



The Voter

December 2025

Co-Presidents Letters

Nicole Drummond

As we move through this League year, I've found myself reflecting on what it means to participate in an informed democracy—especially at a time when our nation is facing what League leadership has described as a “constitutional crisis.” It can be easy to feel that democracy is distant or abstract, shaped by people far more powerful than we are.

But democracy lives closest to the ground. It thrives where informed people show up, ask questions, speak truth, and imagine what's possible. As our national CEO Celina Stewart reminds us, “Movements don't start with policy papers. They begin when people are willing to name what's broken and imagine what's possible.” Our local League members embody this spirit every day, and I am proud to be part of such committed work.

I was humbled to step into this co-president role, especially now, when civic engagement matters so deeply. As we move forward, I hope our League continues to welcome both traditional and non-traditional members—across generations, racial and cultural backgrounds, and all who align with our values and well-informed positions. A thriving democracy needs everyone to be informed, engaged, and empowered, which is at the heart of our mission.

As we look ahead, may we stay curious, stay active, and remain rooted in the belief that informed people, working together, can strengthen democracy—right here in Butte County.

Janet Rechtman

In 1958, the renowned anthropologist Margaret Mead drew upon her lifelong studies of “primitive” tribes to affirm the transmogrifying power of people in community. I fear that in today's “advanced” tribes, we have lost track of the power of small groups to create needed change. Yet all that comes back to me when I reflect on this past couple of years as co-president of our League.

Inside This issue

Save the Date!—Winter Meeting

Membership Renewal Time

Reflection on Prop 50

Focus on Natural Resources

Groundwater Program

Immigration & Criminal Justice

Get Involved!

Our New Board Member

Your League in Action!

Board Members / Donate



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Our League membership is one of those small groups of thoughtful citizens committed to positive change, if not in the world, at least in our communities. Our board of directors and other leaders have organized programs and supported members as they worked tirelessly to defend democracy and empower voters. Our members have organized and shown up for educational programs, political demonstrations, farmers markets, and public meetings, bearing witness to the importance of civic engagement, regardless of party affiliation or philosophical bent. Through donations of money and time, people have expressed support for and commitment to the League's mission writ large and to our work locally.

In our world of doom-scrollable technology and commitment to the power of wealth, work by such a small, committed group may indeed seem primitive—a reversion to the earlier stages of community development. Probably that is true. And that is **ABSOLUTELY OKAY!**

What matters now is what has mattered since the beginning of our democracy: that good government requires the consent of the governed—the voices and votes of small groups of people working together in community.

Your League is one such small group of thoughtful, committed citizens. We are grateful for your support and participation.

PS/BTW: Anthropologist Margaret Mead was a member of the League of Women Voters in her hometown of Plainfield, New Jersey.

Janet Rechtman & Nicole Drummond, Co-Presidents

Save the Date!

**LWVBC Winter Meeting, January 24, 2026
10:30 a.m.–12 p.m., Chico First Baptist Church**

Join our uninvited guest, Mr. Jerry Mander, as we explore the implications and ramifications of Prop 50 for the communities we serve. Mr. Jerry Mander will be there to hear from Dr. Diana Dwyre, professor of political science at Chico State University, and community activist David Welch. Professor Dwyre will discuss how congressional districts are formed; Mr. Welch will discuss, from a non-partisan perspective, recent changes in Congressional District One. We expect Mr. Mander to listen politely, as he tries to figure out how in the world the League can empower voters and defend democracy in such a dynamic context.

Don't Wait! It's Time to Renew

The year is almost over and it's time to reflect on our membership since the first of the year. We have grown a bit since the end of 2024, generally getting new members who have come to some of our events and liked what they've heard. We've decided to return to our new-member face-to-face meetings with and plan to hold one every quarter. The most popular meeting type seems to be those held in members' homes, although we've had one in the League office and one which was planned to precede one of our events at St. John's Church. The latter did not have any new members in spite of special invitations and may not be the best way as it is also time limited. We also welcome recent, but not necessarily brand-new members at those meetings. A call to the League office at (530) 895-8683 will get you on the list for the next new-member meeting

As you are probably aware, we accomplished the transition from renewing membership locally to joining/renewing membership through LWVUS. That seems to be working well and 40 of us responded to the first reminder that came out on November 1. That leaves 87 of us who **STILL** need to renew by December 31. LWVUS sent out reminder emails in early December. We also will send one or two reminders locally for those who might have missed it. If you think you are not getting those emails or have any questions about how to renew, please emailing us at presidentlwvbutte@gmail.com. We will follow up with you to answer any questions and/or offer help. When you write, please state that you are contacting us about renewing your membership.

And do keep League membership top of mind when talking to friends and acquaintances. Refer them to our website, invite them to meetings, and let's make 2026 an even bigger year for growth.

