



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

March 2014

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Calendar

Saturday, March 8, 2014, Noon--3 P.M.

International Women's Day
Louden Nelson Community Center
301 Center Street, Santa Cruz

Tuesday, March 11, 2014, 1--3 P.M.

LWVSCC Board Meeting
Santa Cruz County Bank
720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Wednesday, March 12, 2014, 12--2 P.M.

Helping the Homeless
Bring your own lunch
Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 1--3 P.M.

LWVSCC Board Meeting
Santa Cruz County Bank
720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Wednesday, April 30, 2014, 12--2 P.M.

Prospects for Soquel Creek Water District
Speaker: Kim Adamson, SCWD General Manager
Bring your own lunch
Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Tuesday, May 6, 2014, 11:00 A.M.--1:00 P.M.

Voters Service Training Workshop with LWVC
Management Training Advisor Jackie Jacobberger
Details to be announced
Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Sunday, June 1, 2014, 12:30--2:30 P.M.

LWVSCC Annual Meeting
Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Helping the Homeless



featured speaker

Monica Martinez
Executive Director
of the Santa Cruz
Homeless Services Center
Wednesday
March 12, 2014
Noon to 2 P.M.

Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
at the Jack & Peggy Baskin Center for Philanthropy
7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Free and open to League members and the public.

No reservations necessary

Bring your own bag lunch. Water and cookies provided.

At LWVSCC's March meeting, Monica Martinez, executive director of the Santa Cruz Homeless Services Center (HSC), will discuss the many services provided by the HSC and the local 180/180 initiative. Since becoming director of the HSC in 2010, Ms. Martinez has focused on community partnerships and innovative solutions to bring a renewed respect to the homeless issue.

Established in 1986, the HSC provides emergency and transitional services to homeless individuals and families that will enable them to achieve self-sufficiency. The largest agency providing services to the homeless in Santa Cruz County, the HSC provides a pathway to housing for hundreds of men, women, and children each year.

The 180/180 initiative is a multi-agency effort to permanently house 180 of Santa Cruz County's most vulnerable, chronically ill homeless by July, 2014. So far this innovative program has helped over 140 formerly homeless clients.

Bring your questions about homelessness and your lunch to the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County at the Jack & Peggy Baskin Center for Philanthropy, 7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos, at noon on Wednesday, March 12. The League will furnish water and cookies. This meeting is free and open to the public; to reserve your place, call 831-426-8683 or e-mail league@lwvsc.org.

Membership Report

Welcome to new member, Karen Smith, who joined our Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters at the recent February 9 event. Karen began her association with the local League by helping her friend, current League president Peggy Marketello, set up the luncheons. Karen's main concern is making sure that obstructions to voting for individuals are eliminated. League programs she attended include health care and the libraries. A former elementary school teacher, Karen moved from Pittsburgh, PA to Santa Cruz in 1976 when she married a Californian. After her husband died, Karen sought outside interests, which now include Fun with Fitness exercise classes, train travel in the west and New England, and singing with a local choir.

—Barbara Lewis

Membership Vice President

April Meeting:

Mark your calendar

On Wednesday, April 30, from noon to 2 P.M., Kim Adamson, General Manager of the Soquel Creek Water District will present an analysis of the prospects for the water district at the Community Foundation in Aptos. This will be a "bring-your-own-lunch" meeting.

International Women's Day Celebrated in Santa Cruz

The United Nations Association of the USA Santa Cruz Chapter celebrates International Women's Day on Saturday, March 8, 2014 from noon to 3 P.M. at Loudon Nelson Center, 301 Center Street in Santa Cruz, with their annual soup kitchen and silent auction. A special program, "Women in Leadership for a Peaceful World" by Marie Kagaju Laugharn of the Santa Cruz Women's Commission begins at 1 P.M. The International Soup Kitchen will be open all day; \$7 buys you all the soup and bread you want, students \$3.00. For more information call: 426-3101.

President's Message

Hello Fellow Members,

I am pleased to report that our annual fundraiser at the Scotts Valley Hilton luncheon was successful with a great team effort your board and members made in planning, setting up, and managing the event. Once again, many donations from members came in with multiple items from Joyce Anderson, Sue Becker, Pam Newbury, and me. Our Voter Editor Pam Newbury won a generous donation from Elizabeth and Marq Lipton for a ride on the Chardonnay. We had a good time and learned new information from George Dondero and Cory Caletti on the proposed Rail and Scenic Trails. (see article on page 3). We thank the Hilton for their comfortable accommodations, good services and luncheon for this third year.



