

IMPORTANT DATES
(regular meetings page 10)

WHAT TO DO NOW

Respond to **LWVUS Action Alert** on Funding to Keep the 2020 Election Safe and Secure
(lwv.org, click on Take Action)

Participate in **Census 2020!**
Find your form, get online and file!

Talk to the LWVDV **Nominating Committee** about how you can be part of LWVDV leadership in 2020-21

Learn to use **Zoom** if you haven't already – for tips, email info@lwvdv.org.
Video helps keep us closer!

Take advantage of extra time to figure out how to **access your city council** meetings remotely – and share the information!

Explore the LWVDV **website**
(also LWVC and LWVUS)

NO PUBLIC MEETING IN APRIL

LWV Diablo Valley is not holding any meetings this month other than Board and Action/Advocacy Committee. These will be held remotely using Zoom. For access information for the Zoom meetings, please contact us at the email or phone below.



City Councils, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, and other government bodies are also meeting remotely. For more information on how to access these meetings, see page 3 and check out the [webpage](#) for updated information.

Stay safe and well!

info@lwvdv.org (925) 283-2235

President's Letter from Suzan

Dear League Leaders, Members and Friends:

We want you to **stay safe and stay safely engaged** in our community services -- Action/Advocacy and Voter Services -- work.

Got Zoom? We continue to hold our Action/Advocacy Team meetings and our Board Meetings. We are using the virtual method of online Zoom video and voice service for our meetings.

We invite and need your attendance at our LWVDV Annual Membership Meeting.

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 30TH AT 10:00 AM. This will be an online conference meeting with video and voice service. You will be able to use your computer, laptop or iPad and/or your smartphone of any variety.



SAVE THE DATE: We need a quorum of members to vote to continue services for the next year so **we will request an RSVP.** With your RSVP we can provide the online meeting information you will need to attend.

SAVE THE DATE and watch for email from LWVDV for instructions on your participation in the call and how to vote. Vote for our elected Board officers and directors; vote to approve our budget; consider and vote to approve our LWVDV Program Priorities.

SAVE THE DATE to meet our voter service leaders and learn of all the services we will provide for the critical November election with your volunteer help.

We are thankful for these options to stay connected and support each other SAFELY. We know that these are strenuously challenging times and that the health risks are highest for all of us. We are fortunate to have such a caring and effective leadership and membership. If possible for you, please do participate to help yourself stay emotionally healthy and focused on constructive activity with our LWVDV.

Call our office and leave a message if you have questions - 925-283-2235. It's our same phone number, but we have a new phone service that is improving our response time.

What's Your League Niche?

Both LWV Diablo Valley and LWV Bay Area are currently looking for just the right people to fill some Board and off-Board slots. Whether it's speaking to local governments, doing voter registration, taking a good look at important regional agencies, or just helping to keep things running smoothly for the Board, there's a place for you if you're interested. Contact Ashley Coates (ashleyaoc@comcast.net) for information about LWVDV, or Leslie Stewart (lwwleslie@gmail.com) for LWWBA.

ACTION/ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Action/Advocacy Committee will meet on April 4, 2020, from 10 am – noon. This will be a **Zoom Only Meeting**. See the links below.

It is best if you join with your computer, using a camera and sound, so that everyone can see and hear each other. The other option is to call in on a phone. NOTE: If you use an iPad, you can only view nine participants on a screen; if you use a phone, you can view four participants on a screen.

Agenda Highlights

- Covid19 in Contra Costa: Status, Impact, Possible LWVDV Action
- Census 2020
- Contra Costa County Budget Justice Coalition Report

Please join us to take action while you are sheltering in place.

Topic: Action/Advocacy Team Meeting

Time: Apr 4, 2020 10:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/315962867>

Meeting ID: 315 962 867

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,315962867# US (San Jose)



Virtual Meetings, Real Public Participation

Interested in what your government is doing? You don't need to be an official League 'Observer' to keep an eye on it. If you have been following a governmental agency, know that meetings are likely now on-line in real time. (For some examples of how that is working, you can read our Observer Reports in this issue.)

With the 'shelter in place' order, your meeting has likely gone virtual but is still accessible to you – you may even be able to comment, just as you would if you were in the same room (something official observers aren't supposed to do!). Here are two examples – more on the LWVDV [website](#).

