



## June/July 2025 VOTER



Can you spot our LWVDV members in this crowd? Why were they there?  
See more below. . .

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## President's Letter

League Leaders and Members:

The assault on our democracy and our rights is unrelenting and LWV is fighting back.

**LWVDV members have participated in protests** around the area on May 1 and on Saturdays in Walnut Creek. Several of us attended the press conference advocating for immigrants outside the Federal Immigration Court on Concord on May 15.

**In California**, LWVC is co-sponsoring [SB 42, the California Fair Elections Act](#), to remove the ban on publicly-financed local elections. I attended a kickoff event in Berkeley on May 18 with other LWVDV members. **[We are working to get this legislation passed in Sacramento](#)** and then our Action-Advocacy team will be recruiting volunteers to gather signatures to get this measure on the ballot.



**At the national level, LWVUS is active on many fronts**, including challenging the Anti-Voter Trump Executive Order signed in April. More information and updates are [here](#). LWVUS issues statements and press releases frequently, and you can keep up by signing up for their emails. You can also check the information and links to details on LWVUS activities on our LWVDV [webpage](#).

Mary Schreiber  
LWVDV President

### ANNUAL MEETING NEWS:

Please see the Board listing at the end of the Voter for the new 2025-26 Board members. We also elected three Nominating Committee members: Susan Hildreth, Brooke Schwartz and Valerie Ventre-Hutton!

Program Priorities were adopted as proposed. See the [Annual Meeting Kit](#) for more information.

## Join the Summer Fun!

**Our puppet star for this summer is Bertie. She is a sweet burrowing owl.**

The Contra Costa County Library is once again inviting LWV Diablo Valley to participate in the Summer Exploration Stations Program. Our puppet friends are so excited about going out into the community to talk to children and their families about voting.

**I still need volunteers to help me from 11 am – 1 pm on June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Dougherty Station Library and June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Walnut Creek Library.** If you would like to be a part of this summer fun let me know. I will send you all the information you need to know about burrowing owls and the process for how the day will go with the children. Please contact [Shawn@lwvdv.org](mailto:Shawn@lwvdv.org).



## Fact vs Fiction: LWVDV's New "Mis/Disinformation" Presentation

June 6, 2025, 6:30 pm

Lafayette Library Homework Center

Open to the public -- bring friends!

Register at [www.tinyurl.com/LAF-fact-fiction](http://www.tinyurl.com/LAF-fact-fiction)



## League Lunch, Wednesday, June 11

Join us for our monthly no-host lunch on **Wednesday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 am** at Bar Camino, 1470 North Broadway, Walnut Creek. There's easy, affordable parking across the street at the library parking lot.

Please let Janet Hoy know you're coming -- you can email her at [janet@lwvdv.org](mailto:janet@lwvdv.org). We're looking forward to seeing everyone!

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## Rally for Democracy – Our First **Unite and Rise 8.5** Action!

*Holding elected officials accountable to the public interest is not a partisan act; it is a vital function of a healthy democracy.*



On May 1, 2025 the LWVUS launched the [Unite and Rise 8.5 initiative](#) -- 8.5 million is the estimated number of voters the League seeks to activate to combat an authoritarian takeover attempt through nonpartisan protest and civic activism.

LWVDV is taking up this initiative throughout Contra Costa County by offering our members and community allies a range of activities we can do locally in protest to the administration's abuse of power.

Our first action will be a **Rally for Democracy on June 14<sup>th</sup>** in Walnut Creek from 11 am - 1:30 pm. For more information,, or to plan, prepare, and participate, contact [unite.rise@lwvdv.org](mailto:unite.rise@lwvdv.org).



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## Orientation to LWVDV for Members and Prospective Members

If you want to learn about LWV Diablo Valley and how to



become involved, join our next Orientation on Saturday, June 28 (11:00 am to 12:15 pm).

This orientation will take place on Zoom.

