



# The Voter



## League of Women Voters of North & Central San Mateo County, California

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The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

October 2018

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### General Meeting The Pros and Cons of the November 2018 Ballot Propositions

Tuesday October 16  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
San Mateo Public Library  
55 West Third Street  
San Mateo CA

The League of Women Voters of North & Central San Mateo, the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the San Mateo Public Library are cosponsoring an overview of the pros and cons of the state proposition on the November 2018 ballot. The LWV California has prepared an unbiased analysis of the state ballot measures to help voters.

On November 6, California voters will face ballot measures covering a wide array of issues including housing bonds, a water bond, repeal of the gas tax, property taxes, and more.

**Gayle Hardt** will present this program for the benefit of our members, their guests and the public. Please bring your copy of the *Pros & Cons* that was sent to you. It is also available on our website at <https://my.lwv.org/california/north-central-san-mateo-county/elections-and-voting>. Copies of the *Pros & Cons* will be distributed to the public after the presentation.

The public is invited.

For more information, contact us at [lwncsmc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lwncsmc@sbcglobal.net) or leave a message at 650-342-5853.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Ann Kuchins, President • Marie Baldisseri, Membership Chair • Ann Kuchins, Editor

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[www.lwncsmc.org](http://www.lwncsmc.org).

## President's Message



After hearing about the midterm elections for weeks on the news, they are finally upon us! Many groups have been hard at work to get out the vote through voter registration drives, tabling events, and postcard parties, but I like to think that the League has its own unique GOTV (Get Out the Vote) strategy that includes the candidate forums, the Pros & Cons presentations, and the Voter's Edge website. **Gayle Hardt** is working hard to meet the requests for forums and presentations, wrangling volunteers, and writing the Pros & Cons script. (See the calendar of events in this issue: Voter Service, p. 3.)

**Kathee Tyson** is working hard on our Voter's Edge website to provide a complete listing of local candidates with their information in addition to information on the local measures and state propositions. You can click the **Español** button to view most of this information in Spanish. Our Voter's Edge bookmarks that list the website URL are very popular with the public. If you have a group that you would like to pass them out to, you can pick them up at any of our events.

During the June Primary, the Voter's Education and Opportunity Advisory Committee (VEOAC) was formed to work with the San Mateo County Elections Office to ensure the successful implementation of the California Voters Act in June and to improve upon that implementation in the Fall. **Petra Siltan**, Thrive, the Alliance of Nonprofits and **Diane Leeds** representing San Francisco Peninsula People Power are cochairs. Both San Mateo County Leagues and the LWVC are members along with the Asian American Advancing Justice/Asian Law Caucus, Legal Aid Society of San Mateo, Office of Supervisor Dave Pine, National Iranian American Council, the NAACP, and other community, nonprofit, and political organizations. Some of the election officials who attend these meetings and work to implement the recommendations are **Sara O'Brien**, **Cho Chiu**, and **Jim Irizarry**. I think it is an excellent example of government working with a citizens' group to effect change that combines good listening and civil discourse.

The Burlingame Public Library is applying for a grant from the California Center for the Book to implement a Book to Action program. Our board agreed to partner with the library if they receive the grant. California Center for the Book works with libraries to connect with their communities by providing resources to promote reading and expand development opportunities to achieve their goals. The Book to Action program combines the book club concept of reading a book and creating events that will promote community engagement. As a partner, we would encourage our members to participate and perhaps conduct a workshop related to what we do, such as civic engagement. We will keep you informed on this program as it is an ideal opportunity for those of you who like to read and want to be active on issues and community projects.

I would like to thank those who participated in National Voter Registration Day. **Joyce Delyani** was the point person at the Martin Luther King Community Center in San Mateo and was joined by **Ruth Kahoun** and **Liz Dossa**. I was at Serramonte with **Diana Stephens**. **Susie Raye** recruited League members to participate in a voter registration partnership with San Francisco Peninsula People Power: **Betty Fleming** was at Skyline College; **Betty Bernstein** and **Linda Franklyn** were at the San Mateo Public Library; and **Susie Raye** was at the Hillsdale Library.

*Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters. — Abraham Lincoln*

*Ann Kuchins, President*

## Board Highlights

At the September Board meeting, our board

- Decided to have the member handbook available in October
- Decided to hold a fundraising event at Cypress Lawn to be organized by **Sheila Musselman**
- Decided that County League Day will be February 23
- Approved partnering with the Burlingame Public Library on a grant program they are applying for called Book to Action sponsored by the California Center for the Book
- Approved contacting Margie Gater who had offered her services for designing a retractable sign

## Voter Service

We had a very informative discussion of the League Pros & Cons of the 11 state ballot measures, and Measure W, the San Mateo County ballot measure on Saturday, September 15. Thank you to **Jean Johnson, Sarah Tyson, Linda Franklyn, Margie Gater, Diana Stephens, Donald Jacobberger, Jackie Jacobberger, Laura Parmer-Lohan, Ann Kuchins, Betty Bernstein, Sherrean Rundberg, Susie Raye, and Carolyn Crow** for attending and contributing so much to the discussion. We are looking for volunteers to assist at these events. There will be a script for the Pros & Cons for you to follow; plus we want someone to assist with the power point presentation. If you would like to help with these events, please contact Gayle Hardt, 650-477-2141 or [hardtlaw1@aol.com](mailto:hardtlaw1@aol.com).

