



June 2025

## Presidents' Message

Dear LWVBC Members,

Those of you who attended the Annual Meeting on May 22 (see article inside) may remember that we invited written comments about why it's important to defend democracy. Here's what folks had to say.

Several people talked about democracy as an historic trust that has endured for generations. Citing the Greeks and a few of the U.S. founders (e.g., George and Thomas and James and Abigail); one member shared disbelief that "we are still fighting in our 70s for the things we fought for in the 70s—I don't want it to die on my watch."

Others mentioned present-day challenges and opportunities. Challenges include subversion of the Constitution and rule of law, the outsize power of corporations and their wealthy owners. On the other hand, there are opportunities for freedom for all, including people who are most vulnerable and the promise of peace and partnerships around the world.

Several people said we must preserve a democratic government for the future of our kids and future generations. "Once it's gone, it's gone," one person wrote, the "it" being: choice, speech, representation, and freedom for all.

## Thoughts on Collaboration and Nonpartisanship

One participant raised an important question:

I have a question about LWVBC's partnership with Indivisible. This organization is very Partisan! If you go to their website it is very oriented to the Democratic Party. How is the League's alignment with Indivisible justified? Maybe this can be addressed in a newsletter. One of the reasons I support LWVBC is because of its nonpartisanship.

To be clear, there is no formal partnership that we

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know of between the League and Indivisible, certainly not involving our local League. We take guidance from LWVUS and LWV California, which do sometimes encourage members to participate in demonstrations organized by Indivisible or other groups. It is true that Indivisible sometimes acts to support or oppose candidates or parties. So, how do we balance that with the League's nonpartisan policy?

This is an ongoing discussion among League Presidents on the LWVC President's dialogue group. One League President shared these plans for their League on the LWVC presidents' dialog group regarding the No Kings Day demonstration on June 14:

[Our League] will be out on June 14th with our League buttons and our big banner. It is important to our members to be out on the street in support of our democracy. The title "No Kings" seems too focused on one individual and our members want to emphasize our nonpartisan work and the League's mission of defending and protecting our democracy. So, [our League] will have signs stating our march is a "Rally for Democracy." In addition, we will be handing out small American flags and pocket-size U.S. Constitution booklets. As defenders of democracy, it is important for the League to be visible but true to our standards. I hope this gives you some ideas.

This is an ongoing discussion. Our board will be considering how to go forward in these difficult times with guidance from the LWVUS and LWVC. Meanwhile, League members are of course free to participate as individuals in any demonstration they choose.

### Final Words

As we come to the end of our current term, it has been our privilege and pleasure to serve as your co-presidents during the past term. Thank you all for all you do to empower voters and defend democracy.

—*Janet Rechtman & Satsie Veith, Co-Presidents*

*A last word from Satsie:* As I end my four years as President & Co-President of LWVBC, I admit to breathing a sigh of relief. And yet it has been one of the high points of my life to help lead (always with so much help from others) this organization—and I've learned *so much*. Now I look forward to helping out as others take over and we face this most challenging moment in our history. Thanks, everyone, for your support for me personally and for the League.

## Annual Meeting Completes Its Business

On May 22, LWVBC members gathered at the Chico First Baptist Church to conduct our annual business meeting (and share a delicious potluck dinner).



*Membership meeting.*

The following nominees for League office, being unopposed, were approved without a vote:

- ✓ Janet Rechtman, Co-President, 2025–27
- ✓ Nicole Drummond, Co-President, 2025–27
- ✓ Lisa Cooperman, 1st Vice President, Voter Services, 2025–27
- ✓ Victoria Houchin, Secretary, 2025–27
- ✓ Corky LeTellier, Director, Natural Resources, 2025–27
- ✓ Debra Barger, Chair, Nominating Committee, 2025–26
- ✓ Linda MacMichael, Nominating Committee, 2025–26
- ✓ Jo Anne Kidd, Nominating Committee, 2025–26

They will take office beginning July 1, 2025.



