



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

January 2015 *Celebrating 50 Years of Voter Education in Santa Cruz County* Volume 49, Number 5

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State Program Planning

Wednesday, January 28

1-3 p.m.

Home of Judy Brock

24 Oak Road Santa Cruz 95060

Enter from Pasatiempo Drive;

NO ACCESS FROM GRAHAM HILL ROAD

Calendar

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

Wednesday, January 28

1-3 p.m.

State Program Planning

Home of Judy Brock

24 Oak Road, Santa Cruz 95060

(Enter from Pasatiempo Drive only)

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

Sunday, February 22, 2015

Noon-2 p.m.

50th Anniversary Celebration

Keynote Speaker State Secretary of

Natural Resources John Laird

Seacliff Inn

7500 Old Dominion Court, Aptos, CA
95003

Cost: \$30 per person

RSVP before Thursday, February 12

See main article for details

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

1-3 p.m.

Local Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz, 95060

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

On January 28 LWVSCC members will meet to discuss State Program Planning. We will look at current State positions and discuss where the League should focus its energy over the next two years. Should there be a new study? Do we need to update any of the State positions? Now is the time to make your voice heard.

Some Leagues around the state have begun to promote studies for recommendation. The League of Women Voters of Berkley, Albany, Emeryville urges other state Leagues to recommend a study on "Raising and Maintaining a Livable Minimum Wage" (read more about this in this issue's President's Message or online at <http://www.lwvbae.org/minimum-wage-or-living-wage/>)

The LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area proposes a study of the use of cumulative voting to resolve California Voting Rights Act lawsuits.

The League uses state positions to decide what legislation to propose or support and what ballot measures to recommend or oppose. Did you see a ballot measure you thought the League should have supported, but lacked a position to base its recommendation on? Do you know of an issue we should be looking at to propose legislation? We recommend reviewing the state positions prior to the meeting. You can read a summary of the positions and how they have been used to shape LWVC policy at <http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/docs/2015-17-Summary-Use-Positions.pdf> The full list of state positions can be found at <http://lwvc.org/issues/lwvc-positions>. You may want to consider printing out one of these to bring with you to the meeting.

The state program planning process steers the course of the LWV of California; come and contribute your thoughts to this grassroots effort.

President's Message

Another dawn of a new year and a hope for each to make it personally memorable. My best wishes to you in that venture.

There is plenty happening in the world today to concern and worry us, but we have the option of choosing the issues to personally respond and take actions in making a difference for improving human needs. We are known for our spirit in laboring with determination and dedication to just causes, and LWV members never seem to veer from those attributes.

Pertinent to our times are current issues of “a living wage,” immigration, statewide and local water issues, health (particularly mental health), and, always, ensuring easy access to the polls for all voters in future elections. We can continue our support of the Voting Rights Act through contacts with our elected officials. In the upcoming months, LWVSCC will continue to address state and local water issues with knowledgeable event speakers to educate and inform our members and the public.



Since the late 1980's, under the LWV's position of “Meeting Basic Human Needs,” the LWVUS and LWVC have not granted permission to Leagues to lobby on raising the minimum wage due to a lack of consensus on what a living wage was. (A majority at the 2014 National convention actually approved the raising of wages, but they needed a 2/3 vote). In response to the push at last year's national convention, the LWVUS recommends that the state Leagues adopt a study of “Raising the Minimum Wage” or “Guaranteeing a Living Wage” at their individual 2015 state conventions. Considerations include the current cost of living, the state and local living wage legislation and rates, and whether and how to adjust eligibility levels for Medi-Cal, Medicare, food stamps, and other benefits for low-income wage earners. We do not want a raise in the minimum wage to automatically trigger a loss of benefits. Having a minimum wage adequate enough to cover expenses without supplemental benefits is the goal. Not an easy task, but worth the effort so that families who work will be able to pay for their homes, food, health, clothing, and educational expenses. Not being able to provide basic human needs for yourself and your family when you are willing to work just doesn't fit in a democratic society!

With our 2015 Local and State Program Planning meetings coming up, our LWVSCC should consider joining the Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville League in recommending a State Study for “Raising and Maintaining a Livable Minimum Wage.” Now is the time to join in a grassroots movement with other groups and organizations throughout the United States requesting proposals for a livable minimum wage. With our current Congress, I have a feeling these goals will need a long-term, persistent shove on our part. I suggest we begin now to support a push for actions to accomplish these goals!

I encourage you to join us at our State Program Planning meeting and Local Program Planning meeting (January 28 and March 3, respectively; see calendar for details) to provide your input about what issues the League should look at, or write suggestions in an email to me at pm4art@aol.com. LWVSCC depends on your input to stay strong and vital; let us hear from you!

Stay warm and safe.

Sincerely,
—Peggy Walker Marketello, President LWVSCC

LWVSCC Celebrates 50th Anniversary

We are now accepting reservations for the *LWVSCC 50th Anniversary Celebration* on Sunday, February 22, 2015, noon to 2 p.m. Keynote speaker State Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird will speak about water management in California. This event is open to League members and the public, so please invite friends and family. You can help spread the word by printing and posting the flyer for the event (available to download at lwvsc.org/calendar).

The event will be held at the Seacliff Inn, 7500 Old Dominion Court, Aptos. To reserve your place, send your check for \$30 per person, payable to LWVSCC, to P.O. Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010 before Thursday, February 12. Please indicate your choice of entrée: Celestino Salmon, Cheese Tortellini, or Chicken Seacliff. All meals include salad, bread, beverages, and dessert.

