

# LWV<sup>®</sup> Voter

JUNE/JULY 2022

Dear League Members and Friends,

Thanks to all who came out for the Annual Meeting at the Picnic Pavilion on a very hot day, and even brought food! For those who couldn't make it, see highlights on page 4.

There is a lot going on:

**Candidate Forums:** Three down for the primary; some number to go. I thoroughly enjoyed being Claire Greene's "co-moderator" for the CD 1 Forum (doing basically nothing but sitting next to her) and getting to write a few of the questions. All three primary forums are available [here](#).

**Programs:** For those of you who missed it, you can watch the excellent presentation on "Homing in on Homelessness," the first of three by the Social Policy committee – [here](#).

The second program on Butte County water will be live via Zoom on June 30 at 7pm – click [here](#) to join the meeting.

Volunteer opportunities abound: Please read the message from Margaret Swick on page 2 asking for members who want to explore local law enforcement issues.

Also see the notice from our new Director of Observers, Caroline Langen, on page 2 recruiting members to keep an eye on local government agencies and issues.

Also, we will need "ballot retrievers" for election night in November and other activities leading up to Election Day. Watch for notices!

Remember, the only limit to what our local league can accomplish is what our members are willing to do. If you have ideas, please contact a board member personally or simply respond to the email that sent you this newsletter.

Sincerely,

**Satsie Veith**

LWVBC President

## Inside this issue

### Criminal Justice Issues

### Why I Joined LWV

### Help Support Transparency in Government

### Redistricting: A Look at the California Citizens Commission

### Highlights of Annual Meeting

### Ballot Retrieval Accomplished

### League Joins Budget Coalition

### Membership News

### Donate

### Board Members

### Mission



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[www.lwvbuttecounty.org](http://www.lwvbuttecounty.org)  
(530) 895-VOTE (8683)

# Criminal Justice Issues

Are you interested in criminal justice issues in Butte County? Do you think it is time to form a committee of League members to follow our many local law enforcement issues? The issues include:

- ❖ Chico Police Department
- ❖ Sheriff's Department
- ❖ Jail
- ❖ District Attorney
- ❖ Immigration
- ❖ School Resource Officers
- ❖ ...and more. So much more.



Our goals will include:

1. Read and become knowledgeable about League of Women Voters of California positions related to criminal justice.
2. Read and become knowledgeable about League of Women Voters of the United States positions on policing, prisons, jails, and use of force.
3. Follow local and state legislation about law enforcement.
4. Attend monthly meetings and participate in the LWVC Criminal Justice Reform Committee.
5. Consider the process of starting a local study on Butte County criminal justice issues with the goal of developing a local position.
6. Meet and discuss the many and diverse issues affecting law enforcement in Butte County.

If you would like to participate, please let us know by reaching out to Margaret Swick at 530-879-0231 or by email at [Maswick4@icloud.com](mailto:Maswick4@icloud.com).

*Submitted by  
Margaret Swick*

## Why I Joined LWV

Our League is seeking new board members **now**. In today's troubled times, the LWV mission – empowering voters, defending democracy – is more important than ever. Here is why I joined our League board.

I moved to Chico from Atlanta, Georgia where one of my sheroes was Stacy Abrams. I met Ms. Abrams when she visited my Rotary Club. In her comments that day and consistently ever since, she never once trashed

the opposition while offering consistent and positive rationales for the positions she held.

Since her narrow loss as candidate for governor (she is now running again for that role), Abrams has become a champion of the vote. Through her advocacy and support, thousands of new voters have registered in Georgia and elsewhere. She calls that a victory— *because votes and voice are what matter in a democracy.*

When Linda MacMichael invited me to breakfast to talk about the League of Women Voters of Butte County, I thought of Stacy Abrams and said, yes, I was glad to learn more about how I might be a champion of the vote in my new home of Chico, California. As recent elections prove, the vote is as important in my new small city as it was in the megalopolis I left three years ago.

I encourage anyone who might be interested in Board service to join Linda MacMichael for a cuppa and learn more about the challenges and opportunities that adding your voice to our League's leadership can bring. I know I'm glad I did ... plus, it was her treat!

*Submitted by  
Janet Rechtman  
Director Social Policy*

## Help Support Transparency In Government

Observing governmental entities such local councils, boards, and commissions is one of the ways League members support the principle of transparency.



If you are interested in serving as the eyes and ears of our League in this way, and want further information, please contact Caroline Langen at 530-342-5388 or by email ([clangen3462@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clangen3462@sbcglobal.net)).

Agencies for which we currently need observers include the Chico School Board and Chico City Council.