Send an email to [membership@lwvdv.org](mailto:membership@lwvdv.org) to register.  
I will send the Zoom link a few days prior to the event.

Ashley Coates

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## We Won! And So Did Our Community!

**"Congratulations! Your League has been selected to win the Strength in Collaborating award!"**

This was the message that was received by LWVDV on May 27 from LWV California. Diane Bianchi and Brooke Schwartz wrote the winning award application, which described **our work with Hispanic community organizations to create and distribute postcards with voting information in Spanish during the 2024 election season.** Ana Pan and Shawn Gilbert were also active in making this project a success. Our community partners included LWV West Contra Costa County, United Latino Voices, and Douglas Lezameta from the Contra Costa Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.



The award will be made during the business part of the LWVC Convention on Sunday, June 22.

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## Progress Report on California Fair Elections Act

Great news! **SB 42, the *California Fair Elections Act*, cleared a major hurdle on May 23, 2025, passing the Senate Appropriations Committee 5-1! Thank you for making this happen!**

This bill is our best chance to curb the influence of billionaires in politics by putting a measure on the ballot that allows any jurisdiction in California to adopt public campaign financing — giving voters more power and ensuring good candidates can compete with Big Money interests.

**Now SB 42 moves to the Senate floor, where it will be decided by June 6.** We need to rally as much support as possible to secure votes! Please continue to contact your State Senator to urge him/her to vote "YES", and share this great opportunity to make a difference with three neighbors!



*Anna Honda, Action-Advocacy Co-Chair*

### **From the Treasurer's Corner:**

With the new membership system, all renewals are paid online. Under limited circumstances, we can allow offline payments. When paying online, we ask that you kindly consider paying by US bank account to minimize the fees your local League pays for processing your payment. Follow [this link](#) for **step-by-step instructions on how to set up a new Payment Method using your bank account**. It also gives you an opportunity to take a look at the new Membership Portal. Thank you for your consideration.

*Paul Derksen, Treasurer*

### **And a Scam Alert:**

We were recently notified of **an attempt to scam a member** with an email asking her to purchase gift cards for LWVDV. Please be aware that we never ask our members to make this kind of donation to us.

## **Celebrating and Defending Democracy!**

### **Celebrate Our Nation's Birthday on July 4th!**

**Something to celebrate:** the Contra Costa County Elections Office does a lot of work to ensure that elections are fair and safe for us all. At the March 12<sup>th</sup> Contra Costa Elections Community Engagement meeting, attended by several LWVDV members, we learned that in the November 2024 election **the county had the largest number ever of people registered to vote**. Over 74% turned out to vote. Unfortunately, this is 10% less than was estimated by the county. Estimations are an important part of the preparation process for elections. Reading through the [notes from this meeting](#) offers good insights into the work that takes place to get ready for elections.

### **Overcoming Angst**

Every day it seems as though another Executive Order is signed challenging the rights of Americans and the very foundations of our democracy. I do a lot of talking to myself to keep from becoming overwhelmed. Perhaps you experience a similar angst. My way

of managing these feelings is to **seek out reputable individuals who are experts in their field to read or listen to**. In this instance, it's those who know law and the U.S. Constitution.



Recently I listened to **an episode of *Amicus* with Dahlia Lithwick** | Law, Justice, and the Courts on @TuneIn. #NowPlaying <http://tun.in/tFuRvB> In this episode, at the 24:14 mark, you will find a very good discussion with Wendy Wiser of the Brennan Center for Justice about the Executive Order (EO), *Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American*

*Elections*. While the title sounds like it is a good thing, it actually is deliberately designed to suppress people's vote. The SAVE Act, recently passed in the House of Representatives, is also designed to do the same thing...keep people from voting.

