



# VOTER

The VOICE of League for Members; the FACE of League for our Communities.

## NOVEMBER 2015 AT A GLANCE

<b>Fri, Nov 13</b> 10 am	LWVNCS D Bd Mtg. LWD Offices, Carlsbad
<b>Sat, Nov 14</b> 9:30 am – 12 pm	Const. Amend. Study Consensus Meeting Dove Library, Carlsbad
<b>Mon, Nov 16</b> 1 pm – 3 pm	Book Group Mtg Home of Anne Patton

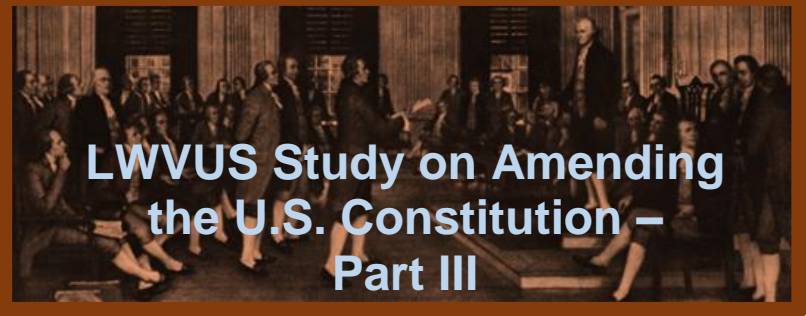
## DECEMBER 2015 AT A GLANCE

<b>Wed, Dec 2</b> 11:30 am – 2:30 pm	<b>San Dieguito Observer Potluck Luncheon</b> Home of Barbara Mendell
<b>Wed, Dec 9</b> 10 am – 1 pm	<b>Carlsbad/Quad Cities Observer Potluck Luncheon</b> Dove Library Carlsbad

Visit us on the web: [www.lwvnscsd.org](http://www.lwvnscsd.org)

Or contact us by phone or mail:

760-736-1608  
PO Box 131272, Carlsbad, CA 92013-1272  
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By Martha Cox, Study Group Member

This is the third and final installment of preparatory information regarding the LWVUS study of the process of amending the U.S. Constitution. You will be better prepared for the November consensus meeting if you take the opportunity to read the articles on the study and review the informational links prior to attending. The constitutional study documents, including Consensus Questions, can be found under the Constitutional Amendment Study tab on the North County League's member website: <http://members.lwvnscsd.org/>.

The first *VOTER* article presented considerations for evaluating a proposed constitutional amendment, while the second article presented process questions about holding a Constitutional Convention. These foundational considerations provide perspective to now address the challenging questions presented in Part III – the crux of the study - of how to balance process and positions when determining League's support. For instance, would we support an amendment, even if flawed, that addressed a policy outcome important to us? Or would we decline to support such an amendment because it did not meet our evaluation or process guidelines?

*Part III's Balancing Questions* direct our thinking to address how much, if at all, we are willing to relax our well-formed, agreed-to standards to promote issues of importance to us. We are asked to consider these questions:

**Should the League consider supporting a constitutional amendment that will advance a League position even if:**

1. There are significant problems with the actual amendment as proposed?
2. It is being put forward by a procedural process the League would otherwise oppose?

We invite you to make your voice heard on this important study by attending your League's consensus meeting scheduled on

**Saturday, November 14, 2015. 9:30 am – 12:00 pm**  
Dove Library, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad 92011

## LWVNCSD Officers/Directors 2015-16

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\*Steering Committee Member



*The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

## Thoughts from the Steering Committee Speaking Out, Advocating, and Educating on Local Issues

We have a terrific Board of Directors this year with members who are bright, energetic, and committed to serving the North County LWV. There is one thing we need from our members—we need to know what is important to you. When an issue arises in your community that you feel needs to be addressed or monitored, we count on our members to let us know.

Communication of your concerns is especially important with the increasing urgency of regional issues of transportation, land use, limited water supply, and climate change. Our cities, towns, and County government are grappling with how to provide enough housing for our growing, vibrant population, while dealing with the ever increasing gridlock on our roads and the resulting air pollution. As our population and economy grow, we are searching for ways to encourage use of public transportation, to preserve our rural areas, agriculture, and wildlife habitat, and to protect the natural resources that make our county unique.