*Current Board members: Satsie Veith, Co-President; Carol Holzgrafe, Secretary; Sandi Shand, Treasurer; Nicole Drummond, Social Policy; Corky LeTellier, Voter Registration; Marcia Moore, 2nd VP; Lisa Cooperman, Asst. Dir. Voter Services; Claire Greene, 1st VP Voter Services. Absent: Janet Rechtman, Co-President; Toni Reid, Natural Resources.*

LWVBC members also approved

- the Budget for 2025–2026, presented by Budget Committee Chair Linda MacMichael,
- Bylaws Amendments needed to comply with the new dues collection requirements, and
- Program for 2025–2026:
  - **Social Policy:** Housing/Homelessness, Healthcare, Criminal Justice
  - **Government:** Election Integrity, Combatting Misinformation, Encouraging Voter Participation, Nonpartisan Redistricting
  - **Natural Resources:** Acting on Issues of Climate Change and Growth in Butte County

All present expressed appreciation for the hard work of the current board, pictured on the previous page.



*Voter Services Changes Hands. Claire Greene (outgoing 1st VP Voter Services) & Lisa Cooperman (taking over that crucial job).*

Thank you to all members who attended, with special thanks to Joseph Crotts, Parliamentarian; Linda Lunsford and Sandi Shand, for refreshments to supplement the potluck dishes; and Roxanne Ferry, Elections Chair and Photographer.

—Satsie Veith

## Facing a Constitutional Crisis? Harvard's Free Course Can Help You Strengthen Your Civic Voice

Are we really in a constitutional crisis? According to the League of Women Voters, the answer may be yes. The League defines a constitutional crisis as occurring when the executive, legislative, or judicial branches

cannot—or will not—adequately protect the U.S. Constitution; when any of these branches attempts to dismantle democratic functions; or, when any level of federal government intentionally undermines democratic institutions in a way that places the Constitution at serious risk. In such moments, the League calls for full-scale action to preserve and protect civil society and our democratic foundations.

This warning feels especially urgent now. As our national CEO, Celina Stewart, shared in March, since the Trump administration took office in January 2025, we've witnessed escalating attacks on democratic systems and a troubling lack of congressional intervention. These developments highlight the critical need for civic education, public engagement, and renewed commitment to the defense of democracy.

In response to this need, we are spotlighting a powerful resource: *We the People: Civic Engagement in a Constitutional Democracy*, a **free, online course from Harvard University**. Offered through [edX.org](https://edX.org), this course is designed to deepen your understanding of American constitutional democracy and strengthen your civic voice. In moments of democratic uncertainty, education remains one of our most vital tools to empower citizens and build resilience.

The course invites participants to reflect on essential questions: What does the Declaration of Independence mean to you? Do its words still inspire—or do they raise concerns about how democracy is functioning in the present? What does it take to make democracy work, not just in principle, but in daily life?

Developed by the Democratic Knowledge Project at Harvard's Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, *We the People* offers foundational lessons in rights and responsibilities, constitutional principles, and the philosophical roots of democracy. It also encourages learners to identify and develop their personal civic identities and consider how their beliefs connect to the broader health of communities and the nation.

Participants will explore what happens when rights are not protected, examine how U.S. democracy was designed and how it has evolved, and learn how individuals can leverage civic tools to enact meaningful change. The course also encourages a shift from "I" to "We," helping learners connect their personal concerns to collective civic goals—and to the diversity of experiences that shape American democracy.

As members and supporters of the League of Women Voters, we know that informed, active citizens are the



foundation of any thriving democracy. This course offers an excellent opportunity not only to strengthen your own civic understanding but also to help others explore their path toward informed participation.

The course is **free and available online** through [edX.org](https://www.harvardonline.harvard.edu/course/we-people-civic-engagement-constitutional-democracy). Participants can move at their own pace, engage with a global community of learners, and opt to receive a certificate for a small fee. We encourage you to take the course—and to share it widely with anyone seeking to better understand, defend, and participate in our democracy.