The following candidate forums and public Pros & Cons presentations have been scheduled at this time:

Event	Date	Time	Location	Description
<b>Candidate Forums</b>				
Belmont City Council Candidate Forum	Oct 2	7:00 PM	Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda de las Pulgas 94002	Sponsored by the Belmont Library Open to the public.
South San Francisco City Council and City Clerk Forums	Oct 8	7:00 PM/8:00 PM	SSF Council, 33 Arroyo Dr. SSF	Sponsored by the South San Francisco City Council Open to the public.
Harbor District and Cabrillo School District Candidate Forums	Oct 10	7:00 PM/8:15 PM	Granada Community Services 504 Avenue Alhambra, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bldg 100	Sponsored by the Midcoast City Council Open to the public
Granada Community Services District and Montara Water and Sanitary District Community Forums	Oct. 16	7:00 PM/8:15 PM	Granada Community Services 504 Avenue Alhambra, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bldg 100	Sponsored by the Midcoast City Council Open to the public
<b>Pros &amp; Cons</b>				
League of Women Voters Pros & Cons of Ballot Measures Presentation	Oct 11	6:00 PM	South San Francisco Library 840 West Orange SSF 94080	Sponsored by the South San Francisco Library Open to the public.

Event	Date	Time	Location	Description
League of Women Voters Pros & Cons of Ballot Measures Presentation	Oct 16	1:00 PM	San Mateo Public Library 55 W. Third Avenue, San Mateo 94401	Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of North & Central San Mateo, the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the San Mateo Public Library  Open to the public.
League of Women Voters Pros & Cons of Ballot Measures Presentation	Oct 20	10:30 AM	Belmont Library 1110 Alameda de las Pulgas 94002	Sponsored by the Belmont Library  Open to the public.

Gayle Hardt, Voter Service Director

## Resources for the November 6 Election

Be sure to see the **Elections** page on our website (<https://my.lwv.org/california/north-central-san-mateo-county/elections-and-voting>). You will find links to the League's resources and publications that will help you prepare for the November 6 election. Be sure to let your family and friends know that these are available.

**Pros & Cons:** The LWV California *Pro & Cons* of the state ballot measures are being distributed at the October meeting or by mail to all members. They are also available on the **Elections** page of our website (<https://lwvc.org/announcement/2014/sep/pros-cons-november-ballot-measures-are-here>).

**Voters Edge:** Find information about the candidates and measures on your ballot (<http://votersedge.org/ca>).

**Easy Voter Guide:** The *Easy Voter Guide* is a joint project of the LWV California Education Fund and the California State Library. It is available in several languages and copies should be in all local libraries. Find it at <https://lwvc.org/news/new-and-busy-voter-check-out-our-easy-voter-guide-now>. Our local League has a limited number of copies available.

Links to the following websites are as follows:

- LWV California: <https://lwvc.org>
- San Mateo County Elections Department: <https://www.smcacre.org/elections>
- California Secretary of State: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/cavoter/>

You can check the status of your registration and whether your ballot was received at this website.

Remember that there are more ways and more days to vote in San Mateo County with the implementation of the Voter's Choice act. Voting begins on October 9 as follows:

- Postage paid mail-in ballots will be mailed to all registered voters.
- Drop-off ballot boxes open.
- Four Vote Centers open.
  - If you have not received your mail-in ballot and are going out-of-town, you can go to any vote center and vote in person.

- You can get a replacement ballot at any vote center.
- You can register to vote and vote at the same time at any vote center from October 9 up to and including Election Day on November 6.

As Election Day nears, more vote centers open and they will be open the last two weekends before Election Day. For information on vote center and drop-off ballot box locations and times, see <https://www.smcacre.org/vote-centers-ballot-drop-box-locations>.

*Jackie Jacobberger and Ann Kuchins*

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## Welcome to Our New Members!

Mary Lou Hely  
Elizabeth C. Hennings  
Jaclynn Nicholoso

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## Action

### LWVUS

Thirty-eight League affiliates around the country hosted over 600 events registering 19,398 students from high schools and community colleges. Leagues plan to stay in touch with the students and will help them to carry out their responsibilities as new voters by explaining what to expect at the polls and providing information about elections through [vote411.org](http://vote411.org).

LWV has a petition online at [participateLWV.org](http://participateLWV.org) to take action to remove a citizenship question from the 2020 census. Congress can do this and should do this as the question undermines the rights of eligible voters and threatens a process vital to our democracy. Note that this petition is to be sent to Congress, not to the cabinet head in charge of the census bureau.

### LWVC

The League emphasizes voter registration and informing voters. At [lwvc.org](http://lwvc.org) you can read or download the *Easy Voter Guide* in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Through Voter's Edge, you can view your ballot early and check out local election information. The website is easy to read and uncluttered, making it easy to find what you want. A big plus is this information is on your screen and won't get lost in the stacks of paper that accumulate during elections.