The number of important issues with the call for advocacy is just mind-boggling, but I would like to call your attention to two issues in particular, voting rights and economic inequality.

The Voting Rights Act has had many challenges to weaken its basic premise of securing voting rights for all. It appears there are some still maintaining dated views of voting as a right of the propertied, the rich, and the privileged, and even a billionaire suggesting the rich should

have more than one vote. Imagine what could be next as active minds look for partisan advantages in directing voters to their causes. A few of the voter suppression challenges include requiring photo ID's, placing restrictions on early and late voting hours, and eliminating preregistrations for 16 and 17 year olds and same day registrations.

LWVUS staff member Gretchen Knell has written an [in-depth history](#) of the League's work on our basic principle--the citizen's right to vote. Her article is long, but worth reading and keeping as a summarizing reference.

There is much talk and debate about economic inequalities in our country today, and I am adding a few words to the mix here. A "livable wage" that supports affordable housing, medical care, daycare and education for families does not come from low paying jobs, largely filled by women. It is the scarcity of jobs with livable incomes, and support for jobs of self-employment that needs to be seriously addressed in my estimation in order to have any economic stability or effect on our growing poverty levels in our country.

—Continued on Page 5

Santa Cruz Tracks and Trails

At our February meeting Executive Director George Dondero and Senior Transportation Planner Cory Caletti of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) informed League members about the RTC and plans for transportation in Santa Cruz County.

The Regional Transportation Commission promotes long term sustainable multimodal transportation to serve all members of our community. Recently their mission has been expanded beyond planning to include project management. Their first management experience was the recently-completed expansion of Highway 1 between Morrissey and Soquel.

The commission has recently released a draft of the [2014 Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) which sets goals, targets, and policies that will be used to prioritize projects for funding. The draft RTP is available for review and public comment until April 8, 2014. The RTP creates a foundation for expanding transportation options in a way that promotes safety, improves equity, is cost-effective, protects the environment, embeds sustainability, and promotes investment in the local economy, resulting in a transportation system that serves our diverse travel needs. The plan endeavors to implement policies that support desired outcomes rather than specific projects or modes, focusing future investments on the best-performing strategies that are broad enough to adapt to change and take advantage of new opportunities.

Mr. Dondero discussed the rail service from Santa Cruz to San Jose that ran until 1940 when a storm washed out the tracks. The tracks were taken out and tunnels dynamited. In the 1990s they studied the feasibility of rebuilding the line, but today's environmental laws would make that impossible. The only remainder is the Roaring Camp and Big Trees line, which continues today as an excursion line only.

In the 50s and 60s, passenger rail travel declined and was taken over by the federal government, which created Amtrak. In the 90s some regional service was brought back, including the capital corridor from San Jose to Sacramento to Auburn, the Altamont Commuter Express, and the LA to Seattle line. The focus is on quality and running on time. Connection to those lines might eventually occur through the southern end of the Santa Cruz branch railway.

With the Santa Cruz Branch Line now in public ownership, the RTC is evaluating future uses. The line runs 32 miles from Davenport to Watsonville. The rail corridor passes through many major activity centers in Watsonville, Aptos, Capitola, and Santa Cruz, and passes close to key features including parks, recreational facilities, and schools.

On the line through Santa Cruz, detailed planning work is being done on plans for repair of thirty-eight structures along the line, working on the most serious problems first. They also plan to upgrade the track to passenger grade. Right now it is rated for freight at 10 mph with only portions upgraded for passenger travel.



Regional Rail Network Surrounding Santa Cruz County
Source: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

The RTC selected Iowa Pacific Holdings to operate freight and passenger service on the Santa Cruz line under the name Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway. The RTC will be responsible for capital repairs while Iowa Pacific takes responsibility for operation and maintenance.

Types of freight hauled on the rail line currently include construction materials, agricultural products, and raw materials for biofuel production at the new biofuel plant in Watsonville. Passenger service consists mainly of excursion trains during the holidays.



Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
 Source: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

As Senior Transportation Planner, Cori Caletti's mission is to bring into being the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, a bicycle and pedestrian path arcing the Monterey Bay with key destinations and coastal access throughout the 50-mile trail to highlight the marine sanctuary. The goal is to provide bike/pedestrian facilities separate from motor vehicles, but use the railroad line as a continuous spine to weave the system together for the 32 miles the trail will follow the track and make key connections that tie into the California coastal trail. The trail will expand non-motorized transportation options and provide a robust system wide enough for safe use by multiple users traveling at different speeds in different modes, from families with kids in strollers to bird watchers to bicyclists. They must consider topographical issues and a variety of mobility ranges.



Example Schematic of Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail along the Rail Line
 Source: Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan, 2013.SCCRTC

The [master plan for the project](#) was certified in November of 2013 to provide a context of what to achieve and to prioritize needs and costs. Development must take place in the framework of public right of way, maintaining agricultural operations, private property ownership, community engagement, stakeholder meetings, the Coastal Conservation Commission, and neighborhood groups. Constraints include critical gaps, areas of high activity, fencing, bridges, and crossings. They are looking at where they can use existing bridges and where they need to build separate bridges. In all but two instances they need to build new multi-use bridges separate from the rail bridges.

The project has been broken down into 20 segments, with each having a specific utility. It may take two to three decades to complete gaps in the trail. Estimated cost to complete the fifty-mile project is \$127 million. Funding for three of the segments, totaling \$5.3 million, was allocated in December: Natural Bridges to Pacific Avenue by the Municipal Wharf, from Fifth to Seventh Avenues along East Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz, and in Watsonville at Lee Road. Funding for the balance of the project will be from a variety of public and private sources.

—Pam Newbury, VOTER Editor

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

____\$65 Individual annual membership

____\$100.00 Two members in a household

____\$30.00 Student membership

____ Contribution \$ _____

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWV Education Fund.

Name _____

Address _____

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Telephone: _____

Email _____

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

A Brief History of Funds Intended for a Sanctuary Scenic Trail

In 1993, a year after the designation of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, a large group of people came together under the leadership of Supervisor Gary Patton as a Santa Cruz County Task Force to promote the Sanctuary and find strategies to enhance economic and educational opportunities in Santa Cruz County. The Sanctuary's headquarters, a division of the federal agency, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), is in Monterey. We were successful in establishing a Sanctuary office in Santa Cruz and the wonderful Sanctuary Interpretive Center near the Santa Cruz Wharf. We published and distributed an educational brochure, "50 Ways To Get Your Feet Wet In The Sanctuary", and established the Sanctuary Scenic Trail along the coast. We installed interpretive signs along the Trail, and planned for an extensive educational/interpretive program.

Congressman Sam Farr became excited about establishing a trail along the entire Santa Cruz and Monterey County coastline, and he and the national Sanctuary program were able to secure federal funds which were split between the two counties. The funds were held by AMBAG (the Association of Monterey Bay Association Governments), and later transferred to the Regional Transportation Commission. The RTC was busy trying to buy the rail line and establish a rail trail, and no planning was continued along the coast for many years.

The Sanctuary Scenic Trail was combined with the rail trail planning, and the money is now allocated primarily for the rail trail. The Task Force is now going to work with the RTC to continue to promote the coastal aspect of the Trail, and complete the original vision: a trail along the coast for all to enjoy, whether driving, walking, riding a bicycle, skateboard, or using a wheelchair. We do not want all the years of planning to be for naught.

—*Stephanie Harlan, Capitola City Councilmember; Chair Santa Cruz Interagency Task Force, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary*

—*President's Message, Continued from Page 3*

There are many ways in which jobs can be generated to improve and protect our environment and infrastructure. Some local Leagues have identified economic inequality as a top priority, but are also finding its study to be gigantic in scope for small Leagues to handle on their own. We are in that group looking to combine our support and labor with other Leagues towards the focus on economic fairness for all. We will keep you posted on our efforts.

In the meantime, please be aware of what is happening with some of our other issues, such as immigration, water supply, health and safety, fracking, carbon emissions, human trafficking, presidential debates, and campaign disclosures; remain as proactive as ever to the basic principles and objectives of the League.

—*Peggy Walker Marketello, President*