Contra Costa County:

Start at <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/> and scroll down to News and information about county meetings. Board of Supervisor John Gioia's office clarified the temporary policy responding to Governor Newsom's COVID-19 executive order. This information is available on Board agendas going forward:

To slow the spread of COVID-19, the Health Officer's Shelter Order of March 16, 2020, prevents public gatherings. In lieu of a public gathering, the Board of Supervisors meeting will be accessible via television and live-streaming to all members of the public as permitted by the Governor's Executive Order 29-20. Board meetings are televised live on Comcast Cable 27, ATT/U-Verse Channel 99, and WAVE Channel 32, and can be seen live online at www.contracosta.ca.gov.

Persons who wish to address the Board during Public Comment or with respect to an item that is on the agenda may submit public comments to publiccomment@cob.cccounty.us either before or during the meeting. All comments submitted before the conclusion of the meeting will be included in the record of the meeting. When feasible, the Clerk of the Board also will read the comments into the record at the meeting, subject to a two-minute time limit per comment.

City of Concord:

Start at <http://www.cityofconcord.org/> and click on City Council Agenda icon to get to agenda, televised meeting (including archive), and instructions on public participation.

LWVUS Advocacy Guidance for Virtual Transparency of Government Bodies

LWVUS has put together guidance for Leagues to use when working with government bodies regarding virtual meetings and transparency. We hope that these guidelines will help Leagues to advocate for open, transparent, and accessible processes for our government in the face of COVID-19 and future emergency situations that require limitation of in-person contact. [Read the advisory memo on the League Management Site.](#)



Our Observers Report In

Carol Murota, Observer Corps Coordinator

New Board of Supervisors Observer Team

Among the many governmental bodies in Contra Costa County that interest the League, the Board of Supervisors is pivotal. It functions as a city council for unincorporated areas. It also passes and enforces county legislation and importantly, oversees services like public health, the county library system, criminal justice, and social services. We have five elected officials who make top level decisions that affect all of us, each representing one district of Contra Costa County. Thanks again to our energetic League members for volunteering to observe this body. Our new "JM³" BOS team is Janet Hoy, Marian Shostrom, Mary Schreiber, and Martha Goralka. See Janet's first report [on our website](#) this month – COVID-19, homeless numbers and Psych Emergency Services remodel.

If you are interested in joining the Observer Corps, know we could always use your help. And most organizations like your City Councils and School Boards are meeting 'on-line' with electronic access so everyone can stay safe.

Lafayette City Council Zooms to Meetings

In response to Shelter in Place orders, the Lafayette City Council started holding their meetings using *Zoom*. The city attorney confirmed that during this 'shelter in place' period, our City Council meetings can be held via Zoom (or whatever method the jurisdiction sets up). Viewers can make their customary time-limited comments and there is a visual component. Importantly, the public has real time access using this Zoom account to make public comments - a couple of obscene ones were made which made me think having to stand in public to make comments might encourage good manners - otherwise comments were succinct and civil. As usual, their meetings are posted on the City website. Hurrah for making technology work for government!

During the March 20 meeting, the Lafayette City Council, with the help of the City Manager, Niroop Srivatsa, discussed the long- and short-term vitality of downtown businesses. As city leaders, they raised the question of 1) sales taxes - reducing, delaying, or eliminating the City portion, 2) allowing sandwich boards on sidewalks to attract passers-by to 'open for take-out' eateries and 3) eliminating all parking meter fees, public and privately managed, to enable patrons to shop easily. They encouraged everyone to stay safe, but consider ordering take-out from the many businesses struggling to pay their staffs.

The Lafayette Reservoir is officially closed and City Manager Srivatsa plans to meet with EBMUD to understand the rationale for the closing. The City Council discussed pros to keeping it open – it is a heavily used, a popular walking area and, like the regional parks, it is part of the health regimen for many -- and the reasons for keeping it closed – keeping the EBMUD employees safe, the tot-playground might not be kept properly disinfected, and perhaps most importantly, the paths are too narrow to maintain a healthy 6 foot separation. Life is never straightforward.

Walnut Creek Is Building More Housing

The Walnut Creek City staff reports a proposed project would produce 3 buildings at 1532 and 1556 Mt. Diablo Blvd in Walnut Creek. Altogether it would result in 42 condos, 22,400 square feet of commercial space, rooftop dining, and 2 levels of subterranean parking. The project would include a public plaza, and, while it removes one tree, there would be four new street trees planted.