These issues are important to the citizens of North County and to our League. We maintain positions on these issues that allow us to speak out, to educate, and to advocate. Our league just participated in an update to the county agricultural position. Those of us who attended the meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Dove Library learned that San Diego County has more small farms than any other California county and nationally is the twelfth largest farm economy among more than 3,000 counties. We also learned that our farmers are adapting to climate change and the reduced availability of water by changing the crops they are growing! With an updated position on agriculture, our league is better able to advocate for sensible and sustainable agricultural policies.

We know that our members will be following issues such as the Lilac Hills Ranch development proposal, the Gregory Canyon landfill proposal, and transportation plans and projects that will affect all of us living and working in North County. As you follow these issues in your communities, talk to your LWVNCSD Board of Directors and let us know your concerns. We need to know what matters most to you. Keep us informed and responsive to your concerns.

*Arlene, Barbara, Cathy,  
and Connie*

## November / December Meetings

### Constitutional Amendment Study

All Members Welcome

Dove Library, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad

Saturday, November 14

9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Be a part of the discussion on this important issue. See the article on page 1. For background information see: <http://members.lwvncsd.org/>

Please go to

[http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/ca\\_questions\\_board\\_approved\\_final.pdf](http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/ca_questions_board_approved_final.pdf),

for the consensus questions, and bring them with you to the meeting.

### Book Group Meeting

All Members Welcome

Monday, November 16

1:00 – 3:00 pm

The League Book Group will meet on November 16 at 1 PM at the home of Anne Patton. The book is *The Nazis Next Door: How America Became a Safe Haven for Hitler's Men* by [Eric Lichtblau](#)

The group will meet on December 21 at noon at the home of Heather Callaghan for our holiday party. A-M bring a salad or main dish, others bring a dessert. Bring a volume or two for our book exchange.

Call Margie Monroy at [760-729 7242](tel:760-729-7242) or <mailto:monroymario@att.net> for more information.

### San Dieguito Unit Observer Luncheon All Members Welcome

Home of Barbara Mendell

Wednesday, December 2

11:30 am – 2:30 pm

The San Dieguito Unit will not have unit meetings in November or December, members are asked to attend the Constitutional Amendment Study on November 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Observer Luncheon on December 2.

The San Dieguito Unit Observer Luncheon will be held on **Wednesday, December 2, from 11:30-2:30 pm at the home of Barbara Mendell**. Please RSVP to Barbara. This is a potluck luncheon and when you RSVP, Barbara will recommend the type of dish you should bring. Barbara can also supply directions to her home. She will need your RSVP in order to give the entrance gate your name for admittance.

### New Member Coffee



Members (from left) Martha Cox, Joanne Fink, Cecilia Jolly and Nancy Telford enjoy the New Member Coffee

### Carlsbad Unit Observer Luncheon

All Members Welcome

Dove Library, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad

Wednesday, December 9

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

By Karen Pendergast

The Carlsbad Unit will not hold a November or December Unit meeting. Instead, we ask our members to plan on attending the Constitutional Amendment Study Consensus meeting on Saturday, November 14, 9:30 am-12 pm, at the Dove Library meeting room, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad. The topic is fascinating, the committee has worked hard on this presentation, and we need your input for consensus. See you there!

All LWV members are invited to attend the Carlsbad /Quad City Unit Potluck Observers Luncheon on **Wednesday, December 9, from 10:00 - 1:00 at the Dove Library** meeting room, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad.

Members, whose last names begin with A thru M, please bring a salad, last names from N thru Z, please bring a dessert. Sandwiches will be provided by the unit. Bring your own beverage.

Please RSVP to Karen Pendergast at [760-729-4534](tel:760-729-4534) or [Kapapen@aol.com](mailto:Kapapen@aol.com).

