

LWV[®] Voter

July 2020

Dear League Members & Friends,

We participated in the first virtual LWV National Convention in June, celebrating our 100th anniversary of the League, plus learning more about how to empower voters and defend democracy while coping with COVID-19. Mahalley Allen and Sandra Flake were glued to Zoom as voting delegates at their first national convention and share highlights of their experiences inside. With less than 100 days to the election, we are moving quickly to evaluate how to continue our essential work to educate and advocate for Butte County. Please watch our web site for news and calendar updates on LWVBC activities. If you have suggestions, questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at presidentlwvbutte@gmail.com.

In addition to our focus on strategizing ways to do voter registration outreach, candidate forums, and Pros and Cons presentations on ballot measures wisely and safely for all, we must redouble our efforts to support a complete census count now that the US Census Bureau has extended the deadline to October 31, 2020. The current response rate for California is 63.4%. In Butte County, the response rate is only 49.4%. For the 2010 Census, we had a 65% response rate – we **NEED** to close that gap to ensure our communities are **not** under-counted and deprived of resources and political representation.

If you want to learn more about Census responses, you can review data at [Census 2020 Response Rate Map](#). With local census outreach efforts pivoting to a contactless approach, LWVBC will be working with Butte County's Complete Count Committee. If you want to get involved in LWVBC's first phone bank for local census outreach, please read more on how to volunteer in this newsletter.

With deep appreciation, I want to share that an anonymous League supporter has generously donated the entire cost of our annual rent for the LWVBC office. This amazing gift, over \$4000, is the largest our local League has ever received. Such generosity allows us to focus the rest of 2020 on voter engagement and census outreach knowing a significant amount of our operating costs is covered. **WOW!**

LWVBC continues to promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all while defending democracy. As our grassroots organization, founded in the belief of nonpartisan education and advocacy, enters its second hundred years, I cherish that belief and thank you for joining me in the work we have ahead of us.

Yours in Making Democracy Work,
Debra Barger, President

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF BUTTE COUNTY (CA)

PO Box 965, Chico, CA 95927
www.lwvbuttecounty.org
(530) 895-VOTE (8683)

League of Women Voters National Convention Experience

During the last week of June, I was fortunate to attend the League of Women Voters 54th Biennial National Convention as a voting delegate representing the League of Women Voters of Butte County. Although originally scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C., the convention was held over Zoom due to the global pandemic. While everyone was understandably disappointed to not be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote in our nation's capital, convention attendees were still enthusiastic to participate in the League's first virtual convention.



In the days leading up to the Convention, the LWWUS hosted webinars to prepare delegates for what to expect. I viewed the live "Introduction to Convention" webinar and also viewed recordings of other webinars introducing the LWWUS's budget, program, bylaws, and candidates for positions on the national board. These webinars were a great way for delegates, especially first-time delegates, to feel more prepared for the work of the Convention.

From Monday through Wednesday, June 22nd -24th, various local leagues hosted virtual caucuses to discuss numerous topics of importance. For example, the LWV of Arlington (VA) hosted a caucus on "How We Can Foster Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging in the League." The LWV San Francisco and the LWV Los Angeles co-hosted a caucus on the topic of "Making Democracy Work in the Criminal Justice" system. These caucuses were a wonderful opportunity for delegates to explore different policy areas.

The pre-Convention events on Thursday, June 25th included a wonderful panel discussion between Muriel Bowser, Washington, D.C. Mayor; Alejandra Y. Castillo, YWCA USA CEO; Valerie B. Jarrett, When We All Vote Board Chair and The United State of Women Co-Chair; and Allison Riggs, Southern Coalition for Social Justice Interim Executive Director & Chief Counsel for Voting Rights. This inspiring panel discussion on the topic of expanding the vote was the highlight of the Convention for me.