<https://www.harvardonline.harvard.edu/course/we-people-civic-engagement-constitutional-democracy>

—Nicole Drummond, Outgoing Social Policy Director, Incoming Co-President

## Membership Notes What Can I Do?

When I was about elementary school age, I met Dr. Frank Laubach, who had become internationally known for the literacy program he started to help address the worldwide problem of illiteracy. Dr. Laubach believed that literacy was the “first step toward ending the suffering and exploitation of the world’s disadvantaged people.” His program was based on the idea “Each One Teach One.” That program eventually (it was estimated) brought literacy to more than 60 million people.

So how does this relate to our League? Well, we’ve had some good, well-attended, and participatory meetings lately, culminating with our recent annual meeting with the election of our new slate of officers and re-capping what we’ve done this past year as well as looking forward to the coming one. We’ve also heard that there are some programmatic positions that need new volunteers and, in some cases, leaders. We’ve also heard the “ask” for volunteers to commit to becoming more involved, knowing that our

experienced League members are very helpful with mentoring new members who are taking on new responsibilities. One of the best ways of filling the vacant slots is to bring new members into our League. So, here’s another “ask.” We need to GROW. There are many people in the community who have skills, interests, and talents that, if they know about our work, may be a match. And often those people simply don’t know enough about the League and the work we do. When I became Membership VP three years ago, I announced a motto I would work under: “Each One Reach One.” And this is something each and every one of us can do—talk League membership at any of the community meetings, social events, church gatherings, exercise groups, lifelong learning classes, family reunions you attend. Make it “top of mind.” We may not reach 60 million, but I bet we might be able to double our membership. And you’ll have done something that only you can do.

—Marcia Moore, 2nd VP, Membership

## In Case You Missed It: LWVC’s 2025 Advocacy Webinar Series

### California’s Immigration Protections: Resistance & Resilience

Recorded May 28, 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqExgMhRxCK>

### California’s Housing Crisis: Policy Barriers and Solutions

Recorded April 29, 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDI4M6dSX8MR>

### California’s Voter Participation Gap: Strategies to Promote Engagement & Representation

Recorded March 26, 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0zhd97seYU>

My name is Corky LeTellier, and I am the new chair of the Natural Resources committee for LWVBC. Topics of interest include the pros and cons of removal of dams and the effects on the fishing and farming practices, Air Quality changes by loosening regulations, Water in the north state, and education on Climate Change. Also, where do the National Parks go from here and the scale of weather patterns in the last 25 years.

We would like to put a committee together to explore any or some of these ideas and are looking for people interested in plunging into the challenges! Please contact me at [lwvbutte@gmail.com](mailto:lwvbutte@gmail.com) with additional areas of concern and let’s dig deep!

On another note, to those of you who have been trained on Voter Registration, it is certainly not going by the wayside! A committee is eagerly sought ahead of the June 2026 primaries....

—Corky LeTellier, Outgoing Voter Registration Director, Incoming Natural Resources Director.



League of Women Voters of Butte County

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<https://my.lwv.org/california/butte-county/donate>

★ **Renew Your Membership**

★ **Donate**

★ **Recruit New Members**

★ **Volunteer for Board Positions**

#### **2024–2025 LWVBC Board Members**

Satsie Veith	Co-President
Janet Rechtman	Co-President
Alexandra Shand	Treasurer
Carol Holzgrafe	Secretary
Claire Greene	1st VP Voter Service
Marcia Moore	2nd VP Membership
Corky LeTellier	Voter Registration
Lisa Cooperman	Assistant Voter Services
Toni Reid	Natural Resources
Nicole Drummond	Social Policy
<i>Vacant</i>	Government
<i>Vacant</i>	Communications
<i>Vacant</i>	Observer Corps
<i>Vacant</i>	Countywide Liaison

#### **League of Women Voters of Butte County's Mission and Board Meetings**

Founded in 1920, the League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the public to take an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any person, regardless of gender, age, or citizenship status, may become a League member; you must be at least 16 years old to vote on League issues.

LWVBC Board meetings are typically on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. on Zoom. All League members are welcome to attend. Please contact us at [lwvbutte@gmail.com](mailto:lwvbutte@gmail.com) if you would like to attend. We will send you the Zoom link.

To contact a Board member, please send an email to [lwvbutte@gmail.com](mailto:lwvbutte@gmail.com). Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate board member as needed.