



IMPORTANT DATES
(regular meetings page 8)

Bay Area League Day
“Regional Governance”
Saturday, February 3
9:30 am – 3 pm
Laney College, Oakland

LWVDV Housing for
All Task Force
Monday, February 5
7:30 – 9 pm
Walnut Creek
(see page 4)

East County Voter
Registration Training
Thursday, February 8
7 pm
Brentwood
(see page 3)

LWV 98th Birthday
February 14

Women’s History
Month - Brown Bag
Thursday, March 1
12:30 – 1:30 pm
DVC Student Union

Contra Costa Housing
Forum
Monday, March 26

Monthly Public Meeting

A Showing of the Documentary **Equal Means Equal**



A look at the status of women in the US

Facilitator: Phyllis Gordon,
Contra Costa Commission for Women

Saturday February 17

3:00 to 4:30 pm

*(the film is 1 hr 33 minutes long --
please be prompt and allow extra time if you will
join the discussion afterwards)*

Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center
500 St. Mary’s Road, Lafayette

Free! Everyone welcome!
Light refreshments

info@lwvdv.org (925) 283-2235

LEAGUE LEADER'S LETTER

By Martha Goralka, LWVDV Co-President
info@lwvdv.org

I was secretly wondering, as we approach our 100th birthday, if perhaps the League, with our nonpartisan policies and process-oriented positions, is outdated and no longer as relevant as our foremothers were.



Then your board stepped boldly up and paid for a booth and materials to reach out to new people at the Walnut Creek Women's March on January 20th. People wanting to register to vote or become new members or sign up for our e-mailed issues lists flooded to our table. Housing Chair Ashley Coates organized our efforts with a planning meeting; so we had brochures, signup sheets and signs to carry on nonpartisan issues -- Immigration, Affordable Housing and Corporate "Make It Fair". Booth staffers included Co-President Suzan Requa and her husband Dave, Treasurer Barbara Hill, past President Ann Flynn who arranged for the loan of the tent and table we used, Action Chair Lee Lawrence, Membership Chair Audrey Albrecht, Office Manager Barbara Coenen and more! Part of our attraction was definitely our nonpartisan nature.

This was the best single voter registration effort I've seen in all my League years. And a great membership tool. And a great place to bask in compliments for our years of service to our communities with Pros & Cons and support of specific issues.

It was a great day and a great event – followed by a well-attended program planning meeting, ably led by long time Leaguer Leslie Stewart, who took us through the program options that will come before the National and Bay Area conventions in the spring.

Our board is so energized, we're looking at new ways to do new member orientation, which we're hoping to implement in March; we're thinking of a "job fair" theme at a local private restaurant room with appetizers and adult beverages.

On February 17th we're celebrating the League's 98th birthday -- and my 71st birthday -- with Phyllis Gordon of the Contra Costa Women's' Commission showing the movie "Equal Means Equal". I think this is a fitting theme for our celebration – one I've worked on for more than half of my life and all of my League life.

I am energized to be part of this relevant group of amazing women and men who are building on the achievements of our mothers and grandmothers.

VOTER SERVICE

Registration Training/Moving to District Elections

Martha Goralka, Voter Service Chair

There will be Voter Registration training on Thursday, February 8th at 7 pm in the "Friends" room of Straw Hat Pizza, 6680 Lone Tree Way, Brentwood. There is no fee to attend; attendees are welcome to purchase refreshments.

LWVDV member Carol Weed is coming to East County to train anyone of any party or political leaning to register voters – but particularly League members.

This is the League of Women Voters' first registration training of 2018, in anticipation of the election on March 6th for the East County Fire Protection District's Measure A to change from nine to five directors. Diablo Community District's Measure B to add a parcel tax will also be voted on March 6th. Registration deadline is February 19th.

The League is also attending the County Elections Office panel discussions. The most recent was January 29th, with an evening meeting plus an additional morning meeting, to discuss the logistics if three City Councils move from at-large to district elections.



Making Democracy Work: A Recent Symposium

Marian Shostrom, Contra Costa County Voter's Edge Coordinator

Five LWVDV members (Martha Goralka, Lee Lawrence, Carol Murota, Suzan Requa, and Marian Shostrom) attended *Voting in 2018 and Beyond: Ensuring Access and Accountability of the Ballot in America*, a symposium offered by the Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly on January 26th. California Secretary of State Alex Padilla gave the morning Keynote, and Ann Ravel, former Commissioner and Chair of the Federal Election Commission, was the lunch Keynote Speaker.

