

# LWV<sup>®</sup> Voter

February 2023

Dear Friends and Fellow League Members:

A few days ago, I read that Oroville Reservoir was at [108% of average](#) water depth as of January 22, 2023. Good to hear, but it doesn't follow that because the streams are flowing and the earth is wet, the drought is over.

Just as dealing with the effects of climate change and Californians' demand for more water than we have is not ending any time soon, the work of keeping democracy functioning is ongoing. As "[Granny D](#)" put it: "Democracy is not something we have, it's something we do."

Luckily for us, the League of Women Voters was [created 103 years ago](#) and generations of members have kept it going. Because of their contributions to democracy, our League is available now to channel our energies. And hopefully, we will pass it along to the next generations.

There are many ways to be active in the League; here are just a few:

- Attend *the planning meeting/potluck brunch on Saturday, February 11, at Chico 1st Baptist Church, at 11 am*. Please come and bring a potluck item, ideas for how we can best act on the League's mission, and any friends who may be interested in joining the League or just the discussion. See also [page 2](#).
- Become more active. The LWVBC Nominating Committee is currently recruiting members who are interested in taking a leadership position. See [page 4](#).
- Join an LWVC online discussion group. See [page 4](#).
- Provide assistance to the unhoused in our county. See [page 2](#).

*Special Note:* Thank you to Dawn Dawson, our new *Voter* layout person!

Sincerely and with hopes of seeing you on February 11,

*Satsie Veith*

LWVBC President

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## League Positions: Why Do They Matter?

The League of Women Voters, whether local, state, or national, does not take action for or against any policy without having a League position to back up that action. A position is only adopted after intensive member study is completed and a consensus is reached. (See, for example, Becky Cox-White's article on the LWVUS Health Care position in the [December 2022 Voter.](#))

Our local League may take action based on our own positions, the positions of LWVUS, LWV of California, or another local League if we adopt that position by concurrence.

Periodically, League members review their positions to see if they need updating.

Before our program planning meeting on February 11, you may want to look at our local positions and those of LWVUS and LWVC.

Here are the links:

- [LWV of Butte County Positions](#)
- [LWVC and LWVUS Positions](#)
- Also of interest: [LWVC's Homelessness Action Policy](#)

For more background on LWVUS Positions:

[LWV Impact on Issues: A Guide to Public Policy Positions](#)

— Satsie Veith

## Social Policy Committee: How to Help the Homeless

As you may know, over the past program year, Social Policy has focused on issues of housing and homelessness, consistent with the state League's support of equal opportunity in housing and of measures to provide state programs to increase the supply of safe, decent, and adequate housing for all Californians.

**This winter, we are changing the format from webinar to focus on hands-on opportunities for people to learn first-hand about issues of housing and homelessness.**

**Some ways to get involved:**

- *Share new and gently used winter clothing and supplies.*

Two choices:

- Bring winter wear or other supplies to donate to the League's member meeting on February 11.
- You can drop off supplies for the unhoused anytime, on the blue tarp under the carport in front of the garage in front of 518 W. 6th Avenue, Chico, and the North State Shelter Team will distribute them. Tarps, hand warmers, warm clothes, socks, etc., are always a hit.
- Noontime any Sunday: *Join Chico Friends of the Street* to share sandwiches, snacks and other lunch foods, and clothing when they gather on the southeast corner of Plaza downtown.
- *Support Safe Space*, which provides year-round direct support to those experiencing homelessness.

Information at [www.safespacechico.org](http://www.safespacechico.org).

We will also publish a list of organizations and opportunities for service on the League website and in other places as appropriate, featuring timely opportunities to get involved in the League's monthly newsletter, website, and more. Please join us as we share our support for the League's goal to end homelessness and ensure affordable housing for all.

—Nicole Drummond, Chellie Gates, Andy Holcolmbe, Charles Withuhn, and Janet Rechtman, Chair

### LWVBC Winter Member Meeting

**When:** Saturday, February 11, 11:00 am to 1:30 pm

**Where:** Chico First Baptist Church Meeting Hall, 850 Palmetto Avenue, Chico, CA

**What:** Potluck Brunch and Get-to-Gather on League Programs/Aspirations.

Bring what you would like to share: food, ideas, passions, and friends.

