books and Reports on Housing Issues**

By E. Heaser and others as noted

"Who's Paying to Fix Sac's Housing Crisis?" By Scott Thomas Anderson, <u>SN&R</u>, <u>2/20/20</u> pgs. 16-19. Describes the background of a lead-up to the lack of affordable housing in the Sacramento area. For 31 years, Sacramento had an Affordable Housing Trust Fund, funded by developers who were compelled to build 15% of any residential project for affordable units. As of 2015, the City Council voted to allow developers to "... opt out by paying a fire-sale-priced fee against every square-foot unit of their project." pg.16. The money would go into an affordable housing trust fund. Since, only159 units have been built and only two permits have been requested to build extremely low-income housing. Retrieved 2/29/2020

Homewreckers: How a Gang of Wall Street Kingpins, Hedge Fund Magnates, Crooked Banks, and Vulture Capitalists Suckered Millions Out of Their Homes and Demolished the American Dream, 2019, by Aaron Glantz, Reveal reporter, Peabody winner and Pulitzer finalist. "Glantz vividly tells how a group of Wall Street bankers and private equity titans whom he calls the 'Homewreckers' – including Trump cabinet members Steve Mnuchin and Wilbur Ross, as well as Trump confidants and funders Steve Schwarzman, Tom Barrack and others – exploited a rigged system in which billions of dollars in wealth was transferred to them from millions of individual homeowners after the real estate bust of the Great Recession. Glantz reveals how many of these same people now are working to weaken the safeguards that were put in place to prevent a similar disaster and how proven programs from our history can be used to create systemic change in favor of the public rather than the Homewreckers." Retrieved 3/1/2020. The author unravels the many machinations whereby the purposefully complex players of international finance snookered then President Obama into subsidizing them meanwhile scamming millions of naïve and hapless mortgage holders out of their homes and often their life savings. Dodd-Frank solved little, as complex regulations are the easiest to game, and President Trump's rollback of that law makes another meltdown even more likely. Some of the same Wall Street advise him or are Cabinet members.

Author Glantz was interviewed on PBS Amanpour & Company, 2/27/2020. By M. Strand and E. Heaser

<u>Capital City: Gentrification and the Real Estate State.</u> 2019, by Samuel Stein, doctoral student; reviewed in <u>Yes Magazine</u>, Spring 2020 pgs. 57-59. Discusses the effects of wealth and ensuing policies that shape the urban landscape that do not balance people's rights with property rights. Policies he suggests: "Strengthening preservation ordinances to protect working class neighborhoods from predatory development; regulations to prevent frequent and severe rent increases that price out lower-income residents; policies that facilitate the transfer of land and property in mortgage default to the city for housing rather than to speculators for profit." page 58. Retrieved 3/1/2020

"Mental Awareness: Let's Focus on Real Causes of Homelessness," by Cecily Hastings, <u>Inside Publications, March 2020.</u> pgs. 12, 14. Includes a discussion with Dr. Drew Pinsky, Pasadena internist and addiction specialist. Retrieved 3/2/2020

"Department Vacancies Stymie Newsom's Policies," by W. Venteicher & S. Bollag, *The Sacramento Bee*, 3/2/2020 pgs. 1A,4A. "The Department of Housing and Community Development, which administers most of the state money for housing, has one of the highest vacancy rates among large state departments, with about 21 percent of its positions unfilled ..." page 1A. The article discusses amounts of money allocated to pay for housing, either by bond measures or propositions, and the difficulty in hiring people for the vacant positions. As of February 2020 the vacancy rate was reduced from 205 vacancies to 170. More job fairs are planned.

"Newsom's To-Do List on Mental Health," by Jocelyn Winer, Cal Matters, SN&R, 3/5/2020 pgs. 13-16. To reduce homelessness, fix mental health care. Retrieved 3/7/20

### Broke: Hardship and Resilience in a City of Broken Promises

Law professor Jodie Adams Kirshner went to Detroit shortly after the Great Recession began in 2008 and spent several years getting acquainted with various Detroiters who were left aside and left behind by the more recent gentrification of desirable downtown Detroit. Now, these destitute neighborhoods continue to molder, while their inhabitants are lucky to find long-commute service jobs in the suburbs, while suburbanites commute to white-collar jobs in the redeveloped center city. Following their experiences over the next handful of years, the reader comes away with a vivid understanding of the meaning and masochism of predatory capitalism and the criminalization of poverty.

#### **Local Information**

Sacramento City Council on Tuesday March 17, 2020 unanimously adopted an emergency moratorium on evictions to protect renters financially impacted by the coronavirus. The eviction ordinance will go into effect immediately. It will cover renters who are unable to pay rent due to any of the following reasons: Renters who are sick with COVID-19 or caring for a household or family member who is sick with the virus, renters who were laid off, lost hours at work, or had income reduced in any way as a result of the coronavirus or the state of emergency; renters complying with the recommendations from government agencies to stay home, self quarantine and avoid congregating and so on. From *The Sacramento Bee* 3/17/2020. By A. Ginosar



The League of Women Voters of Sacramento County

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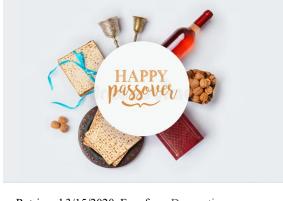
# Return Service Requested April 2020 First Class Mail



# FIRST CLASS MAIL

<u>LWVC COVID-19 Guidance and Update</u> sent from the LWVC

Table of Symptoms for Some Viruses



Retrieved 3/15/2020, Free from <u>Dreamstime.com</u> <u>LLC [USA]</u>



Retrieved 3/15/2020, Free from Pexels



Retrieved 3/21/2020, bing.com/images