# Redistricting: A Look at the California Citizens Commission

*“Redistricting impacts every issue we care about.  
It impacts our lives in every way.”*

— Jeanette Senecal

LWVUS Senior Director of Mission Impact

Yes, 2020 census redistricting is completed, but it's not too early to consider whether we can do better next time.

A great deal hangs on who is empowered to draw new district lines and how those people are chosen. The [LWVUS position](#) is that redistricting is best done by an **independent commission**, whose members reflect the diversity and interests of the population.



According to [Common Cause](#), a commission is “independent” when “*political insiders are prohibited from participation, eliminating the clear conflict of interest that exists when elected officials or those close to them draw districts.*”

California is one of a small group of states that empower “non-politician” or independent commissions to draw lines for US Congress districts and the state legislature. See [Ballotpedia](#) and the [National Council of State Legislatures](#) for detailed lists of states and various types of commissions.

The rest of this article focusses on the California [Citizen Redistricting Commission](#) [CRC]: its history, how commissioners are chosen, rules for drawing maps, and some reviews of its performance.

**History:** In 2008, California voters approved the [Voters First Act](#) (Prop 11), which created the CRC and transferred power to draw State Senate, Assembly, and Board of Equalization district maps from state legislators to the commission. In 2010, the Voters First Act for Congress (Prop 20) passed, doing the same for US Congressional districts.

**Who draws the districts?** Fourteen Californians: five Republicans, five Democrats, and four Decline to State. In brief: Citizen applications are reviewed, a panel selects

the 60 most qualified, eight are selected by random drawing, and those eight select the final six. The full process is [described here](#).

**What rules does the CRC follow when drawing maps?** (per [CRC FAQ](#).)

Districts must:

- ❖ be of equal population to comply with the US Constitution,
- ❖ ensure that minorities have an equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice (per Voting Rights Act),
- ❖ be contiguous (all parts connected to each other),
- ❖ respect the boundaries and minimize division of cities, counties, neighborhoods, and communities of interest.
- ❖ Districts should be geographically compact (regular in shape).
- ❖ Where practicable, each Senate District should be comprised of two Assembly Districts and Board of Equalization districts shall be composed of 10 complete State Senate Districts.
- ❖ Districts shall not be drawn to favor or discriminate against an incumbent, candidate, or political party.

**How is the CRC doing?**

[Assessing CA's Redistricting Commission: Effects on Partisan Fairness and Competitiveness](#), Public Policy Institute, March 2018. Looks at the districts created by CRC after the 2010 census and finds, among other things, “[e]vidence of greater competitiveness,” ie, fewer districts where one party always wins.

[The CA Citizens Redistricting Commission: Fair Maps, Voting Rights, and Diversity](#), USC Schwarzenegger Institute, July 20, 2020. Compares the results of the CRC's maps after the 2010 Census to the previous legislature-drawn maps; finds that the percentage of Latino/a and Asian-American members of Congress doubled, and the number of Latino/a, Black, and Asian-American state legislators increased.

[Why is CA's Redistricting Commission Under Increasing Scrutiny?](#) CalMatters, Dec. 8, 2021. Summarizes various complaints about the CRC, including a messy process, cost overruns, and allegations of secrecy.

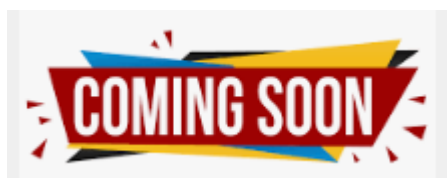
[CA Redistricting: What to Know about the Final Maps](#), KPBS, Dec. 21, 2021.

[Citizen Redistricting Commission Defends New Maps: "They Represent the Wishes of the People of California,"](#) CBS BayArea, Dec. 27, 2021.

[Racial Representation and Partisan Leanings](#) in CA's Final Redistricting Maps, Public Policy Institute, Jan. 12, 2022.

[No Legal Battles for CA's New Election Maps. But What Lessons Can Be Learned?](#) CalMatters, Feb. 14, 2022.

Notes that commissioners voted unanimously to approve the final maps, and the deadline to challenge the new districts passed with no lawsuits filed.



In a future Voter:  
*California redistricting commissions  
at the local level.*

Submitted by  
Satsie Veith  
LWVBC President

## BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



**Volunteers Needed for Candidate Forums:** Claire Greene emphasized the need for volunteers to help with forums for the General Election – which we plan to hold in person.

### Thank you to:

- ❖ Everyone for turning out and bringing delicious food.
- ❖ Linda Lunsford for, once again, providing coffee, lemonade, ice, utensils, plates, etc.
- ❖ Linda MacMichael and Andy Holcombe, Marvey Mueller, and Carol Holzgrafe, for handling the presentation and election of board members.
- ❖ Outgoing board members Patty Haley, Roxanne Ferry, and Lori Fuentes, for all your hard work and dedication to the League!