### Health Interest Committee

By Jane Dunmeyer

The Health Interest Group is in a state of transition. The meeting times will be changing and possibly the focus, once we meet to decide. The meeting time will soon be communicated to members. If others are interested, call Jane Dunmeyer at 760-473-7931

By Connie Ulrich

## December Observer Luncheons

December is a busy month and one of the traditions we look forward to is attending the Observer Luncheons.

Who are the observers? They are League members who attend the public meetings of elected or appointed agencies and commissions to learn what their government is doing, and whether those meetings are conducted in an open and transparent manner. The League of Women Voters has been a champion of governmental transparency, or “Sunshine “ since our founding in 1920. It is one of our core principles and a vital part of our mission. Experience has shown the importance of the League’s presence to observe and take action when necessary.

Twice a year, the League observers share their reports with their fellow members at the Observer Luncheons. Among our most popular League meetings, the luncheons are always informative, enjoyable and a great way to connect with other League members.

Mark your calendars and come meet the observers and learn what’s happening in your community. All League members are cordially invited to attend either or both Observer Luncheons.

**Welcome New  
Members!**

**Joanne Fink  
Alec Jolly  
Polly Williams**

## From Civil Engagement to Deliberation

by Mary Thompson & Martha Cox

**Too Much Civility: A Chilling Effect?** – A recent San Diego Union Tribune [article](#) reported that school policies are being scrutinized by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) which sees some efforts at creating civil campuses as violating the First Amendment.

FIRE, which has settled lawsuits against two California schools, has similar concerns with Cal State San Marcos, SDSU, and UCSD, among others.

At issue is the practice of establishing free-speech zones intended to ensure free speech activity doesn’t interfere with instruction, research, or general operations of a campus. According to FIRE, free speech should not be limited to one place, and civility should be aspirational in a statement of the university’s values, not listed in student conduct requirements.

“Civility rules can have a chilling effect on free speech,” according to communications scholar, Karen Tracy, in her 2010 book, [Challenges of Ordinary Democracy: A Case Study in Deliberation and Dissent](#).

[Reviewed by Alice Diebel](#) of the Kettering Foundation in the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, Diebel summarizes Tracy’s argument that “reasonable hostility” is the ideal necessary in political communication practices of citizens and local governments, arguing that it is the emotion and controversy that encourage interest in the process, thinking about the issues, engagement in democracy, and possibly even increased voting.

Tracy encourages people to recognize the value of argument and conflict as a means of dealing with tensions inherent in democracy, but Diebel has the last word by speculating about what better outcome might result if elected officials took seriously what citizens had to say and encouraged deliberation at meetings.

### **Civility Matters**

*Struggling to bring tensions into clearer view  
is a key purpose for deliberation.*

*Alice Diebel, Program Officer, Kettering  
Foundation*

## Annual Fiscal Report 2014-2015

By Arlene Meadows, Treasurer

As required by the LWVNCSD Bylaws, here is the Fiscal Report for our last Financial Year.

### Beginning Balance 7/1/2014

Checking	13,685.67
Savings	27,698.07
PayPal	9.49
Postal Deposit	167.90
Total Assets	41,561.13

### Ending Balance 6/30/2015

Checking	13,374.41
Savings	27,711.95
PayPal	9.49
Postal Deposit	
LPF Inventory	560.13
Total Assets	41,655.98

The Postal Deposit was refunded as we are no longer doing Bulk Mailings through the USPS. The LPF Inventory is the value of the license plate frames purchased for our fundraiser and not sold to date.

Total Income	21,208.55
Total Expenses	21,178.07
Net Income/(Loss)	30.48

The LWVNCSD was approved as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in September 2014. The LWVNCSD is compliant with the Secretary of State. Due to clarifications we had to request, the annual filings with the IRS, CA FTB and CA Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts will be filed by 15 November 2015.

Please contact Treasurer, Arlene Meadows, 760-751-2049, [lwvncsd@gmail.com](mailto:lwvncsd@gmail.com) for additional information.