Concord City Council Update



Mary Schreiber, LWVDV Observer

Concord City Council meeting was broadcast on CCTV. Public comments were submitted by email and read by staff.

City Council Meeting 3/24/20 - City of Concord's agreement with developer Lennar for the Naval Weapons Station:

Concord City Council voted not to extend the partnership with Lennar, effectively sending the project back to the drawing board. The dispute was over whether the development company had negotiated in good faith with representatives of labor.

Special City Council Meeting 3/25/20 - Moratorium on evictions and rent increases:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Concord City Council voted unanimously to enact a moratorium on evictions and rent increases through May 31. *[Note: This complies with the governor's statewide order prohibiting evictions for nonpayment of rent.]* Additionally, the City is establishing a mediation/advocacy program for tenants whose landlords do not comply with the temporary eviction and rent moratorium.

A Monthly Exercise in Exploring Our Own Unconscious Biases

Sue Brandy, LWVDV Administrative Vice President



This month the LWVDV Board will be discussing the question from Chapter 2 of *Waking Up White*. Last month we had a short but important discussion about the first chapter question, which asked about stereotypes each of us remembers our parents communicating to us as a child. This month the question is:

"What values and admonitions did you learn in your family? Think about education, work, lifestyle, money, expression of emotions, and so forth. Try making a list of ten principles, values, and unspoken beliefs. Siblings and cousins can be good resources for thinking about this. Now consider what conclusions you drew about people who did not appear to follow your family's belief system."

Join the Board in thinking about these topics each month. It's an opportunity to become more conscious and aware of our own blind spots and misunderstandings about people who are different from us.

Suffragists You Need to Meet: Selina Solomons

Shawn Gilbert, LWVDV Vice President

Selina Solomons grew up in a middle-class Sephardic Jewish family in San Francisco. As a feminist, she worked to improve the standard of living for the underprivileged, and fought against forced prostitution. However, Solomons is best known for her devoted leadership in the fight for women's suffrage and for the key role she played in California women finally succeeding in winning this right in 1911.



Crushed by the loss of the first attempt to win suffrage in 1896, many suffragists stepped back from the movement for a period of five years. Solomons took the time to evaluate where things went wrong and came to believe that the suffragists had been too limited in the scope of their outreach: the movement was too confined to San Francisco and too centered on organizing only the elite class of women. The movement was beginning to regroup when the 1906 earthquake happened. Energies were diverted to recovery efforts, which temporarily hindered the resurging efforts of the suffrage movement.

In 1910, Solomons founded the Votes for Women Club in downtown S.F. on Sutter St. This club was designed with the working-class woman in mind, but was open to all including any interested progressive men. The Union Square loft (the suffrage epicenter) included a small kitchen, which offered a daily variety of nutritious meals for a reasonable cost. The Club loft also included "Rest and Reading Rooms", where late afternoon teas were served. Solomons believed that the "girl who comes to eat, stays to read and talk." The Club was a welcoming place for women of every class mingled, learned about suffrage, and strategized for their common goal.

The walls of the Votes for Women Club were plastered with every sort of suffrage poster, yellow paper flowers, and other memorabilia. Suffrage literature was readily available all around. Speakers in the suffrage movement from all around the world gave lively lectures, and musical performances were also a regular affair at the Club. Indeed, Solomons even penned a comedy playlet called, "The Girl from Colorado" or, "The Conversion of Aunty Suffridge: An American Votes-For-Women Comedy with a Love Interest."

The activities and popularity of the Votes for Women Club soon led to it becoming the statewide central headquarters for the movement. As the membership grew, Solomons successfully recruited Club women to expand their outreach efforts. Many joined her to canvass previously ignored neighborhoods, such as the poor Irish and German immigrant workers along the South of Market. Women in these neighborhoods supported the movement, but had not previously known how to get involved.

To defray the cost of the club, Solomons accepted donations at all performances, lectures, and marches, and held Suffrage Bazaars during the Christmas holiday. In addition, she requested members pay dues of three dollars a year. To enhance the treasury further, Solomons created a dues-paying Men's Auxiliary, open to any class of men.

