



# Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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## Calendar

Wednesday

November 4, 2015

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

*Moving Beyond Red versus Blue*

Paula Lee, Co-President, LWV Sacramento

Scotts Valley Branch Library

251 Kings Village Road

Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Bring your own lunch

Free and open to the public

Tuesday

November 10, 2015

10 a.m. to noon

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

Tuesday

December 8, 2015

10 a.m. to noon

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

January 10, 2016

2 to 3 p.m.

Our Changing Climate and  
the California Coast

Dr. Gary Griggs, UCSC

Dr. Michael Orbach, Duke University

Co-Sponsored by the Seymour Marine

Discovery Center

La Feliz Room

100 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz 95060

Sunday

February 21, 2016

LWVSCC Anniversary Luncheon

Noon to 2 p.m.

Seacliff Inn Banquet Room, 7500 Old

Dominion Court, Aptos, CA 95003

Assemblymember Mark Stone

*The League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County  
invites you to attend*

## MOVING BEYOND RED VERSUS BLUE

*Using electoral reform to  
end gerrymandering, elect  
more women, and represent  
more voters*

Featuring **Paula Lee**

LWV Sacramento Co-President

**Wednesday**

**November 4, 2015**

**11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Scotts Valley Branch Library

251 Kings Village Road | Scotts Valley, CA 95066

*Bring your own lunch. Free and open to the public*

With voter participation at all-time lows and red-versus-blue divisions within our legislative bodies creating dysfunctional governance, it is time to consider whether alternative voting systems can benefit citizens and strengthen our democracy by representing more voters and encouraging more civic participation. At our November meeting, electoral reform proponent Paula Lee will discuss proportional representation, instant runoff voting, and the national popular vote for president.

In 2003 LWV of California adopted [a position endorsing instant runoff voting](#) and in 2010 the national League voted [to support the National Popular Vote Compact](#) as one possible path to a direct vote for president. Perhaps now is the time to take a closer look at further options for electoral reform.

Join the League as we explore this topic on Wednesday, November 4 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Scotts Valley Branch Library, 251 Kings Village Road, Scotts Valley, CA 95066. This event is free and open to the public, so bring a friend and your own lunch. No reservations required. Water and cookies will be served. For more information call 831-426-VOTE (8683) or go to [lwvsc.org](http://lwvsc.org) to download a [flyer](#) to print and share.



## President's Message



Thank you to Gail Pellerin for the terrific talk and stimulating discussion at our September 15 lunch meeting at the Downtown Library (see

page 2 for full report).

She explored ways to increase voter registration and return of ballots, as well as how to counteract the apathy and despair that keeps registered voters from participating. There was a very lively discussion by members and guests during the question and answer session. We are delighted that Gail Pellerin, Santa Cruz County Clerk/Registrar of Voters and a current member of the Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters, agreed to give such a candid and informative talk. Thank you to those who attended to learn about and discuss a topic that goes to the heart of our concerns as League of Women Voters members.

During this 2015-16 year, our Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters continues its strong support for voter registration efforts, providing in-depth information and discussion on issues related to the voting process and elections (see Voter Service Report). Our future programs will explore a diversity of topics selected as high priority at the local, state, and national levels. If possible, you are encouraged to participate. Your continued support and donations are also greatly appreciated.

—Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC

## Voter Service Report

### *Banner Year for Voter Registration in SCC*

This September our League's Voter Service team collaborated with Helen Ruiz-Thomas, program coordinator for voter registration and outreach from the County Elections Department, for a very successful voter registration effort. Ruiz-Thomas asked for our help in recruiting volunteers for eight days of registering. We were especially interested since she was focusing on the colleges. We agreed to call volunteers and were able to find eleven enthusiastic people to register on eight consecutive days, starting on September 15 and continuing through National Voter Registration Day on September 22.

In the week before September 22, the focus was on our area colleges. Sue Becker and Margit Aramburu manned a station at Cabrillo College in Aptos with the help of Ruiz-Thomas, who set up the tables and organized everything efficiently. The trio registered 97 students in two days. Kathy Donovan and Dottie Fry held forth at the Cabrillo campus in Watsonville, along with Helen, and altogether 27 students were registered there. In addition, seven people filled out poll worker applications at Cabrillo College.