—Satsie Veith



## Progress and Next Steps in Becoming a §501(c)(3) Organization

After the membership attending the November Members' Meeting on Zoom approved the correction to our Articles of Incorporation, to identify us as a public benefit rather than mutual benefit corporation, we submitted the change to the Secretary of State, and it was approved in December. So we completed the first step in changing from a §501(c)(4) to a §501(c)(3) organization.

What are the next steps? They are:

- 1) To make changes to the Bylaws that identify us as a 501(c)(3) and
- 2) to make changes to the Articles of Incorporation for the same purpose.

What process will we follow?

- 1) The Board of Directors will review the proposed Bylaws changes and the proposed Articles amendment and will vote on approval of each at a regular Board meeting.
- 2) If approved by the Board, the changes will be brought to the membership at the Annual Meeting for approval.
- 3) If both are approved at the Annual Meeting, the changes to the Articles of Incorporation will be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 4) Once the Bylaws have been changed and the Articles of Incorporation are accepted by the Secretary of State, the LWV of Butte County will submit appropriate forms for approval to Internal Revenue Service.

Through all these steps, Tom Carson will continue to advise us and provide input on any of the documents we prepare. He has shared drafts and guidelines based on other local Leagues' experiences, and we are confident that we should be able to succeed in becoming a 501(c)(3) corporation.

If you want to know more about the whole process, purpose, and benefits, go to the September issue of the *Voter* at this link:

<https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/butte-county/voter-sept2022.pdf>

—Sandra Flake, Treasurer, LWVBC



## Why Serve on the LWVBC Board?

In today's challenging times, the LWV mission—empowering voters, defending democracy—is more important than ever.

For our League, empowering voters includes voter registration, working at voting sites, and supporting the office of elections on election day by delivering ballots to be counted. All this work is certified by county agencies, proof that the League is a trusted resource in our communities.

Defending democracy gets complicated in these polarized times. To that end, the League is scrupulously nonpartisan. The community votes with its feet, turning out by hundreds to attend our candidate forums to hear all points of view. Your League also regularly sponsors forums on key issues defined by members to provide a deeper understanding of what is involved.

Board members provide the leadership and energy needed to keep this work going forward.

Our League is seeking new board members now. To learn more about the challenges and opportunities that adding your voice to our League's leadership can bring, contact of the Nominating Committee co-chairs: Linda MacMichael at [lmacmichael@pacbell.net](mailto:lmacmichael@pacbell.net) or Carol Burr at [cburr@csuchico.edu](mailto:cburr@csuchico.edu).

—Janet Rechtman

## Seeking Nomination for 2023–2024 LWVBC Officers and Directors

Calling all good leaders—our League chapter needs your leadership skills! The Nominations Committee is developing a slate of proposed officers and directors for the 2023-2024 board. The term begins July 1, 2023, and last for two years. The board meets monthly for 1½ hours.

We require members to fill the following positions:

- President
- 1st Vice President
- Secretary
- Communications
- Program Directors: At Large; Natural Resources; Social Policy, Observer Corps; Government; Countywide Liaison; Assistant Voter Services

We know by virtue of your League membership that you care about *empowering voters* and *defending democracy*. Our crucial work only continues with members like you.

Please reach out to one of our co-chairs—Linda MacMichael at [lmacmichael@pacbell.net](mailto:lmacmichael@pacbell.net) or Carol Burr at [cburr@csuchico.edu](mailto:cburr@csuchico.edu)—for more information.



## Thoughts on the League Mission

On a warmish winter morning walk, my League mentor reminded me, “The League is a nonpartisan political organization.”

Hum, I wondered. How does this relate to the Social Policy Committee’s (SPC) focus on issues of housing and homelessness?

So far, the SPC has organized two webinars covering issues related to housing and homelessness, consistent with the LWV’s position: *The League of Women Voters of California supports actions to reduce and eliminate homelessness, both sheltered and unsheltered, throughout the State*. We presented an overview of factors that lead to housing shortages and homelessness, such as wildfire and natural disasters, changes in community resources for health care, mental health, and veterans, and social challenges of poverty, addiction, aging, and other increases in personal vulnerability. We looked at responses from the public and private sector through programs offered by nonprofit social service agencies, emergency shelters, housing providers, and local, state and federal government.