Over the course of Friday and Saturday, June 26th and 27th, Convention delegates voted on several motions. Delegates passed a motion to focus the work of the LWWUS over the next two years in the areas of: "Campaign for Making Democracy Work®: ensuring a free, fair and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters by focusing on Voting Rights, Improving Elections and advocacy for the National Popular Vote Compact, Campaign Finance/Money in Politics and Redistricting and to continue to work on urgent issues: Climate Change, the Equal Rights Amendment, Health Care, Gun Safety, and Immigration and the abolition of the electoral college."

Delegates also passed motions affirming the LWV's commitment to immigration reform; advocating against systemic racism in the justice system; and supporting mobilization to restore, protect, and fund an ecologically sustainable environment and climate. Delegates adopted by concurrence the League of Women Voters of New Mexico's Transfer of Federal Public Lands position. The LWWUS CEO, Virginia Kase, and the LWWUS newly elected president, Deborah Turner, both gave moving and inspiring speeches on the last day of the Convention. After participating in my first LWV National Convention, I look forward to future opportunities to attend state and national conventions to represent the League of Women Voters of Butte County.



Submitted by Mahalley Allen, Secretary

Comments from a National Convention Rookie

I attended my first League of Women Voters National Convention on June 26 and 27 as a LWV Butte County delegate to the Convention; held remotely on Zoom. It was a major learning experience for me. I was impressed that, despite glitches here and there, the LWVUS was able to transition from a live D.C. meeting to a totally virtual Convention, including caucuses and a pre-convention meeting.

The caucuses were held in the days just before the Convention. Although I signed up for two caucuses, one had a Zoom problem that limited attendees, but I received the materials afterwards. The one I attended, "Climate Emergency - Time for All Hands-on Deck" on June 24, was sponsored by several Leagues and prepared by the LWVUS Climate Emergency Working Group. In just an hour, I learned much about the LWV role in addressing climate change, about resources we can connect with, and about activism in local, state, and regional groups. ([Click here to view recordings of the many caucuses](#))

I also attended both the pre-Convention meeting on June 25 and both days of the Convention. Despite the challenges of a 5-hour Zoom webinar on the days of the Convention, aided by a few breaks each day, I never lost interest in any of the sessions. I found it all valuable, even as I struggled with understanding some of the finer points of *Robert's Rules of Order*. I became truly engaged when I heard from the speakers. So, I am focusing on just a few of those highlights for me.

The outgoing President, Chris Carson, opened the pre-Convention session and welcomed us, followed by a panel discussion on Expanding the Vote, moderated by Virginia Kase, CEO of LWVUS. The panel included Muriel Bowser, Washington, DC, Mayor; Alejandra Castillo, YWCA USA CEO; Valerie Jarrett, When We All Vote Board Chair and The United State of Women Co-Chair; and Allison Riggs, Southern Coalition for Social Justice Interim Executive Director and Chief Counsel for Voting Rights. Each of them brought a unique perspective to the discussion, starting with Mayor Bowser's comments on the efforts to win statehood for Washington, D.C., on the night before the vote in the House of Representatives. All were focused on the critical democratic need to have free, open, accessible, and equitable elections and talked about their work to support voters' rights. It was an impressive opening for the activities that began the next day—setting the stage for the Convention.

The backdrop to the conduct of business, including ongoing demonstrations against structural racism across the country, enhanced the importance of a change in bylaws to bring diversity, equity, and inclusion into the policy statements of Article II. In the CEO's address, Virginia Kase brought home the importance of the League's role to lead in these highly partisan times, while remaining true to our non-partisan emphasis on defending and promoting democracy. She is an impassioned speaker and advocate for the League's growth and leadership as we face challenges to voter rights, democratic principles, and social justice. It was a moving address, in which she reasoned with us about our past and future. I encourage you to listen to [her speech on YouTube](#), and to listen to [Dr. Debra Turner, our new President of the LWVUS](#). Dr. Turner is the right person to lead us into our second century. She understands the critical times we are in. President Turner and the new board will take us through the next two years with passion and leadership.

I highly recommend taking advantage of opportunities to participate in future Conventions, state or national, as a delegate or as an observer. I now understand much more about the League, our mission, and the connections between local, state, and national leagues. I hope to be able to attend a face-to-face Convention sometime in the future.