Secretary Padilla discussed the work his office has done to increase voter registration and voter access. The morning panel presented Voting Access issues, including language and accessibility, election challenge cases, and voting machine concerns. Ms. Ravel's keynote focused on campaign finance issues and money in the political process. The second panel was on Voting Districts and Gerrymandering, and the third panel was on Election Integrity.

The League of Women Voters received "shout outs" from several panelists. The speakers were excellent, and audience members asked thoughtful questions. Look for more information about what we learned in a future issue of *The Voter*. In the meantime, here are links for more information:

Voter's Choice Act: <https://voterschoice.org/>

The California Voter Foundation: <http://calvoter.org/index.html>

Vote California Mobile Apps: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-info/mobile-apps/>

Ashley Coates, Barbara Coenen and Barbara Hill register voters at Walnut Creek Women's March

LWVDV PRIORITY: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

League Volunteers for Homeless

Audrey Albrecht, LWVDV Housing for All Task Force member

The Housing for All Task Force discussed ways Leaguers might do more hands-on work to further the cause of affordable housing and to help those without homes. Several of us went to the Walnut Creek City Council meeting which discussed the temporary housing for Trinity Center and Ashley Coates spoke for the League in support of the center and its plans.



Fred Sullivan and I followed up with a meeting with Carol Lombard, Trinity Operations Manager and Director ([925.457.3935](tel:925.457.3935).) She said they would love **volunteers to help serve food and work in the office**. However, with the move the Center would find new volunteers difficult to incorporate until March, when they would love volunteers in pairs, groups or singles.

Pam McGrath, coordinator of the Evening Program, would love volunteers right now for the **overnight shelters to help serve dinner and work with check-ins**, one or two or more volunteers at a time. To sign up, use their online tool <http://signup.com/go/JLFNNZS>. Wear your League pin when you go, exposure can't hurt. Call me if you have questions (leave a message at the LWVDV office, 925-283-2235).

Yearly Count -- I volunteered to help with the "Point In Time" yearly count of the homeless nationwide, organized by the Health, Housing and Homeless Services Division, Contra Costa Health Services. The agency did several trainings to walk us through the questionnaire we used to interview each person. There were about fifty in my group so the total must have been well over one hundred. Only staff members were assigned to do the outside work in the camps, etc. while volunteers were assigned to various sites in the county where homeless gather, especially centers and food kitchens. I was assigned to Loaves and Fishes in Martinez.

People began to gather about 10:30 and the center opened about 11:00. One other volunteer had been assigned there and once we were allowed inside, we began to approach the people who came. A very nice meal (looked good although I didn't have time to eat) was served and, in addition, dozens of loaves of bread (packaged), packaged pastries and other food, apples and oranges were available for anyone who wanted them. Many had come with sacks for that purpose. A table with clothes was offered to anyone who wanted them. The food was served by a team from the Church of the Servant high school.

Those I talked with were pleasant but not overly friendly, skeptical at first, until they discovered the questions were not intrusive and personal. Most were from Martinez, and many of those had lived there all their lives. Most were negative about shelters, citing problems they had had. Only one said she would stay in one if offered. More than half had incomes but not enough to afford housing. We had been given free bus passes to give in appreciation and these were happily accepted. No one objected to telling age although I would have guessed higher numbers for every one. A few had been homeless for many years. It is not an easy life. At that center, they have access to some of the comforts they need. **Helping there would not be a difficult volunteer duty.**

If you want to get involved in advocating for homes for people of all income levels in your own community and/or the county, join our Task Force! We meet monthly and also communicate by email. Next meeting will be Monday, February 5, in Walnut Creek from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Contact Ashley for location and possible carpooling, info@lwvdv.org.

“KNOW YOUR BOARD”: Co-President Martha Goralka

We introduce a new feature here, to give a more comprehensive picture of the workings of your local League. Frequently, when we ask members what they might like to do, they respond that they are fuzzy about the possibilities. Usually, serving on the board alone is a real education. Since not everyone is on the board, we thought you'd like to know about the different positions and the people who are presently doing them. Maybe you will see a role you would fancy!

Martha Goralka is one of our co-presidents, a new leadership form for us.

“I dropped out of the League for a while, so although I think of myself as an almost 50-year member – I’m really not. I joined the League when I was 22 years old, in Mounds View, Minnesota – where I was the youngest voter service chair in the state at that time. We were a provisional League – doing the study and research of our community to be a full-fledged League.