## Member Spotlight Nita Rodriguez

By Kathy Anderson



Nita Rodriguez has a special ability to relate to her fellow human beings with empathy and energy. Nita, now retired, was an elementary school teacher for 33 years, mostly in the Pico Rivera School District. She came to San Diego from Ohio right after college and was immediately hired to teach here.

Nita met her husband, a graphic artist, moving to the LA

region in 1969. In addition to having two sons, and full time day jobs, she and her husband bought fixer-upper houses, moved the family in while doing needed repairs, and then sold the house to move to the next opportunity. Her husband died when the boys were in their teens and Nita became a single mother. Her older son, a software developer, his wife and Nita's cherished granddaughter now live in San Diego, while her younger son is a professor in San Francisco.

After taking early retirement, Nita became deeply involved with the Juvenile Court System, serving as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for several foster children who had no functional parent or relative to represent them in life decisions. The CASA is often the only stable person in the child's life. Nita represented and advocated for the children with the school system, courts, health care, and more and introduced them to the world of possibilities with weekly excursions outside their somewhat chaotic living arrangements.

Upon moving to Carlsbad five years ago, Nita became involved with Brother Beno's Auxiliary, which helps support two homes for women with substance abuse issues, conducts gift drives at Christmas for kids and teenagers at Brother Beno's, and provides much charitable support. She is now a member of their Board.

Nita has always respected the LWV for the non-partisan information provided through Candidate Forums and education about ballot propositions, so she joined the Carlsbad Unit and became an Observer for the Carlsbad City Council. She finds being a League member stimulating. She enjoys being part of a group who research and discuss issues to educate themselves and others.

## Money In Politics: Evidence of Spending's Impacts on Electoral and Legislative Outcomes.

Summarized by Catherine Thieman

When preparing to rule in the case of *McConnell v. FEC* (2003), the Supreme Court used over 100,000 pages of evidence in its deliberations. The majority found that this evidence supported most of the reforms passed in the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act. Unfortunately, court opinions in the more recent *Citizens United* (2010) and *McCutcheon* (2014) cases have not relied as much on empirical evidence. This issue paper looks at three types of evidence the Court could have considered.

### 1. Public Opinion Surveys

Public opinion is an important source of information. Do voters trust the political system to yield legitimate and fair policies that represent the will of the citizenry?

(See **Money in Politics, Page 6**)

### **(Money in Politics Continued)**

According to polls, public opinion runs strongly against the 2010 Citizens United decision, which gave corporations and other organizations more power to make unlimited campaign contributions. A PublicCitizen survey, July 2014, found 61% of likely voters opposed this decision. In May 2015, a New York Times / CBS News poll found that 84% of respondents believe that money has too much influence in politics. This view was held across the political spectrum, including 80% of registered Republicans, 90% of registered Democrats, and 84% of independents.

#### **2. Political Participant Experience**

The 2003 McConnell decision used a substantial amount of testimony from Congressional hearings in the 1990s. The Court found that donors frequently gave to political parties in order to seek influence. Robert Rozen, a lobbyist at Washington Council Ernst & Young, testified that donors “give soft money because they believe that’s what helps establish better contacts with members of Congress and gets doors opened when they want to meet with Members. There is no question that money creates the relationships... Large political contributions are worthwhile because of the potential benefit to the company’s bottom line.”

After the 2012 election cycle, Tokaji and Strause studied the views of recent participants in Congressional electoral and legislative arenas. They interviewed incumbents and former members of Congress, winning and losing candidates, campaign and legislative staff members, and representatives of various interest groups. Respondents agreed recent growth in independent campaign spending had a significant impact on campaign activities and a smaller impact on legislative process.

Tokaji and Strause made three findings in regard to campaign outcomes. First, donors’ increasing gifts to Super PACS rather than to candidates or parties increased the risk that that a campaign would be targeted by outside groups, therefore putting more pressure on fundraising by the candidate. Second, as independent ads began to dominate the media, the campaign staff began to lose control of the message. Finally, although FEC regulations prohibit explicit coordination between campaigns and independent groups, respondents believed that candidates “engage in cooperation through a tapestry of signals that allow them to pursue their electoral goals in concert.”