UCSC allowed the county four days to register voters, and there were five from our League that helped: Maggie Smith, Paul Fleischman, Dottie Speidel, Karen Smith, and Laura Grossman. That team registered 176 students in four days, and three people applied to be poll workers.

On September 22, there were volunteers in all thirteen libraries, and five were recruited from our League: Morgan Rankin, Joan Hebert, Maggie Smith, Sue Becker and Dottie Fry. The total number of people registered via the libraries was 48, but also 86 people registered on line that day—134 in all on National Voter Registration Day. This brings us to a total of 434 new voter registrations in just eight days!

I am proud of our faithful enthusiastic volunteers who made a significant difference in the success of this campaign to register voters. Ruiz-Thomas said she could not have accomplished these results without us. Dottie and I want to thank our volunteers for all the time and energy spent on this effort. And hats off to Helen Ruiz-Thomas for doing an excellent job of organizing this huge project.

—Sue Becker, Voter Service Co-Chair

# Electoral Updates and Insights from our County Clerk

In September LWVSCC invited Gail Pellerin, Santa Cruz County Clerk/Registrar of Voters, to give an update on electoral happenings on local, state, and national levels. She began with an overview of the various anniversaries celebrated this year: it's the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities act, and the 95th anniversary of the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote.

Pellerin started with Assembly Bill 1461, the New Motor Voter Act. This legislation (then on the Governor's desk, but since signed into law) will register every eligible citizen who goes to a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office to get a driver's license or renew one, potentially adding millions of new registered voters to California's voter rolls. More than 6.6 million California citizens are eligible but unregistered to vote.

California citizens who are identified as eligible voters when visiting the DMV to apply for, renew, or change their address on a driver's license would select their party when at the DMV, then the DMV will automatically send their registration to the Secretary of State's office, where eligibility will be verified and they will be added to the voter rolls. Voters would retain their right to opt out or cancel their voter registration at any time, as well as change their party affiliation.

Another major bill that is currently on hold would, if passed, provide for all voters to receive ballots in the mail and to be able to drop off or complete ballots at voting centers or secure drop boxes for 10 days before the election. Senate Bill 450 is aimed at increasing voter turnout. In the 2014 General Election, California ranked 43 in voter turnout.

Pellerin evinced some concern about the feasibility of such plans. In a county of our size, the law would require ten to eleven voting centers open for a minimum of eight hours daily for ten days prior to the election. Considering the various site requirements (ADA accessibility, central to transportation), it would be a challenge to find and secure the required number of sites. Finding eligible facilities willing to host voting for one day is difficult enough. Adding to that the need to tie up the facility for 10 days and recruit and train staff to fill them for eight hours a day, plus the need to obtain secure 24-hour drive-up-and-drop-off ballot boxes and places to put them, presents a considerable challenge for a medium-sized county such as ours. One possibility is that counties would be allowed to opt in to the law, but that creates concerns of its own due to the confusion created by allowing different voting structures in counties around the state.

Pellerin also highlighted several other bills which Governor Jerry Brown has since signed in to law. Assembly Bill 44 establishes guidelines allowing for state-funded manual recounts for any statewide office, state ballot measure, or presidential election with a low victory margin of either 1,000 votes or .015 percent

Assembly Bill 363, aims to speed election results and reduce costs by allowing officials to begin securely transporting ballots from polling places to counting locations by mid-day to enable counting to begin before polls close. Pellerin emphasized that security is always an issue, and that it's important to follow a methodical, step-by-step process when handling ballots.

Assembly Bill 400 provides for the use of the state's changeable electronic message signs to be used to display Election Day reminders two days prior to statewide Primary, Special, and General Elections and voter registration deadlines. AB 477 will reduce the number of legitimate mail-in ballots that are currently rejected because they are not signed or don't have matching signatures by allowing more time for the voter to submit an "unsigned ballot" statement after Election Day. Pellerin pointed out that this would delay final election results.

