



IMPORTANT DATES
(regular meetings page 8)

April 15-17
DVC Student Elections
Pleasant Hill/San Ramon
(contact Martha Goralka)

Saturday, April 27
LWV Bay Area Council:
Regional Voter Service
Training
10:00 am – 1:30 pm
Bellevue Club, Oakland
(see page 7)

Saturday, May 18
Complete Count: Census
2020
3:00 – 4:30 pm
Location TBA

May 30-June 2
LWVC Convention
Pasadena

Saturday, June 15
LWVDV Annual Meeting
10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Location TBA

Saturday, August 17
LWV Bay Area Mini-
League Day:
Voting Rights 2019 to
Equal Rights 2020
10:00 am – 1:00 pm
San Francisco

Monthly Meeting



Join us for a viewing of FIX IT, a 38-minute documentary that takes an in-depth look at our dysfunctional health care system.

The viewing will be preceded by a short presentation, followed by a panel discussion and question & answer period.

Panelists:

Mary Boegel, MD
Dan Geiger, MBA
Pat Snyder, RN, PhD

Thursday, April 18, 7-9 PM
Our Savior's Lutheran Church Sanctuary
1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette CA

Free event but RSVP is requested:

<https://tinyurl.com/HCAFixit>

Sponsors:

Health Care for All - Contra Costa County
Business Alliance for a Healthy California
Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center
League of Women Voters Diablo Valley
Lamorinda Peace and Justice Group

info@lwvdv.org (925) 283-2235

Leader's Letters: Building a League Legacy

Martha Goralka, LWVDV Co-President

The League of Women Voters is made up of people reflecting every religious community. For some of us this is a time of deep thoughtfulness. This is one of my latest reflections.



Our LWVDV membership chair — before Ashley Coates so ably stepped up as chair — was Audrey Albrecht. In addition to working with our League members, Audrey was also devoted to affordable housing, attending meetings, and advocating for affordability. In addition, she came all the way out to Brentwood to table for the League when the Health Care for All film, “The Time is Now,” was shown at the Brentwood Community Center. Audrey was a dedicated office volunteer; so you can imagine my shock when she gave me her key to the League office at what turned out to be her last board meeting. I am a perpetual denier, so I could not believe she would not be needing her key. I didn’t know then that her cancer was back, and this time it was winning. Audrey gave freely of herself and I’m proud to have known her. She did fight the good fight on every level of her life. Her legacy lives on in all of us as we continue to Make Democracy Work by every means imaginable.

Our Diablo Valley League is working on curriculum for our high schools; the League will be speaking to low income housing groups; Shawn Gilbert has already presented our League history to DVC students during March Women’s History Month; we’re gearing up for our 2020 Election Season; we’re helping with the DVC student elections this month; we’ve already held our observer training meeting; we’ve selected our State League issues and are working on the selection of our Local League’s priority issues. . . . and so much more. Audrey’s League legacy is there for all to see. It is exemplary. She died June 30, 2018. What will your legacy and my legacy be as we complete our League journey? Your decision and mine is today and every day. I hope our daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters in the next 100 years benefit from the legacy we’re building right now.

Suzan Requa, LWVDV Co-President

We have now come face to face with the results of policy advocacy based on false promises:

“The wealthy, with lower taxes, will create more middle class jobs. All working families with those jobs will have quality health care and retirement without government subsidies. Current jobs are disappearing for some Americans totally because of too much governmental and environmental regulation. Cut all regulations and those jobs will return.”

There is not enough corporate nor individual profit in making democracy work nor for providing community service for all. All businesses and individuals make use of government investment, government subsidy, and government regulations.

Those of us of LWVDV are still believers in democracy for all and diversity in leadership. We want to return to rebuilding a healthy government safety net of services. We have constructive and timely work to do.

Building grass roots expertise, communication skills, advocacy, and networking are key to changing this dynamic of the destruction of our democracy and the refusal to fund historical government services, government regulation, and government investment.

What is your personal focus of concern? Is it affordable housing/homelessness? ACA or Healthcare as essential (including with pre-existing conditions)? Separation of immigrant children from their families? Gun safety and violence prevention? Campaign finance? Voting Rights and/or Gerrymandering? Voting District Creation? Election security? Climate Change?



We have a need for volunteers with communication skills in all computer and social media forms and in public speaking.

Work with us to build the POLITICAL WILL to generate community solutions at our local city councils and state legislature through partnership of LWVDV and your known non-profit, non-partisan allies.

Donate to us for local community issues education and/or to the LWV nationally to support the legal battles for a return to voting rights act and an end to gerrymandering, among other fundamental democratic principles.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Two Town Halls on Race

Tuesday, April 23rd, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Special Guest: Congresswoman Karen Bass (CA-37), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and first African American woman to be Speaker of the California Assembly

Diablo Valley College Cafeteria
321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Saturday, April 27th, 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Hosted With: Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13)

Black Repertory Group Theater
3201 Adeline Street, Berkeley, CA 94703

RSVP for either: <https://desaulnier.house.gov/town-hall-rsvp>. Information on the first event in this series, held on February 3, 2018, can be found [here](#).

Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition Report

Marian Shostrom, LWVDV reporter

The League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley recently joined the Contra Costa Budget Justice Coalition (BJC) <https://www.budgetjusticecc.org/>. The Coalition is chaired by Dan Geiger, Director of the Human Services Alliance of Contra Costa, and its mission is to advocate for community engagement in the budgeting process and “for a set of values-based budgeting principles that support safe and affordable housing, stable employment with fair wages, sufficient healthy food, essential health care, access to critical social services, quality early care and education.”

Anna Roth, Director of Contra Costa Health Services, and Kathy Gallagher, Director of Contra Costa Employment & Human Services, spoke at a recent BJC Meeting in Concord. The largest share of the \$3.58 billion County budget—70%--goes to Health and Human Services. It is important for the Coalition to understand budget priorities and processes for those departments.



Ms. Roth said that food insecurity (hunger) is a huge issue for about 60% of Health Services clients. The budget is driven by the needs of the County’s most vulnerable population. The Health System is changing from system centered to human centered. The current priorities are to maintain existing services, and to identify what metrics of health to use. Challenges include cost increases and flat or declining revenues.

Ms. Gallagher explained that Employment & Human Services receives Federal, State, and County funding. Many services they provide are legally mandated: welfare; child protection; Head Start; Workforce Development. Revenues for CalFresh and CalWorks are declining. There are new requirements with fewer staff.

Following the presentations, Mr. Geiger moderated a discussion among the presenters and the non-profit and union groups present. It is clear that increased advocacy at the state and federal level is needed, and that the County needs more revenue.

The Budget Justice Coalition meets the last Thursday of the Month from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Richmond Community Foundation. For slides from the February 28, 2019 presentations, as well as slides from the County Budget Workshop on December 5, 2018, click on the link below.

<https://www.budgetjusticecc.org/resources>

League Observers = Government Watchdogs

Melanie Speir, LWVDV reporter

Attendees at the March 16th LWVDV meeting learned how to be government watchdogs by keeping an eye on councils, boards, and commissions and reporting back to League committees. This is a critical need for democracy to work. As one of

the presenters said, "It truly makes a big difference for officials to know they're being observed by someone committed to good government."

League officers and a panel of experienced observers provided detailed instructions about how to do this, including two excellent handouts: "LWVDV Observer Corps Reporting Form" and "Basics for LWV Diablo Valley Observers" and shared their personal experiences of observing for the League. Entertaining skits illustrated some how-to's in common circumstances.

Highlights from the handouts and presentations:

1. Sign up to receive meeting notices and agendas for the meetings you want to cover.
2. Do a little homework: read agendas and backup materials before meetings.
3. Learn about the Brown Act - it's online.
4. Introduce yourself briefly to the body at a public comment period when you begin observing, wear your League button and be ready to talk to officials and the public about league observers.
5. Gather information from each meeting and use the LWVDV Observer Report Form as a guide.
6. Report back!

Tips from the panel:

- Look at the organizations we cover to see if there's a group that appeals to you topically, preferably in your district.
- You don't need to attend every meeting. You can go online for minutes or watch televised meetings.
- Always remember you're an ambassador for LWV, whether a government body is interested in your issue or not.
- If you are attending a meeting as an observer but want to personally weigh in on a topic, express your opinion with a phone call or written letter, BUT don't go beyond your role as an observer. Observers watch and listen, but don't speak on agenda items - if that is needed, it's your job to notify the League members who speak for the League.
- Pay attention to other people attending these meetings to learn who else is interested in your issue.
- Note how members of commissions interact with each other to see who is supportive or not supportive.
- Report which members of a body are present or absent.
- Learn which staff members prepared the agenda report and which staff members are associated with an issue you're observing.
- Learn what information you might gather to prepare for a meeting. Check to see if the League has a position on the issue under consideration.
- Add notes and backup information to the observer form and be ready to participate with Advocacy committees if they need feedback about how a council stands on an issue.



Beyond 2020 – Independent Redistricting Commission Applications

The California State Auditor has launched the Shape California’s Future informational webpage! ShapeCaliforniasFuture.auditor.ca.gov is the official site for the public, community organizations, and stakeholders to get information about the application and selection process for the 2020 Citizens Redistricting Commission.

The new webpage houses general information and timelines about the application and selection process, regulations, and contact information, and allows interested parties to sign up for information and updates. Top Questions, Fact Sheets and other documents are available to download in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Tagalog.

You can apply for the Citizens Redistricting Commission if you meet the minimum eligibility requirements:

- Have been a registered voter since July 1, 2015;
- Have been registered with the same political party (or declined-to-state) since July 1, 2015; and
- Voted in at least two of the last three statewide elections.



However, an applicant is ineligible to serve on the Commission if the applicant has a conflict of interest as defined by the Act within the ten years prior to submitting an application.