Tokaji and Strause found both primary and secondary impacts to legislative activity. A primary impact is the implied threats to incumbents that outside groups will target them in the next election if they do not support a donor’s position. In addition, campaign contributions can determine how much attention an issue gets in Congress. Secondary impacts include less time available

for legislative work as more time is spent in fundraising, increased polarization as more funding comes from extreme right- and left-wing sources, and lower levels of public trust.

#### **3. Academic Research**

Empirical research has not found evidence of significant impacts of Money in Politics. Many factors can influence who wins a campaign. Beyond the basic finding that challenger dollars typically earn more votes than incumbent dollars, it is difficult to isolate the impact of campaign financing. This finding says nothing about the source of funds, nor does it mean that challengers necessarily win, only that large expenditures can increase their odds of winning. The recent increase in heavily financed challenge campaigns may have weakened the benefit of incumbency.

Research found little evidence that links contributions to specific votes on partisan issues before the year 2000. Political corruption is not uncommon at state and local levels; it typically occurs as bribery or extortion to receive a government contract or favorable treatment. The Supreme Court and most scholars agree that quid pro quo corruption (that is, an agreement to give a campaign contribution in exchange for a specific vote or other favorable action) is rare, or at least rarely discovered, at the national level. Beyond quid pro quo bribery, research has addressed whether distortion, undue influence, or misalignment might be related to large campaign contributions. Evidence supports the view that legislators respond to the interests of the upper-income constituents, but not to those of middle- and lower-income constituents. In addition, donors with extreme right- or left-wing groups seem to have more influence than their numbers, since the general electorate is generally more centrist than the members of Congress. Considering the fact that the top 0.01% of citizens contribute more than 40% of campaign contributions, it makes sense that legislators will tune in to wealthy donors’ interests.

Can average citizens influence public policy? Gilens and Page presented evidence about how much influence average citizens, economic elites, and interest groups have on public policy across a large number of issues during the 1980s and 90s. They reviewed public opinion surveys on a large number of issues between 1981-2002, and then tracked what happened on these issues over the four years following the survey. They found that average citizens and broad-based interest groups (such as the AARP, Christian Coalition, and Veterans of Foreign Wars) have little independent influence on policy. In contrast, economic elites and interest groups representing business and the professions have substantial influence.

**Time to Renew!**  
Please renew your  
membership as soon as  
possible.  
Your support is vital!

## Stay Connected and Share

[www.lwvncsd.org](http://www.lwvncsd.org).

Be Sure to "Like" us on Facebook. The more activity, the more our message gets disseminated to prospective members and people interested in our mission

Regards,  
Suzanne

**LWV North County San Diego  
Membership Application**  
~ Share this with a friend! ~

Membership is open to all US citizens of voting age.  
Others are welcome as Associate Members.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to LWVNCSD  
and mail to:

**LWVNCSD • Attn: Membership**  
**PO Box 131272**  
**Carlsbad, CA 92013-1272**

or join online at:

[http://www.lwvncsd.org/join\\_form.html](http://www.lwvncsd.org/join_form.html)

**Dues:**

- \$60/year (Oct. 1 - Sept. 30)
- \$30/year for 2nd member, same address
- \$30/year, new members joining after Feb. 1st
- \$30/year Students enrolled in accredited Institution.

**Additional levels of giving (thank you!):**

- \$100/year • Suffragist
- \$200/year • Activist
- \$300/year • Advocate
- \$500/year • Founders Circle

**I am interested in the following:**

- Provide organizational support
- Participate in Voter Service
- Participate in Interest groups:
- Book Group
- Civil Discourse
- Health
- 

**The League of Women Voters North County San Diego is a nonprofit and tax exempt organization as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Dues and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable under the law."**



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

*North County San Diego  
Post Office Box 131272  
Carlsbad, CA 92013-1272*

FIRST CLASS



**November, 2015**

Volume V, No. 8

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The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.

Have you checked North County League's website this week?

Stay current, stay active, stay informed!

[www.lwvncsd.org](http://www.lwvncsd.org)

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