Submitted by Sandra Flake, Treasurer



20TH NATIONAL PRESIDENT

**DEBORAH
TURNER**



[Click on the image or this link to listen to remarks from our new League of Women Voters National President, Deborah Turner, made during the National Convention](#)

Observer Focus: Butte County Water Commission

After a two-month virus-caused hiatus, the Butte County Water Commission met on-line via Webex (similar to Zoom) on June 3. Members of the public could not be seen or heard but were able to email in comments before and during the meeting. County staff read the emails into the record and questions were addressed.

Butte County Water & Resource Conservation Director Paul Gosselin explained that since the public was absent and the commissioners were not in the same room, the meeting was a “trial run” that did not include important items requiring a vote. He indicated that the next meeting might be able to follow procedures more conducive to public engagement, but he gave no specifics.

During the meeting, a proponent of the controversial proposed Tuscan Water District (TWD) gave a presentation on its stated purposes. Then, a representative of the Butte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) explained that if LAFCO ultimately approves the district, landowners within the TWD boundaries will vote on it. Each landowner will have “one vote for one dollar of assessed value” of their property. The [application is available on LAFCO’s website](#) for public review.

The next Butte County Water Commission meeting was set for August 5.



*Submitted by Satsie Veith,
Director Countywide Liaison*

Join LWVBC's First Census 2020 Phone Banking Efforts

The US Census Bureau has extended the 2020 census count until October 31, 2020. The current response rate for California is 63.4%. In Butte County, however, the response rate is currently only 49.4%. We have a number of hard to count populations in our county and unique challenges as a result of the Camp Fire which compound efforts to achieve a complete count. Butte County needs our help to ensure everyone is counted so our communities receive our fair share of federal funding and representation in the upcoming decade.

If you are interested in participating in contactless census outreach, please become a Butte County Census 2020 phone banker. We must create a list of LWVBC volunteers (name, email, and phone number) to provide to the Butte County Complete Count Committee. They will then provide logins for the Census Bureau vendor PDI for all volunteers.

We will schedule PDI administrator trainings and provide volunteers with details on how to access the Phone Bank Webinar Training along with the Census PDI application and phone scripts. The PDI process may take time to set-up, so please don't wait—sign up **NOW** to be a census phone bank volunteer by emailing Maureen Kirk at maureenkirk@earthlink.net or calling or texting her at (530) 228-2947. October 31 is right around the corner.

Maureen Kirk, Director Government

League of Women Voters of Butte County CALENDAR

Watch the LWVBC calendar for updates at www.lwvbuttecounty.org!

Working for all Californians – LWV California OUR WORK, BY THE NUMBERS:



Click on image to access website

LWV 2021 Dues and Memberships

With more time at home right now, you might want to pay your 2021 League dues now and have it done before we get busy with voter candidate forums and Pros and Cons for propositions and referendums.

Individual memberships are now \$90 and household memberships are \$125. You may pay your dues online on our website at www.lwvbuttecounty.org or you may send a check, **made out to LWV of Butte County**, to:

LWVBC
P.O. Box 965
Chico, CA 95927-0941

We have seven new members that you will enjoy getting acquainted with during our September 12 League membership meeting. They are **Jeanette Alosi, Lori Fuentes, Laura Kling, Judy Lawrence, Timothy McAnulty, Lucinda Tiffo, and Jeffrey White**. Welcome! We want more new members!! Invite friends, family, and neighbors who might be interested in joining to attend the September meeting so they can learn about us and start participating in the many efforts we have planned.

Submitted by Roxanne Ferry, Membership

Supreme Court Update 2020

To close out its 2019-2020 term, the United States Supreme Court recently issued decisions in several noteworthy cases. Here are brief summaries of four of its most significant recent decisions.