AB 683 renames the Visually Impaired Voter Assistance Board as the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee. It requires the Committee to advise the California Secretary of State on improving the accessibility of elections, including election materials, for voters with disabilities. AB 1443 creates the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee to advise the Secretary of State on ways to improve the voting experience for those who speak limited English. SB 365 establishes the legality of vote-by-mail ballot drop boxes and directs the California Secretary of State to create regulations that establish best practices for their use.

Pellerin proceeded to an overview of ballot measures heading our way in June of 2016. With four measures approved so far and over 30 petitions circulating, we could end up with crowded June and November Ballots. Now



approved for the June 7 ballot, the Suspension of Legislators Amendment would require a two-thirds majority to suspend a legislator and defines the removal of rights, privileges and powers of a suspended legislator.

For November 7, three measures have now qualified (one more than was qualified in September). They include an



initiative that requires voter approval of changes to MediCal's hospital fee program and another that repeals Proposition 227, which passed in 1998. Repeal of 227 would allow for bilingual education in public schools. The third measure is a referendum on Senate Bill 270 enacted by the California State Legislature to prohibit single-use plastic bags. A yes vote ratifies the law; a no vote overturns it.

Among the many initiatives attempting to qualify, you'll find proposals to create an advisory group to consider the autonomy of California, amend the California Constitution to replace the word Governor with the word President, eliminate spousal support, and make the sale or consumption of shellfish a serious felony punishable by a \$666,000 fine per occurrence and/or prison sentence of up to six years, six months, and six days.

*Pellerin addresses audience at League meeting.*

Don't miss the "Intolerant Jackass" initiative that provides any person who proposes a ballot measure that advocates the killing of gays and/or lesbians must attend sensitivity training and donate money to a pro-gay or pro-lesbian organization. That initiative was proposed in response to the California "Sodomite Suppression" initiative, which proposed putting to death any person who "willingly touches another person of the same gender for purposes of sexual gratification." (This initiative was struck down by a judge as unconstitutional and, thankfully, will not be on the ballot!)

To keep current on the status of state ballot measures and for more fun and interesting reading, check out the list of proposed ballot measures on [Ballotpedia.org](http://Ballotpedia.org)

Pellerin encouraged increasing the participation of 18 to 24 year-olds in their civic duties through the recommendations of the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning, which has lesson plans and other resources available on line at [www.powerofdemocracy.org](http://www.powerofdemocracy.org). In the 2014 general election, voter turnout among this demographic was a dismal 8.2 percent. Pellerin emphasized, "A person in this age group was more likely to get arrested in 2014 than to cast a ballot."

Pellerin reviewed statistics for Santa Cruz County's 140,494 registered voters, of which 68,509 have requested permanent vote-by-mail status. She also expressed frustration with the name of the American Independent Party, which confuses many who register for that conservative party, thinking they are registering as independent voters not affiliated with a particular party. The "decline to state" or "no party preference" (NPP) is a growing segment of voters in our county. With 34,066, the number of NPP voters is topped only by Democrats (75,275), with Republicans (22,343) a distant third.

Pellerin announced that the county has received a grant to make improvements to the County Voter Information Guide from the Center for Civic Design. She also touched on issues with our voting equipment, saying that we can't find certified parts for the machines due to the age of the system. A new voting system could be a slate that looks like an iPad. She doesn't see online voting any time soon because our current internet is not secure.

Pellerin finished by urging the audience to talk to people about voting. There are many instances where just a few votes mattered. She referenced the Zayante Water Board where just two votes could have changed the outcome. With the future of the Supreme Court at stake in the next election, it's more important than ever for each of us to exercise our civic duty and vote.

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*

## Looking at Drug and Alcohol Use in Our Community, Part Three

### A Community Decision: Tolerance, Deterrence, and Understanding

Last May the LWVSCC sponsored an educational forum about substance use disorders (SUD). League member and attorney Ashley Wheelock moderated a panel that included Rod Libbey and Jessica Stone of Janus, Vanessa de la Cruz, M.D., and Bill Manov, Ph.D. of the county health services, and Sheriff James Hart. This is the third of a series of articles reporting on what the panelists discussed.