Once the initial application period begins on June 10, 2019, ShapeCaliforniasFuture.auditor.ca.gov is the site where interested parties can begin the application process.

If you have any questions or feedback, please call 1-833-421-7550 or email shapecaliforniasfuture@auditor.ca.gov.

From LWVC President Helen Hutchison: Think about who you would like to see on the commission, and then start talking with them about this incredible opportunity!

Did You Know?

The [League of Women Voters supports abolition of the death penalty.](#)

In California, the League has supported both legislative and initiative measures to abolish the death penalty. LWVC is naming representatives to a new coalition on Abolishing the Death Penalty. The first meeting is March 28, from 9 am to 11 am. There will be technology connecting people around the state — in-person locations in LA, SF, and Sacramento, and a call-in option for others.

Update on H.R. 1, the “For the People” Act

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 1 on March 8, 2019 and sent it to the Senate. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY), Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Tom Udall (D-NM). Visit the [LWV US website](#) and select the Action Alert at the bottom of the home page to add your support to this bill.

DONATE

To support our newsletter and other activities, please donate online by clicking on this button or visiting our website at www.lwvdv.org.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS & UPDATES

If your name appears below, then it is time to renew your membership in April. Please use the form on the back page. If you have already renewed, thank you! (*We send three notices before deleting but remember: expiration date does not change even if payment is later.*)

Sallyanne Erickson

Murial Sonne

Welcome, new members: Cathy and Sophia Corbett, Cynthia Culmer, Cathleen Crane, Gayle and Gregg Saxton, Dennis and Maria White, and Diane and Francois Envent!

Did you join LWV before 1969? If you have been a member ever since then, you are a Life Member and do not pay dues. Contact Membership Chair Ashley Coates to upgrade your status!



We're on Facebook! Visit us and LIKE our Facebook page. <http://tinyurl.com/of4o2pj>

And Twitter! Follow us on Twitter -- @LWVDiabloValley



LWV Bay Area Council: Regional Voters Service Training

The Biennial Council will consist of a short business meeting and then proceed to a special Voters Service 101 presentation from LWVC. This 101 course will cover Forum 'to do's' as well as how to handle bad behavior from candidates and guests, what's needed for a seamless video production, and an opportunity to discuss the creation of a regional question bank. We realize all counties and public offices are not alike. However, a question bank allows the "idea-juices" to flow as inspiration to other Leagues.

Date & Time: Saturday, April 27th

9:30 Networking, 10:00 - 1:30 pm - Council with presentation by LWVC

Location: Bellevue Club, 525 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610

Cost: \$10 local League fee covers President and LWVBA liaison; others pay \$10 each.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-league-of-women-voters-of-the-bay-area-biennial-council-tickets-56538948517>



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 500 St. Mary's Road, #14
 Lafayette, CA 94549

LWVDV Board Members:

- Suzan Requa, *Co-President*
- Martha Goralka, *Co-President & Voter Service Chair*
- Sue Brandy, *Vice President*
- Karen Dolder, *Secretary*
- Barbara Hill, *Treasurer*
- Lee Lawrence, *Action/Advocacy*
- Leslie Stewart, *Communications*
- Barbara Coenen, *Office Mgr*
- Marian Shostrom, *At-Large Director*
- Ann Flynn, *At-Large Director*
- Diane Bianchi, *At-Large Director*
- Ashley Coates, *Membership*
- Tammy Moulton, *At-Large Director*
- Nancy Thursby, *At-Large Director*

Membership: Join Us or Renew!

Membership is not based on ability to pay. To pay alternate dues or to request a scholarship, please contact Barbara Hill at the League office: (925) 283-2235.

- \$ _____ \$75 Individual Membership. Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
 - \$ _____ \$110 Family Membership (2). Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
 - \$ _____ \$35 Associate Membership. Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
 - \$ _____ \$10 Student Membership. Indicate NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
 - \$ _____ GIFT MEMBERSHIP (circle appropriate category above)
 - Gift Membership from: _____
 - (Please write recipient's information below.)
 - \$ _____ \$10 included to receive printed copies of the *Voter* by US Mail
 - \$ _____ Additional Donation to LWVDV
 - \$ _____ **TOTAL** of ALL above enclosed to LWVDV.
- (LWVDV is a 501(c)3 organization. Dues and donations to LWVDV are tax-deductible. Tax ID number supplied on request.)*

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please print, complete, and mail this form along with your check to:
 LWVDV, 500 St. Mary's Road #14, Lafayette, CA 94549

**CALENDAR
 MONTHLY MEETINGS**

- Apr 6 Action Committee**
 10-noon [LWVDV Office](#)
- Apr 11 Board Meeting**
 10:15 - [LWVDV Office](#)
 12:15 am
- May 4 Action Committee**
 10-noon [LWVDV Office](#)
- May 9 Board Meeting**
 6:30 - [LWVDV Office](#)
 8:30 pm

**Check out our website,
www.lwvdv.org to keep up
 on meetings and activities!**