Following the winning of the October 10, 1911, passage of Amendment Eight, giving women in California the right to vote, Solomons took up the task of writing and capturing the history of the campaign. In 1912, she published [*How We Won the Vote in California: The True Story of the Campaign of 1911*](#). It remains the most comprehensive profile of the organizing efforts of California suffragists, both women and men, from San Francisco, Oakland, Stockton, Alameda, Bakersfield, and Los Angeles, just to mention a few.

Considering Health Care Reform

Marian Shostrom and Pat Snyder, LWVDV Health Care Issue Co-Chairs

During the recent campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, issues related to health care reform were frequently discussed and debated by the candidates. There is much evidence that health care is a high priority for many Americans in this election season. The Covid19 pandemic has made health care an even more urgent issue for many people, especially those who do not have health insurance or who had employer-provided insurance and are now unemployed.

When it once again becomes possible to gather for discussion of policy issues, we would like to organize a discussion for LWV-DV members who are interested in exploring health care policy. We can all share our views and information about the policy proposals under discussion and consider how we would like to see this critical issue addressed by our elected officials. Look for more information about this event in the future.

In the meantime, here are links to recently published articles of interest.

- An article by Marcia Angell, a member of Harvard Medical School's Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, and a former editor-in-chief of the New England Journal of Medicine: [Why the U.S. Failed the Coronavirus Test](#).
- An [article in The Lancet](#), from the scientific medical community, analyzing the elements of health care costs.

Voter Service: Thinking Ahead

Martha Goralka, LWVDV Voter Service Chair

Our Primary Election efforts went well, thanks to your help; the names of the many, many Leaguers to thank were listed in the February Voter.

Now may feel like the time to take it easy during our "new normal." But your Voter Service addicts are already plotting to improve registration efforts, VotersEdge promotion, and candidate forums and roundtables. We'll be asking for your help just as soon as our shelter-in-place requirements ease.

Sharon Burke, a former Voter Service chair, has agreed to facilitate a Moderator's Training Workshop on Saturday, May 9th (This date clearly may change due to the virus.) We haven't set a time or location; but interest surveys indicate we have many members interested in moderating for the General Election. By starting early to train and put teams together, we plan to have several teams available for live audience forums. This means the League can have more than one forum on the same evening or afternoon.



Kay James is already getting requests for Pros & Cons speakers for next fall; she has a call back list for when she is able to actually set dates.

VotersEdge is poised for another successful season, as are our registration teams.

DVC Student Elections have been postponed indefinitely.

So shake off your boredom and dream about serving voters during this coming 2020 General Election. Don't plan anything else for those key September and October dates. And if you have

clever ideas for registering voters, presenting forums or presenting Pros & Cons by some kind of electronic wizardry, please let us know!

Guest Article: Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

This article is a followup to a presentation to the LWVDV Action/Advocacy Committee in March. Author is Lisa Dell'Anno, Diablo Valley Moms Demand Action - Be SMART Lead.

Moms Demand Action <https://momsdemandaction.org/about/> is the largest grassroots organization of Americans who strive to reduce gun violence and encourage responsible gun ownership. We want to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers, felons, and those who are a danger to themselves and others. We are non-partisan, and our volunteers include gun owners, gun violence survivors and people from all walks of life (we aren't just Moms; we like to say we are "mothers and others").

Moms Demand Action has established a chapter in every state of the country and along with Students Demand Action, and Survivor Network, we make up Everytown For Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country, with nearly 6 million supporters. [Everytown Research](#) has abundant fact-based statistics on gun violence, and on the patchwork of gun laws in our nation. Over 100 people die every day from gun violence, either from homicide, suicide, or unintentional shootings. This is close to 40,000 people a year, a sober statistic nobody should accept as normal.

An important function is to educate about existing firearm laws, and the importance of responsible gun ownership. We have two educational programs. One is called **Be SMART**, which is focused on the education and awareness about child gun deaths and responsible gun storage. Locally, we try to get the Safe Storage message out via School Districts, or PTAs. The second is called **Speak for Safety**, which is designed to raise awareness of the California Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO or Red Flag Law) and how to obtain one. Moms groups reach out to local law enforcement agencies and District Attorneys to advocate that police get trained in seeking and enforcing GVROs.

In California, we are partnering with other gun violence prevention groups like Brady and Giffords to advocate for more funding for the **Cal VIP** (Violence Intervention & Prevention).