Parts one and two of the series are available in the [August](#) and [September](#) VOTER newsletters. Part one covered the definition of SUD, how drugs and alcohol interact with the culture of our community, and the different effects of drugs versus alcohol. Part two covered interventions and resources for young people, why there is stigma and fear about reaching out for help with substance use disorders, availability of treatment in Santa Cruz County (SCC), how SUD is treated, co-occurring disorders, the chronic inebriates program, and the costs of treatment versus the costs of not treating SUD.

Wheelock continued the discussion with a question from the audience about criminalization and disease versus treatment, “when does enough become enough, and if release and repeat isn't working, what do we do then?”

Hart answered that as a community we must decide how to deal with repeat offenders, some of whom have been to the county jail over 200 times this year. Part of the question is in determining what part of the jailed population of low-end offenders (excluding high-end offenders who are in for murder and assault) can legally be held and who can be released, factoring in public safety. He mentioned alternatives to custody, such as electronic monitoring and work release programs. People can do community service rather than serve jail time. Capacity is an issue as well, “...we've had as many as 600 people in a jail with 450 beds, and that's not safe.”

Hart also referenced the many other agencies that impact who comes and who goes in the jail, such as judges, district attorneys, probation officers, and public defenders. That group dictates who comes and who goes; the Sheriff's department just follows orders from the court about who to release and who to hold.

The community needs to decide who we can tolerate being out there on the street and who should remain in jail, Hart emphasized. Is there another alternative for a mentally ill person in crisis who breaks a window and is now doing 200 days in county jail for a low-end offense? What about a 77-year-old man in jail doing 270 days because he's had his eighth public intoxication arrest?

Libbey expressed his belief that there is a real value in using criminal sentencing to improve treatment possibilities, “...using someone's criminal history and what they owe in terms of their criminal time to enhance their motivation for treatment can be a very positive thing.” He referenced the example of how a state program successfully reduced recidivism by allowing prisoners to reduce their sentence by attending a counseling and education program.

Wheelock asked Stone to comment on what information would help the community better understand those with SUD. Stone mentioned the federal [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency's](#) website as a good source of information.

Stone also referenced the [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACE\) Study](#), which conducted one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and wellbeing. The result of collaboration between the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente's Health Appraisal Clinic in San Diego, the ACE Study findings suggest that certain adverse experiences during the first 18 years of a person's life will impact what happens to them as an adult; those experiences can be major risk factors for the leading causes of illness, including SUD, and death as well as poor quality of life in the United States. It is critical to understand how some of the worst health and social problems in our nation can arise as a consequence of adverse childhood experiences. Realizing these connections is likely to improve efforts towards prevention and recovery. The study looked at many factors, including verbal or physical abuse, neglect, substance use in the home, incarceration of a family member, divorce, depression of a family member, and more.

It changed the way I looked at treatment, Stone commented, “I stopped asking, ‘what is wrong with you?’ and started asking, ‘what happened to you?’” Stone emphasized, that the more information we have about what addiction is and how it can occur can help improve the way we treat people.

Wheelock asked Libbey to discuss how inter-agency relationships can facilitate or hinder treatment. Libbey felt that a lot of positive progress has been made in recent years. County clinics have to be aware of what’s going on in the contract community and non-profit programs so that patients get referred to the proper level of care.

Wheelock shifted back to criminalization with questions about fines for driving under the influence and drug penalties. The questioner expressed concerns about the difficulty of paying fines for those who are trying to seek treatment and wondered about the purpose of the fines.

Manov responded that fines are related to recovering court and probation costs associated with the criminal case. He continued, “...they definitely can be a barrier to regaining a place in society... it's not intended to be therapeutic or punitive, it's really the system trying to recover its costs.”

De la Cruz expressed further reservations about fines as a deterrent, “They're drinking and driving because their drinking is out of control.”