For more information, contact Dottie Fry at (831) 688-9234, email league@lwvsc.org, or visit our website at lwvsc.org/calendar

Voter Service Report

The 52 percent turnout among registered voters in the November 2014 election was the lowest in Santa Cruz history for a general election. Non-presidential election years often draw a lower turnout, but this was 14 percent below the previous midterm election in 2010. This is despite the County Elections Office making voting more convenient, including sample ballots, voter information pamphlets, early voting, and vote-by-mail ballots. The League of Women Voters also had information online and voter registration county-wide. With several close local elections, those missing voters could have made a difference in the outcome. We need to redouble our efforts in future elections.

In December, Assemblymember/Speaker pro Tempore Kevin Mullin (D-San Mateo County) introduced comprehensive, permanent election recount reform legislation. Assembly Bill 44 would require state-funded automatic manual recounts for statewide close elections or ballot measures where the margin of victory is one tenth of one percent (0.01%) or less; if passed, it would take effect for the 2016 elections. The bill also includes a recount process for presidential elections. Eighteen states already require publicly-funded, automatic recounts for very close races.

—Dottie Fry, Voter Service Co-Chair

Membership Report

Thank you to Laura Grossman for her continued work doing the local roster updates and giving information to the national League.

In December, we welcomed Judi Orbach as a new member to our Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters. Judi and her husband, Mike, who lived in Santa Cruz from 1979-1982 and became parents here, moved to eastern North Carolina where they lived from 1982-2014, the first 10 years in Greenville and the rest of the time at the coast (Morehead City & Beaufort). Joining the LWV chapter in Greenville marked the start of her positive experience as a League member, which continued when the family moved to the North Carolina coast. Over the years, Judi served on the board of the Carteret County LWV as secretary, treasurer, and president. Before returning to California, she also served as a member of the board of the North Carolina League of Women Voters. Judi's political activity has included work on the passage of a school bond, and her other interests include serving on the board of Public Radio East, folk music, and contra dancing.

When Mike decided to retire from his job at Duke Marine Lab, he and Judi decided to return to Santa Cruz. Their son Matt, who was an undergraduate at UCSC, lives here, and they "love the politics, the people, restaurants, the cultural activities, and the great radio stations."

Jan Beautz, who currently serves on our Board of Directors as program chair, has a long history of community service and political involvement in Santa Cruz County. She and her husband, Michael, are parents to three sons, and now have five grandchildren.

In addition to her work as an attorney, Jan Beautz served for twenty years on the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors before retiring in December 2008. First elected as the Santa Cruz County's First District Supervisor in 1988, she championed slow development, environmental protection, and citizen participation. Jan served on the Joint Powers Board of the county libraries and the Mental Health Advisory Board. Readily accessible, she worked hard to make sure the First District, comprised of Live Oak, Soquel, Branciforte, and a swath of the Santa Cruz Mountains from Highway 17 to Nisene Marks and the Summit, was well represented. The infrastructure of the district--from sidewalks to parks to a new library and swim center--were influenced by her leadership.

During her retirement, Jan decided to join the League of Women Voters, attracted by its nonpartisan policy and good reputation. She currently serves on the Family Services Board and the Santa Cruz Women's Club Board of Directors.

Barbara Lewis, First Vice President/Membership

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 _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____

Email _____

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President: Peggy Marketello

Membership: Barbara Lewis

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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.

Committee Forming to Plan SUD Panel

In Governor Brown's inaugural speech this week, he spoke of California's overcrowded prisons, the result of our response to an increase in crime by adding new crimes and increasing sentences. In the 1970s, California had 12 prisons and corrections spending accounted for three percent of the state budget; today that amount has risen to 34 prisons with their portion of the budget swelling to over ten percent. Brown spoke of recent legislation and propositions that "attempt to find less expensive, more compassionate and more effective ways to deal with crime."

One of the ways to bring this about is to change the way we understand and respond to substance use disorders (SUD). Over the last few months, LWVSCC has studied and supported the County Health Services Agency's Draft Strategic Plan for Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Intervention Services, which promotes prevention and treatment over incarceration for those affected by SUD. In May, LWVSCC will hold a public education meeting to help the community learn more about SUD and why it makes sense to spend our dollars helping those with SUD rather than imprisoning them.

If you would like to get involved in making this event happen, you can join our planning committee. You can help decide on panelists, determine topics and questions to be addressed, and run the event itself. Don't miss being a part of this important event; please contact the committee chair, Pam Newbury, for information on when the committee will be meeting. 831-423-6904 or pknewbury@earthlink.net

Reproductive Rights Network Annual Pro-Choice Brunch

Reproductive Rights Network's Annual Pro-Choice Brunch, held each year near the anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision is an inspiring time for local pro-choice advocates to come together, learn, and recommit. Keynote speaker Kathy Kneer, CEO Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California Planned Parenthood's highly respected Sacramento lobbyist and public affairs strategist, will bring us up to date on state and national trends. Event will be held on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2015, 10 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 250 California St., Santa Cruz. [Reservations](#) appreciated but not required.

Sliding scale donation requested: \$10-25; students free. Questions? Carol Fuller, 423-2356, or fulkins@cruzio.com