On the Federal level, our volunteers keep pressure on legislators to pass a **Universal Background Check law**, to keep guns out of the hands of felons, domestic abusers, and minors, which has been hung up in the Senate. Also, Moms advocate for a national **Red Flag Law**, allowing the removal of guns from people at risk, e.g. domestic abusers, people threatening violence or suicide, or seniors with dementia.

Moms Demand Action is also involved in [elections](#). We ask for candidates to fill out a questionnaire, and then award a **Gun Sense Candidate Distinction** if they demonstrate they will govern with gun safety in mind. Candidates could add this to their resume on the LWV VotersEdge. Volunteers also will canvass for gun sense candidates, and work from phone banks to influence elections in other states.

We hope to liaison with LWV on cross-over interests. We'd urge anyone who believes more can be done to reduce gun violence, to [join Moms Demand Action](#) and help push our supporter numbers up to 7 million. There is no cost, unless you choose to donate, and you can be as active or as non-active as you like. We have an active group in Diablo Valley that meets in Alamo, or the new group in Lafayette. Joining will give you access to news of upcoming events, marches, town halls, and calls to actions.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about Moms, also if you have a PTA group, a Church group, or other community group that would benefit from the 15 minute Be SMART presentation regarding children and safe storage: 925-956-9496 or LisaD4CA@gmail.com.

Progress Report on Schools and Communities First

Carol Murota, LWVDV SCF Campaign Chair

Time to celebrate! Thanks to everyone for your help -- with our massive effort from East County to Danville (and especially Rossmoor), our League returned 2,223 signatures to SCF headquarters. We can, for the moment, rest on our laurels. It has been fun and rewarding to be part of such an enthusiastic, energetic, and over-achieving team of League members and friends.

From Helen Hutchison at LWVC:

Signatures: We have reached — and probably surpassed — our overall goal of 1.6 million signatures! The turn-in event, originally scheduled for March 26, has been delayed. This is to allow the county offices to work with the Secretary of State to develop a protocol for signature turn-in that protects the people on both sides of the turn-in.

Qualification press conference: This will be an online press event, with some key spokespeople available to speak to the press. Once we know the date and time, I'll let everyone know so that we can all support it with social media.

Framing: The campaign is developing some updated framing and messaging, shifting the narrative from exposing bad actors to appealing to our interdependence, and lifting the stories of the frontline workers (nurses, teachers), and making the case for investing in public health and local services.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

If you have a March membership anniversary, watch for your renewal reminder.

If you have been a League member for 50 years or more, you are a Life Member. Life Members do not pay dues. Contact Membership Chairs Ashley and Cathleen to upgrade your status!



Visit us and LIKE our **Facebook** page.

<http://tinyurl.com/of4o2pj>

Follow us on **Twitter** -- @LWVDiabloValley

See us on **Instagram**: @lwvdiablovalley

DONATE

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

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- Shawn Gilbert, *First Vice President*
- Sue Brandy, *Admin. Vice President*
- Karen Dolder, *Secretary, Office Co-Mgr*
- Barbara Hill, *Treasurer*
- Marian Shostrom, *Action/Advocacy*
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- Ashley Coates, *Membership Co-Chair*
- Cathleen Kirk, *Membership Co-Chair*
- Martha Goralka, *Voter Service Co-Chair*
- Linda Soliven, *LWVBA Liaison, Census*
- Leslie Stewart, *At-Large Director*
- Christina Soto-Maynez, *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. NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
- \$ _____ \$110 Family Membership (2). NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
- \$ _____ \$35 Additional Family Membership. NEW ___ or RENEWAL ___
- \$ _____ \$10 Student Membership. 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, Lafayette, CA 94549

**CALENDAR
 MONTHLY MEETINGS**

- Apr 4** **Action Committee**
 10-noon Zoom Meeting*
- Apr 9** **Board Meeting**
 6:30 pm - Zoom Meeting*
 8:30 pm
- May 2** **Action Committee**
 10-noon Zoom Meeting*
[LWVDV Office?](#)
- May 14** **Board Meeting**
 10:15 am - Zoom Meeting*
 12:15 pm [LWVDV Office?](#)

***To participate in a Zoom meeting, leave a message with your email address on the office phone and meeting link will be sent to you.**