Expanding on the topic, Manov agreed that fines may have a deterrent effect on those who still have some degree of control over their use, when someone deep on the substance disorder spectrum is compulsively using, all the fines and confinement in the world won’t have much impact. “You really need to look at this whole continuum from no use to mild misuse, to a degree of habituation and psychological dependence, to full-on addiction. Different interventions work with different people along that spectrum.”

Libbey referred back to the definition of addiction being about people doing things despite adverse consequences, “...a DUI fine means nothing to somebody whose drinking is out of control.”

Wheelock turned the focus to an audience question about the potential for increased drugged drivers if recreational marijuana becomes legal in California.

Hart referenced the difficulty of making an arrest for someone under the influence of marijuana because there is no quantitative measurement that can be taken in the field to determine the level of intoxication. On a recent trip to Colorado, where recreational marijuana has been legal for over two years, Sheriff Hart found that they have experienced increases in drivers under the influence of marijuana and teen use of marijuana. California may face a ballot measure on Marijuana legalization in November of 2016. (A ballot measure has been submitted and is currently circulating for signatures; get an update at [ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org) )

Wheelock addressed a question to the panel about the effects of marijuana on the teenage brain and what should be done by schools and parents to promote drug prevention. Manov mentioned that the strategic plan focuses on alcohol, prescription drugs, and marijuana. He pointed out that young people generally are aware of the dangers of marijuana, and that marijuana can interfere with achieving their life goals.

Hart brought up the 7% tax on Marijuana dispensaries in the county that was passed in November of 2014. The money from the tax is currently funding a number of things, including two detectives whose job is to curtail environmental degradation in rural areas due to marijuana cultivation, to address neighborhood safety concerns, and to ensure that dispensaries are operating under the rules of the current ordinance. He mentioned the recent identification of at least 30 substantial commercial marijuana grows in the foothills of SCC. Entrepreneurs from out of state are buying up property and clearcutting it to grow marijuana for non-medical use.

This ends part three of our report on last May’s forum. Look for continuing installments in future issues of the VOTER. You can also view the entire video of the forum online by clicking the link on the calendar page at [lwvsc.org/calendar.html](http://lwvsc.org/calendar.html).

—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.

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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.

## In Memoriam: Winnie Heron

The League recently heard about the passing of long-time member Winnie Heron. In 1996 Winnie Heron was the first recipient of an annual award to honor LWVSCC members whose contributions exceeded the norm and redefined volunteerism.

The idea for a Winnie Heron Award germinated as a result of Winnie's outstanding efforts in gathering signatures for the 1996 Campaign Finance Reform Initiative. The League board decided it merited a special mention. In deciding how to go about this, the board recognized that many local members have merited recognition, so they decided on an annual award named in Winnie's honor.

Winnie was also hostess for the unit that met for years in her Aptos home near Cabrillo College; she served a table full of delicious treats on a very regular basis. Winnie was very active in voter service and used to register an outstanding number of voters for the League. She faithfully and in good humor observed the board of supervisors meetings for over ten years. Winnie actively supported and participated in League functions and planning efforts, always responding when called upon, and offering ideas, information, inspiration, and education for other League members.

Winnie, an accomplished artist, participated in Open Studios and had many exhibitions of her work. She was a founding member of the art museum in Santa Cruz and served on many boards in the county. In 1996 she was recognized for twenty years of service as a volunteer driver for transporting senior and disabled citizens. In 1998 she and her husband David were honored by the Santa Cruz County board of supervisors for their civic service, their support of the local arts, their support for the county library system, and their efforts to preserve the history of Santa Cruz County.

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor, with thanks to Barbara Lewis and Morgan Rankin for their assistance*

## Suffrage Road Trip Revisited

A hundred years ago women fighting for the right to vote raised awareness of their mission by riding cross country in an open automobile from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. To learn more about this trip and its envoys, Ann B. Glass of Main will retrace their journey this September, October, and November. Learn more about this exceptional endeavor at [www.suffrageroadtrip.com](http://www.suffrageroadtrip.com).