On *America's Constitution* on @TuneIn. #NowPlaying <http://tun.in/tFGqZ0> you will find another good discussion. In this episode, **Yale University professor Akhil Reed Amar** offers insightful analysis on the U.S. Constitution as it relates to elections, voting, and other guardrails designed to protect democracy. Yes, you and I, as voters and activists, are one of the major guardrails protecting our democracy. **Elections matter!**

*Shawn Gilbert, Voter Services Co-Chair*

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## Board Briefs for May 2025

At its meeting on May 8, the Board took the following actions:

- Appointed Audra Ruthruff as Membership Chair.
- Approved the draft budget to be submitted to members at the Annual Meeting.
- Appropriated funds for Meeting the Moment events, as proposed by Janet Hoy and Sue Brandy.
- Named delegates to the LWV California Convention in June: Mary Schreiber, Janet Hoy, Anna Honda, Shawn Gilbert, Paul Derksen, Kathy Gallagher.



The Board also

- Heard a report on participation in grassroots training for League members.
  - Received the Nominating Committee report and discussed other aspects of Annual Meeting planning.
  - Received reports from teams, including Action-Advocacy, Civic Engagement, Communications, Community Conversations, Membership, and Voter Services/Community Outreach.
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## Membership Updates and Information

**Welcome new members Susa Cooper, Chelsea Quinlan, and Mary Steiner!**

### **Thank you to our Renewing Members!**

We very much appreciate our continuing members. With more members, our voice is stronger.

### **Membership: Join Us or Renew!**

We have a new process for membership. Sign up online by going to our [website](#) and using the new Join page; if you cannot renew online, please call LWVDV at 925-283-2235. **If you have an upcoming membership anniversary, please check the Join page on the website for instructions on how to renew with the new system. We need you, so please renew!**

**Membership is not based on the ability to pay.** You select the dues amount when you join or renew. 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@lwvdv.org](mailto:membership@lwvdv.org) to upgrade your status!

Suggested dues: \$75 Individual Membership (\$20 minimum)

*(LWVDV is a 501(c)3 organization. Dues and donations to LWVDV are tax-deductible. Tax ID number supplied on request -- call the LWVDV office at 925-283-2235.)*

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*Image credits: Campaign kickoff, Guy Cummins, Pro Bono Photo; owl puppet, Shawn Gilbert, LWVDV; Bar Camino, website; Info sign, Anne Nygard on Unsplash; winner graphic, Pete Linforth, Pixabay; gavel and flag, Bermix Studio on Unsplash.*

### **CALENDAR of MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Board meetings are hybrid meetings at the LWVDV office or via Zoom\*. Luncheons are at Bar Camino in Walnut Creek.

**Wednesday, June 11, 11:30 am**

**Luncheon**

**Thursday, June 12, 10:00 am**

**Board Meeting**

**Monday, June 16, 3:00 pm**

**Action-Advocacy**

**Wednesday, July 9, 11:30 am**

**Luncheon**

**Monday, July 21, 3:00 pm**

**Action-Advocacy**

**Saturday, July 26, 10:00 am**

**Board Retreat**

\*To participate in a Zoom meeting, leave a message with your email address on our [email](#) or on the office phone (925-283-2235) to receive the link.



## **LWVDV Board Members (through June 2026):**

[Mary Schreiber](#), *President*

[Kathy Gallagher](#), *Vice President/Observer Corps*

[Karen Dolder](#), *Secretary, Office Manager*

[Paul Derksen](#), *Treasurer*

[Diane Bianchi](#), *Community Conversations Co-Chair*

[Anna Honda](#), *Action-Advocacy Co-Chair*

[Audra Ruthruff](#), *Membership Chair*

[Shawn Gilbert](#), *Voter Services and Community Conversations Co-Chair*

[Ana Pan](#), *Voter Services Co-Chair*

[Janet Hoy](#), *Civic Engagement Chair*

[Kathryn Wilder](#), *At-Large Board Member*

[Anne Granlund](#), *At-Large Board Member*

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### **The League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley *Voter***

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LWV of Diablo Valley

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