“We then moved to Minnetonka, Minnesota and I was Voter Service Chair there.

Our tiny Leagues were concerned with Women’s Rights, which was just becoming an issue, and we had child care for every meeting – with one member volunteering to watch the kids while the rest of us met. My son, John, called us the “League of Women Boaters”. My League experience helped me get my first real job with the Minneapolis Star & Tribune’s news research department

“Then on to Maine where I was president of the Brunswick League – because no one else would do it. We moved back to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, my hometown – where I became the Chair of the Linn County Equal Rights Coalition.

“Then on to Walnut Creek, where I joined the Diablo Valley League. I’ve worked for the Contra Costa Times, the Antioch Ledger/Dispatch, and the Antioch Chamber of Commerce. I work very part-time now for the Delta Learning Center, a nonprofit tutoring center in Antioch.

“My husband Joe is also a member of the League. His favorite thing is registering voters – he really doesn’t do anything else with League, but often attends LWV Oakland’s fundraiser lunch. We live in an historic home in Antioch, which we’re upgrading this year -- or at least trying to!

“We are both very involved in Rotary, and served on the AUSD bond oversight committee. I also am on several local boards such as the Antioch Schools Education Foundation.”

“KNOW YOUR LEAGUE”: Membership Committee

Members hear now and then about various committees which are described somewhat in our online “Member Manual,” but it may be helpful to describe one or two each month to raise awareness of where you might like to volunteer. In many Leagues, in the old days, these might be referred to as “portfolios” – assignments to individual Board Members. Committee chairs for LWVDV need not be on the Board but many of them are.

The Membership Committee (present chair: Audrey Albrecht) seems fairly self-explanatory. Our job is to try to recruit members and to keep track of them once they have joined. We try to follow up on anyone who has expressed interest, by signing up at one of our meetings or events, and to devise functions that might attract the public either to educate themselves or to interest others in working with us.

Once a person joins, we must enter them on the national data-base and also on our local rosters. LWVUS database is the record of the official number of members, which is computed

[Membership, from page 4]

on January 31, every year. The number of members is important because it determines how many voting delegates we are allotted for conventions of the Bay Area, California, and U.S. Leagues. Based on this number, we pay a Per Member Payment to each level; most of your dues are used to support these other levels.

Many Leagues simply do a yearly renewal for everyone, usually during Annual Meeting month. However, we ask for renewal during the month a person joined. Each month, those who need to renew, as shown on our local roster, are listed in the *Voter*, and we also send them notices.

Upon joining, you should receive a call or an email from one of us appointed as your mentor, asking that you complete the "Interest Survey" and try to come to the next scheduled event so that we can meet you or greet you as a member and give you a pin. We would like all of our members to have a "League of Women Voters" pin to wear to events, public meetings, visits to our representatives or elsewhere.

If you have ideas about attracting new members and would like to help, we would be interested in hearing from you. If you have medium-level computer skills, we can use back-up people for the records that need to be kept. Those who do them presently may not wish to do so forever. (The computer work can be done at home, no "meetings.") Contact the chair if you would like to help in any way.



LWV California ACTION: Healthy California Update

Pat Snyder, LWV California Healthcare Consultant

The Healthy California Act (SB 562), which would create a single payer health care system for California, continues to be held in the Assembly Rules Committee. After its passage in the Senate on June 2, instead of allowing the legislature to hold hearings on the bill, Speaker Rendon appointed an ad hoc Select Committee on Health Care Delivery Systems and Universal Health Care to explore the most effective ways to achieve universal coverage for California.

Not until the fifth hearing, scheduled for February 7, have any witnesses been invited to provide testimony in regard to SB 562. A number of witnesses, however, have acknowledged that if the goal is cost containment and universal coverage, single payer is the system that can meet these goals. These witnesses include former Governor Peter Shumlin of Vermont, and Larry Levitt, Co-Executive Director of the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Although the bill remains inactive, the Healthy California campaign continues its work to promote the bill. Amendments have been submitted to address questions raised during Senate hearings, and research and policy work continues unabated. It now falls to the legislature to hold hearings and determine the best approach. This cannot happen, however, until the bill is released from the Rules Committee by Speaker Rendon.

While we wait, advocates have not flagged in their determination or in the level of advocacy. Multiple campaign events occur every week all across the state, and hundreds of supporters have packed the hearing rooms at all the Select Committee hearings.