—Marcia Moore

Renewal note! Only \$15 of standard dues goes to our local League. If you plan to give more than the regular dues, in the form of a donation, please consider doing it directly through our website. Go to <https://my.lwv.org/california/butte-county> and click the Donate button. Simple! and thank you.

Reflection on Prop 50

My cousin Mike called, fully quizzical, because he had received a flyer that claimed that the League of Women Voters supported “No on Prop 50.” “I thought the League was totally nonpartisan and here they are taking a stand on a highly partisan issue. Wassup?”

With the passage of Prop 50, Californians voted to replace maps drawn by the Citizens Redistricting Commission with new maps drawn by the California State Legislature. The new maps will be used in every congressional election through 2030, including those in 2026, 2028, and 2030. After the 2030 census, the Commission would return to drawing district lines using the rules set out by law.

Turns out, cousin Mike had received a flyer from a coalition called Protect Voters First, which quoted League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) President Gloria Chun Hoo, expressing opposition to Prop 50. The mailer wrongly implied that the LWVC was part of their organization and endorsed the information contained in the flyer. This implication was not correct. The LWVC was not part of that coalition and most assuredly did not authorize this action.

[LWVC's position on redistricting](http://lwvc.org/position/redisctricting-ca/) (lwvc.org/position/redisctricting-ca/) is long-established and has not changed. The League supports a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and in the house of representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. And we support an independent commission as the preferred redistricting body.

As for Proposition 50, LWVC decided to take no position. Here is an excerpt from their [statement](#) (the full statement is available at lwvc.org/prop50/):

Early in the process, before the ballot language was written, the League, along with several other good government groups, issued independent statements opposing mid-cycle redistricting. This was consistent with the League's long-standing positions at both the state and national level. Since then, and on the heels of Texas' decision, California Governor Newsom and the legislature moved forward to do mid-cycle redistricting. While the process for the redistricting in California differs from what is happening in Texas, the California League recognizes the importance of staying aligned with our national League and with

state and local Leagues, such as in Texas, that are, or may soon be, in court challenging unfair maps. With all of these factors in mind, the League decided not to take a position on Proposition 50.

Instead, our League focused on getting out the vote and getting information out to voters. We are committed to continuing this work for the upcoming election year. We will devote the program for our January 31 Winter meeting to a review of the changes the new districts have created for the communities we serve. Join on January 31 from 10:30 a.m. to noon at First Baptist Church in Chico to learn more about what has changed, what remains the same, and what the LWV of Butte County intends to do to advance its mission of empowering voters and defending democracy in these new circumstances.

So, back to cousin Mike and to others who are looking for information about Prop 50. Keep up the good work. Ask hard questions and don't accept too easy answers. With so much at stake, investing a little time and thought into this important issue will help us all continue to enjoy the benefits of American democracy.

—Janet Rechtman, Co-President, League of Women Voters of Butte County

Focus on Natural Resources

The League of Women Voters of Butte County supports measures that promote the development and management of water resources in ways that protect the environment, strengthen the local economy, and enhance quality of life—while recognizing that hydrogeologic boundaries do not follow political lines.

Our Natural Resources Committee has been hard at work collaborating with Chico AAUW on a program on the status of and sustainability of Butte County groundwater resources.

We will start the year with our program “Butte County Groundwater: How the Pieces Fit” on Saturday, January 10, 1:00 to 3:30 p.m., at the Chico Baptist Church (850 Palmetto Avenue). We are also planning a discussion of this year's Book in Common, *California Against the Sea: Visions for Our Vanishing Coastline*, by Rosanna Xia, on Sunday, March 15, from 2 to 4 p.m., also at the Chico Baptist Church.

—Corky LeTellier and Satsie Veith

***The League of Women Voters of Butte County and
the Chico Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW)***

Invite You to a
Program of Local Experts on
Saturday, January 10, at 1:00 pm,
to Discuss How to Protect an Essential Resource: Groundwater.



**Butte County's Groundwater Puzzle:
How the Pieces Fit**

- **TODD GREENE, PH.D., GEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, CSUC & MEMBER VINA GSA STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
- **CHRISTINA BUCK, PH.D., BUTTE COUNTY DEPT. OF WATER AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION**
- **BECKY FAIRBANKS, GRANTS PROJECT MANAGER, VINA GSA**
- **JIM BROBECK, WATER POLICY ANALYST, AQUALLIANCE**
- **TOVEY GIEZENTANNER, GENERAL MANAGER, TUSCAN WATER DISTRICT**

**Saturday, January 10, 2026
1:00 to 3:30 pm**



**First Baptist Church of Chico
850 Palmetto Avenue**



*SPONSORED BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS - BUTTE COUNTY AND
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN - CHICO CHAPTER*

Our speakers will present information on the Tuscan Aquifer,
the CA Groundwater Sustainability Act (SGMA),
the Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency,
and implications of the law and its implementation
for our local environment and agriculture.

Please join us for a great afternoon of ideas and discussion.