For our third and final program, we suggested that League members find paths to street-level involvement through contributing to a winter clothing drive, bringing sandwiches to the square on Sunday, volunteering at a shelter, or otherwise meeting and getting to know homeless persons in our communities. Such activities are an opportunity to learn more about and engage with the “grass roots,” namely the people who are directly affected by the “grass-tops” politics that have led to the alarming situation on our streets.

So, the SPC’s work has been nonpartisan and political in at least three ways.

First and foremost, the LWV operates by consensus so internal politics are key to decision making. As a case in point, the SPC’s focus on housing and homelessness represents the consensus of membership regarding the top three issues facing our communities. League members who joined the SPC are, for the most part, community leaders in the area of housing and homelessness. Through discussions and committee meetings, the consensus was to offer the three-part educational effort described above.

Second, in the current highly polarized environment, seeing politically active League members engage with the issue of housing and homelessness is a clear

demonstration of interest to those with political power. Some members may provide gifts of time, treasure, and talent to organizations that offer direct services or invest in businesses that build affordable housing. Other members may serve on nonprofit and public boards that address this and related issues. Some may write letters to the editor, mentor, teach, or otherwise support leaders who work on these issues. Still others create works of art that raise awareness and empathy. All of these activities can be at once nonpartisan and political.

Third: Reality bites. And those bites can be sore, itchy spots that need attention to heal. By paying attention to pain points in our communities, League members bridge between grass-roots and grass-tops on important issues, which is the essence of nonpartisan political engagement. The bite of reality my League mentor raised with her simple statement is an example: as a writer and League board member, I am obliged to think out loud (or in this case on paper) about how our work aligns with the League’s mission. Thank you, friend, for your provocative observation and for all you do for me and for our communities.

—Janet Rechtman, Social Policy Committee Chair

## LWV of California Online Discussion Groups

All LWVC members are invited to join online discussion groups on various topics such as Voter Services, Climate Change, Homelessness, Money in Politics, and more.

Click [here to find out more](#) and how to join.

—Satsie Veith

## Celebrating Black History Month

Enjoy some excellent reading, especially from our local libraries, highlighting Black History Month.

Berry, Daina Ramey, Kali Nicole Gross, et al. *A Black Women’s History of the United States*, 2020.

Blight, David W. *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*, 2020.

Kendi, Ibram X., et al, eds. *Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019*, 2021.

Perry, Imani. *South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation*, 2022.

Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of the Law*, 2018.

Twitty, Michael W. *The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African-American Culinary History in the Old South*, 2017.

Ward, Jesmyn. *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race*, 2016.

Whitaker, Mark. *Smoketown: The Untold Story of the Other Great Black Renaissance*, 2018.







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**

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### 2022–23 LWVBC Board Members

|                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Satsie Veith</a>    | President                        |
| <a href="#">Claire Greene</a>   | 1st VP - Voter Service           |
| <a href="#">Marcia Moore</a>    | 2nd VP - Membership              |
| <a href="#">Sandra Flake</a>    | Treasurer                        |
| <a href="#">Mahalley Allen</a>  | Secretary                        |
| <a href="#">Toni Reid</a>       | Director Natural Resources       |
| <a href="#">Janet Rechtman</a>  | Director Social Policy           |
| <a href="#">Caroline Langen</a> | Director Observer Corps          |
| <i>Vacant</i>                   | Director Communications          |
| <i>Vacant</i>                   | Director County Liaison          |
| <i>Vacant</i>                   | Director Assistant Voter Service |
| <i>Vacant</i>                   | Director Government              |
| <i>Vacant</i>                   | Director Voter Registration      |

### League of Women Voter of Butte County's Mission

Founded in 1920, the League of Women Voters is a non-partisan 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 Tuesdays each month at 5:30 pm.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings will be held via Zoom. All League members are welcome to attend and participate. Please reach out to President Veith for meeting Zoom credentials if you wish to join our meetings.

To contact a Board member, you may email them at their email (linked to their name on the left) 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.