Submitted by  
Satsie Veith  
LWVBC President

## Highlights of Annual Meeting

About thirty members gathered at the Picnic Pavilion in unseasonable heat and accomplished the following:

### Elected:

- ❖ Marcia Moore  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP for Membership
- ❖ Caroline Langen  
Director, Observer Corps
- ❖ Sandra Flake  
Treasurer, Second Term



### Approved:

- ❖ Budget for 2022-2023 FY
- ❖ [Bylaws Revision](#)
- ❖ Program Priorities: Housing/Homelessness, Climate Change/Water, Redistricting (same as last year)

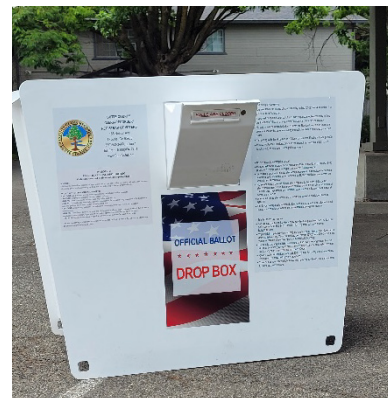


## Ballot Retrieval Accomplished

On the evening of June 7, eleven League members and family reported to the Hall of Records in Oroville to be sworn in by Candace Grubbs, receive a brief training, head out in teams of two to ballot drop boxes around the county, lock them at precisely 8 PM, to bring in the last of the ballots.

**Thank you** to all the volunteers on behalf of the League and the County Elections Office for your willingness to help out!

If you missed out, we'll be signing people up again for the same process on November 8 .... Watch for notices.



Submitted by  
Satsie Veith  
LWVBC President





# League Joins Budget Coalition

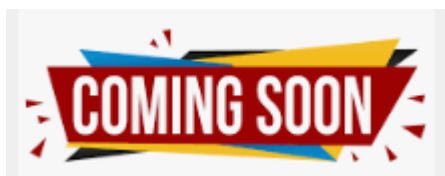
The LWVC joined the coalition behind the \$85M budget proposal to help close the voter participation gap. If approved, the funds would target a persistent voter participation gap between Latino, Black, Asian-American, and youth compared to non-Hispanic whites.

“Despite . . . a historically high voter turnout in the November 2020 election, *disparities in participation among youth and voters of color persisted, and in some cases grew*, compared to our older, non-Hispanic white population.” – [Coalition Letter](#).

The Coalition Letter (see link above) also states that universal vote-by-mail, without vigorous voter education and outreach programs, could result in “unintentional disenfranchisement for communities of color, youth, language minorities, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, and those who are unhoused, housing insecure or geographically mobile.”

The intent of the budget is to:

- ❖ fund a state-wide voter outreach campaign through the Secretary of State’s office and
- ❖ give each county elections office \$2 per voter for voter outreach through mailings, social media, work with community organizations and more.



At press time, the budget negotiations were still ongoing – [look for an update in the next Voter](#).

Submitted by  
Satsie Veith  
LWVBC President

## Membership News

Throughout the Pandemic pandemonium, we have maintained our membership numbers with some new members and returning inactive members of the LWV of Butte County. It is great to see 127 names on the roster!

Some of the League’s newest members are:

- ❖ Becky Cox-White
- ❖ Kelley Crockett
- ❖ Dawn Dawson
- ❖ Nicole Drummond
- ❖ Carol Krok
- ❖ Leilani McManus
- ❖ Theresa O’Connor
- ❖ Leslie Radlen
- ❖ Nancy Wirtz

Returning members are:

- ❖ Dave García
- ❖ Susanne Griffin
- ❖ John Merz
- ❖ Debbie Vermette

Four of the five panel members for the Social Policy committee’s *Homing in on Homelessness* are members who joined in 2020-2021! Their participation is much appreciated.



Please be sure to greet our new and returning members at the September membership coffee.

League dues for the 2022-2023 year are due in September 2022 but can even be renewed this summer and be paid on line: <https://my.lwv/california/butte-county>.

If you prefer, you may renew your membership by mailing a check made out to **LWV OF BUTTE COUNTY** for \$75 for an individual and \$125 for a household membership. Mail check to:

League of Women Voters of Butte County  
P.O. Box 965  
Chico, CA 95927

Thank you for your ongoing support of the League.

Submitted by Roxanne Ferry  
Former VP of Membership





League of Women Voters of Butte County  
P.O. Box 965  
Chico, CA 95927



<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 Countywide Liaison
<i>Vacant</i>	Director Voter Registration
<i>Vacant</i>	Director Communications
<i>Vacant</i>	Director Assistant Voter Service
<i>Vacant</i>	Director Government

## 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.