In *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, decided on June 15, 2020, the Supreme Court reviewed whether an employer's firing of an individual for being gay or transgender violates Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VII prohibits employers from discriminating against an individual "because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." In a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court found that Title VII's language includes employment discrimination based on an individual's sexual orientation. Justice Neil Gorsuch, writing the Supreme Court's majority opinion, concluded that "[a]n employer who fires an individual merely for being gay or transgender defies the law."

In *Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California*, decided on June 18, 2020 the Supreme Court reviewed the federal government's decision to repeal the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The DACA program allows undocumented people who were brought to the United States as children to apply for renewable protection against deportation and to acquire work authorization and other federal benefits. In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court found that, although the government has the legal authority to terminate the DACA program, its recent attempt to do so was a violation of the Administrative Procedure Act because it was insufficiently justified and arbitrary and capricious. In writing the majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts emphasized that the Supreme Court's decision did not address the legality of the DACA program itself and focused only on the government's attempt to rescind it.

In *Chiafalo v. Washington*, decided on July 6, 2020, the Supreme Court addressed the issue of "faithless electors" voting in the Electoral College. In a unanimous opinion authored by Justice Elena Kagan, the



Supreme Court decided that state laws requiring presidential electors to cast their votes for the candidates they pledge to support are constitutional. The Supreme Court's decision gives states broad authority over their electors and reinforces that electors do not have discretion or independence to decide which presidential candidate to support. Thirty-two states, including California, and the District of Columbia have laws requiring electors to vote for the presidential candidates they pledge to support. This Supreme Court decision may have important implications for the future of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, which is supported by the League of Women Voters United States. Electors in states participating in the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact would be chosen by the political party whose presidential candidate receives the most popular votes across the country instead of the most popular votes within that state.

In *Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania*, decided on July 8, 2020, the Supreme Court examined the federal government's exemption of employers with sincerely held religious or moral objections from complying with the Affordable Care Act's requirement that employers provide health insurance with contraceptive coverage. In a 7-2 decision, the Supreme Court decided that the federal government did have the lawful authority to provide for moral and religious exemptions to the contraceptive mandate of the Affordable Care Act and had followed proper administrative procedure in doing so. Writing the Supreme Court's majority opinion, Justice Clarence Thomas noted that the federal government's Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and the Treasury have the authority to "provide exemptions from the regulatory contraceptive requirements for employers with religious and conscientious objections."

Submitted by Mahalley Allen, Secretary

Attend a Voter Registration Training and Become Deputized

We have coordinated an in-person voter registration training, but it will be done using social distancing protocols through the Butte County Registrar of Voters office at 155 Nelson Avenue in Oroville.

The training is **Friday, August 14 at 9:30am** in the Hall of Records training room. Attend the training to learn about the all new [Where's My Ballot?](#) from the California Secretary of State. If you have never attended a voter registration training or just need a refresher for the latest changes related to the Voter Choice Act and Voter Assistance Centers in Butte County in preparation for the November 3 election, please join us!



Successful completion of the training may result in the designation Deputy Registrar for Butte County. To ensure 6-feet spacing between all participants, pre-registration is required in order to ensure there is an accurate attendance count for the number of seats available.

Please sign up for this important training by emailing Patty Haley, Director of Voter Registration at pattyhaley@sbcglobal.net.

*Submitted by Patty Haley,
Director of Voter Registration*



June LWVBC Board Meeting Outside and Distancing



League members demonstrate social distancing and masking at the LWVBC Annual Business meeting held at an open-air pavilion.





Betsy Kruger, Budget Committee chair, presented the proposed 2020-21 budget, including a membership dues increase.



Toni Reid, invites members to join the League's Observer Corps. Reid was also recognized with the Mita Markland Award for her outstanding community service.

[League of Women Voters of Butte County](#)

P.O. Box 965

Chico, CA 95927

www.lwvbuttecounty.org



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Get the facts before you vote.

2020-21 LWVBC Board Members

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<u>Patty Haley</u>	Director Voter Registration
 <i>Vacant</i>	 Director Natural Resources
<i>Vacant</i>	Director Social Policy

Underline indicates email link

LWVBC'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 Barger for meeting Zoom credentials if you can join our meetings.

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