A fiscal study, conducted by Robert Pollin and colleagues at UMass, Amherst, was published on May 31. It outlined the cost saving under single payer and proposed two different methods of public funding. On February 7, Robert Pollin, UMass Amherst, and Michael Lighty, California Nurses Association, will testify about the bill before the Select Committee. The testimony can be viewed on CalChannel.com. Information about the progress of the campaign and campaign events can be obtained at HealthyCaliforniaAct.org.

DONATE

To support our newsletter and other activities, please donate online by clicking on this button or visiting our website at www.lwvdv.org.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS & UPDATES

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 LWV of Diablo Valley
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 Current/past issues are posted on our [website](#).

If your name appears below, then it is time to renew your membership in February. Please use the form on the back page. If you have already renewed, thank you! *(We send three notices before deleting but remember: expiration date does not change even if payment is later.)*

Jan Berckefeldt	Annabelle Cloner	Wendy Helms	Frances McNamee	Nancy Thursby
Michael Brandy	Michelle Cook	Kay James	Jacquelin Pels	Jean Veltema
Susan Brandy	Sheryl Faria	Suzanne Kuba	Joyce Pollack	Steve Weir
Jane Britton	Sally Hayward	Julia Linde	Joanna Rains	Amy Worth
Constance Chiba	John Helms	David McNamee	Wyatt Recob	Renee Zeimer

Welcome, new members: Kathy and Jim Jakel, Deloris McCabe, Grant and Rachel Pickett, Mary Sarracino, John Sergeant and Barbara Werum, and Penny Walker!

Did you join LWV before 1968? If you have been a member ever since then, you are a Life Member and do not pay dues. Contact Membership Chair Audrey Albrecht to upgrade your status!




We're on Facebook! Visit us and LIKE our Facebook page. <http://tinyurl.com/of4o2pj>
And Twitter! Follow us on Twitter -- @LWVDiabloValley

Please help us grow our social media network!

Volunteer to help with Twitter campaigns!



More LWV California ACTION:
Strengthening our Schools and Public Services: the Ballot Initiative to Close the Corporate Tax Loophole in California



League of Women Voters of California is a member of the coalition starting to gather signatures to put this initiative on the ballot.

If you would like to participate in a group effort locally, or get your own signature-gathering petition to circulate among friends, neighbors, coworkers, your faith community, etc, call LWVDV at 925-283-2235 or email info@lwvdv.org!



LWVDV VOTER
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League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley
 500 St. Mary's Road, #14
 Lafayette, CA 94549

LWVDV Board Members:

- Suzan Requa, *Co-President*
- Martha Goralka, *Co-President & Voter Service Chair*
- Carol Murota, *Vice President*
- [vacant], *Secretary*
- Barbara Hill, *Treasurer*
- Lee Lawrence, *Action/Advocacy*
- Leslie Stewart, *Communications*
- Barbara Coenen, *Office Mgr*
- Carole Woods, *Program*
- Audrey Albrecht, *Membership*
- Marian Shostrom, *Voter's Edge*
- Sue Brandy, *At-Large Director*
- Ann Flynn, *At-Large Director*

Membership: Join Us or Renew!

Membership is not based on ability to pay. To pay alternate dues or to request a scholarship, please contact Barbara Hill at the League office: (925) 283-2235.

- \$ _____ \$65 Individual Membership. Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
- \$ _____ \$95 Family Membership (2). Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
- \$ _____ \$35 Associate Membership. Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
(For a student member)
- \$ _____ GIFT MEMBERSHIP (circle appropriate category above)
Gift Membership from: _____
(Please write recipient's information below.)
- \$ _____ \$10 included to receive printed copies of the *Voter* by US Mail
- \$ _____ Additional Donation to LWVDV
- \$ _____ **TOTAL** of ALL above enclosed to LWVDV.

(LWVDV is a 501(c)3 organization. Dues and donations to LWVDV are tax-deductible. Tax ID number supplied on request.)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please print, complete, and mail this form along with your check to:
 LWVDV, 500 St. Mary's Road #14, Lafayette, CA 94549

**CALENDAR
MONTHLY MEETINGS**

- Feb 1** **Action Committee**
10-noon [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb 8** **Board Meeting**
10:15 am -- [LWVDV Office](#)
12:15 pm
- Feb 17** **Monthly Meeting**
(see page 1)
- Mar 1** **Action Committee**
10-noon [LWVDV Office](#)
- Mar 8** **Board Meeting**
10:15 am [LWVDV Office](#)
12:15 pm