Free admission, all are invited.

Light refreshments will be served.

The Intersection of Immigration and Criminal Justice Program

On October 25, 2025, the Criminal Justice Committee of the League of Women Voters of Butte County conducted a very successful program on *The Intersection of Immigration and Criminal Justice: A Community Conversation*.

St. John's Episcopal Parish Hall was full of enthusiastic League members and community guests. The criminal justice committee had devoted many hours to recruiting expert panel members and developing questions for sharing with everyone.

Panelists Juan Araujo of NorCal Resist, Maitreya Badami, JD, of CSU Chico, LeAnne Jenswold of Resisters, Leslie Layton of Chico Sol, and Tami Ritter our Butte County District 3 Supervisor each brought their special knowledge and passion to this critical conversation.

Margaret Swick, Committee Chair, and Nicole Drummond, Co-President of LWVBC, moderated the discussion, and there was an excellent flow of information about this important issue embroiling our community.

Each panelist shared their special insights regarding legal issues, agency jurisdictions, and the humanitarian stress on everyone. It became obvious that this was a special opportunity for everyone to learn factual information around the intersection of immigration and criminal justice. Members of the audience and the press submitted excellent questions which promoted even more discussion. It was a very insightful experience overall.

The League of Women Voters has a Position on both Criminal Justice and Immigration that can be found on our website. Both subjects are difficult and complex in today's world. It is the League Position that provide the foundation for both League education and activism.

The LWVBC Criminal Justice Committee will resume meeting regularly in January and is open to all interested members.

—Margaret Swick



Get Involved with Your League — Help Strengthen Democracy in Butte County

The League of Women Voters of Butte County is seeking leaders to join our Board of Directors. We offer various leadership opportunities, including Observer Director, Communications Director, and Voter Registration Director.

The Observer Director leads our Observer Corps, ensuring transparency in local government and keeping the community informed.

The Voter Registration Director organizes outreach and voter registration efforts, with a special focus on engaging underserved communities.

The Communications Director is responsible for disseminating accurate and timely publicity about League activities. We are specifically in need of a volunteer to focus on social media to improve direct engagement.

The 2026 California elections will take place on November 3, 2026. The statewide direct primary election will be held on June 2. Voter Services Director Lisa Cooperman will recruit volunteers to assist with organizing voter forums, voter registration, and other voter education activities in our communities.

Under the leadership of Victoria Houchin, the Social Policy Committee will focus on supporting the work of our criminal justice committee, addressing food insecurity, and improving healthcare access.

These roles are vital to protecting democracy, empowering voters, and fostering civic engagement. If you're ready to make a difference, we'd love to hear from you by contacting the board member directly or by writing presidentlwvbutte@gmail.com.

Our New Board Member



My name is Victoria Houchin, and I was born and raised in the Chico area. I earned my Associate's degree in Social and Behavioral Science from Butte College and my Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Chico State. After graduating, I worked in the legal field, focusing on family law and personal injury.

Recently, I decided to take on the work of full-time parenting my two young children. I am passionate about making a positive impact within our community. With the current attacks on our democracy, I have come to realize the importance of everyone participating in our democracy. I shared with my neighbor that I felt powerless yet deeply motivated to protect not only my own voting rights but also my young daughters' rights. She invited me to a League of Women Voters new member meeting, and I joined that very day.

I am honored to now serve as a board member in the role of Secretary since July and Social Policy Director since November, focusing on food insecurity and health care access. I'm grateful for the kindness and warmth I've received from everyone



Victoria Houchin and Carol Krok register voters on campus at CSUC.

Your League in Action!

No Kings Day, 2025



Satsie Veith and Nancy Wirtz represent the League to No Kings Day participants.



Nicole Drummond and Angela Rison standing up for democracy on No Kings Day.



Marvey Mueller tabled to register voters at the No Kings Day picnic in Veterans Park.



League of Women Voters of Butte County

P.O. Box
965 Chico,
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<https://my.lwv.org/california/butte-county/donate>

★ Renew Your Membership

★ Donate

★ Recruit New Members

★ Volunteer for Board Positions

2025–26 LWVBC Board Members

Nicole Drummond	Co-President
Janet Rechtman	Co-President
Lisa Cooperman	1st VP - Voter Service
Marcia Moore	2nd VP - Membership
Alexandra Shand	Treasurer
Victoria Houchin	Secretary
Corky LeTellier	Director Natural Resources

League of Women Voter of Butte County's Mission

Founded in 1920, the League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages citizens to play 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 16 years or older, male or female, may become a League member.

LWVBC Board meetings are the 2nd Tuesday each month at 5:30 p.m. at the League Office. All League members are welcome to attend and participate.

To contact a Board member, please send your email to presidentlwvbutte@gmail.com, or you may call 530-895-VOTE (8683) to leave a message. Please be sure to provide your name, contact information, and a brief description of what you need.