*Diana Stephens, Action Director*

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## Observer Corps Report

The League of Women Voters has been a champion of government transparency since its founding in 1920. Government transparency is one of the League's core principles and a vital part of its mission. Efforts in this area reinforce the League's reputation of fairness, nonpartisanship, and trust.

To that end our League relaunched its Observer Corps approximately one year ago. Our plan was to review four government agencies: The City of Burlingame; South San Francisco Unified School District; San Mateo Community College District; and the San Mateo Harbor District. Corps members were asked to: analyze government agencies' websites for clarity, completeness and accuracy; attend and record government agency meetings; interview agency

leadership/decision makers; report back to the League and to the community their findings regarding what's working, as well as, suggested areas for improvement.

The League's Observer Corps benefits the community, the League and the observer by:

- Connecting individuals with government
- Promoting open, transparent, and accountable government
- Connecting elected/appointed officials with their constituents
- Creating a civically engaged and empowered team of watchdogs

If you want to increase your participation in the League and learn more about local government agencies, the LWV Observer Corp offers members an opportunity. If you're looking for a way to make a positive difference, join the Observer Corp! For more information please contact Marie Baldisseri at 650-992-2233 or mbaldisseri@att.net.

Observer Corps Members: **Marie Baldisseri, Marta Bookbinder, Ann Loper, Maxine Turner, and Kathy Wheeler.**

Below is a summary of the findings from the Observer Corps review of The City of Burlingame. Future editions of the *Voter* will report findings from other agencies reviewed.

#### **Government Agency: The City of Burlingame**

Access & Transparency:

Agendas:

- City council meeting agenda posted outside City Hall, outside City Clerk's office, and online. Entire council member agenda package placed on City Clerk's counter, made available to public for review.
- Plans in place to install computer capabilities that will provide online access to agenda and minutes as far back as there are records.

Minutes:

- Extremely detailed city council minutes (he said, she said).
- Extra effort made to ensure easy to understand (written at 7<sup>th</sup> grade level) written language.

Online:

- Agendas and minutes back to 2008.
- City website upgraded January 2018. User friendly, great photos, informative. Provides City's calendar of events, information about and access to all city agencies, departments, commissions, city projects, muni. code, etc., as well as to all staff employees. Simple language, no government labels/lingo.
- Upcoming plans include adding to the website an E-Comment component for the public to communicate their comments to the City Council prior to their meetings.

Signage:

- Rooms, offices clearly marked.

Parking:

- Free public parking next to City Hall in addition to nearby public parking lots and street parking.

Contact information:

- City directory to all services, departments, officials, and staff makes contact easy via email, phone, letter.

**Public transportation to Council meetings:**

- Bus routes, city trolleys, Cal Train schedules available outside City Clerk's office.

**ADL compliance:**

- Handicapped parking and ramp access. No stairs.

**ESL and non-English speaking accommodations:**

- No translators available currently for meetings.
- City recognizes need to do more to accommodate those who require a translator, especially the Planning and Public Works Departments. No known problems, but City is working on solutions.

Timely responses: Met or exceeded State Law requirements, 48 hours for callbacks.

**Accountability:****Accurate up-to-date, complete agency directories:**

- All City employees empowered to make changes, updates, corrections to City's website.
- All changes are made immediately as authorized to keep information accurate for the public.

**Timely, effortless access to public records:**

- The City will soon make all records available online to the public. Technology approved to be purchased and installed.
- Meets or exceeds state law requirements, 10-day turnaround for historical documents requests.

**Comments:** City employees work well together in a positive atmosphere that reflects trust. City enjoys benefit of large budget. Requests for improved technology funded. When City Clerk was asked what she was most proud of, she said, "preserving quality of life is a priority."

**Recommendations:** Recommendation accepted by City Clerk to post a reminder to the public that they are to notify the City Clerk 72 hours in advance if a translator will be needed.

**Overall Rating – Excellent**

*Marie Baldisseri*

## October Calendar

Date	Time	Description	Place
Sunday Sept. 30	2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Implementing the California Values Act and Engaging with Local Government	William E. Walker Recreation Center 650 Shell Blvd, Foster City 94404
Monday Oct. 1	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Board Meeting All members welcome	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Wednesday Oct. 10	Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Brown Bag Lunch with the League Topic: Supreme Court Nomination Process	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Saturday Oct. 13	9:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.	Voter Registration at the CSM Farmer's Market	CSM Farmer's Market 1700 West Hillsdale Blvd, San Mateo
Tuesday Oct. 16	1:00 – 3:00	Pros & Cons Presentation	San Mateo Public Library 55 West Third Street San Mateo CA

**JOIN THE LEAGUE!**

*Where new members just like you are taking advantage of leadership opportunities and making an impact.*

Name(s)

Address

City

Zip Code

Phone Number (daytime)

E-mail address

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(\$75 one member; \$115 two members, same household; \$40 each additional member, same household. *Dues are tax deductible.*)

Mail to: LWVNCSMC 444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1, San Mateo, CA 94401

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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