



The Voter



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

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

November 2018

General Meeting

Skyline College – Promise Scholars and SparkPoint Programs

Tuesday, November 13

6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

South San Francisco Public Library

840 West Orange

South San Francisco 94080

What are the Challenges Facing Community College Students Today?

The League of Women Voters of North & Central San Mateo and the South San Francisco Public Library are cosponsoring a talk on the Promise Scholars and the Sparkpoint programs at Skyline College. The Promise Scholars program provides financial support, academic support, and structured guidance to assist first year students in their journey to graduation. The SparkPoint program is a partnership between Skyline College and the United Way of the Bay Area committed to reducing poverty in the Bay Area by 50% in 2020. Low income students and members of the community use this program to facilitate financial self-sufficiency.



Speaker: Cherie Colin, Director, Marketing Communications and Public Relations

Ms. Colin holds a Bachelor of Arts in Marketing Communications with an emphasis in Public Relations from Columbia College Chicago.

In addition, we will hear from one or two students on their experiences.

The public is invited.

For more information, contact us at 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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President's Message



I am pleased to introduce our new board member, **Sandra Shapiro**. Sandra was a member of the Oakland LWV for about 5 years and rejoined the League two or three years ago when she retired. Before retirement, she was a trial lawyer specializing in business litigation and taught at USF Law School as an Adjunct Professor in trial practice/evidence. "I had, and still have, a great interest in the administration of justice and equal access to legal services – that's where my 'extracurricular' activities have mostly been."

I believe that attendance at our candidate forums and Pros & Cons events have been at an all-time high reflecting great interest in these midterm elections. It will be interesting to see if this translates into higher voter turnout. Gayle Hardt and Joyce Delyani have written articles on our events and voter registration drives and the volunteers who gave their time to make these events happen.

There is still time to educate your friends and families on using Voter's Edge for election information. I especially like checking who is supporting the candidates and measures and who is financing these candidates and measures. I did a workshop on Voter's Edge for the Family Services Agency staff in San Mateo and discovered all sorts of handy features that I had not used in the past, such as comparing candidates so that you can see their information side by side. The FSA asked us to come back and do similar workshops for their clients. **Pedro Gonzalez** did one in Spanish and I did one in English.

Most of you have probably heard the good news that the Secretary of State qualified the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act for the November 2020 ballot, having acquired 850,000 legitimate signatures. At this time, the initiative has secured 300 endorsements including the California State PTA, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and the California Association of Nonprofits. Now the hard work begins to campaign for Proposition 13 reform.

About three years ago, the California Leagues completed a study on higher education that led to the LWVC's position on Public Higher Education (<https://lwvc.org/our-work/positions/position-public-higher-education>). At our November meeting, Cherie Colin from Skyline College will speak on the Promise Scholars and SparkPoint programs that address some of the priorities in our position, such as access, affordability, equity, and excellence. The SparkPoint program is very interesting in that it facilitates the transition of low income students from school to the workforce so that they can achieve life-long financial stability. Our study addressed many of these issues.



Ann Kuchins, President

Board Highlights

At the October board meeting, our board

- Heard that many of our members participated in National Voter Registration Day activities
- Appointed Sandra Shapiro to the Board
- Decided to get involved with the Girl Scout civics badge project, Voter Girl
- Heard that we have many candidate forums and Pros & Cons sessions scheduled
- Learned that the Observer Corps finished their report on the South San Francisco Unified School District, completed their work on the San Mateo Community College District, and are currently reviewing the San Mateo Harbor District
- Decided that our December meeting would be a holiday/membership celebration party

Jean Johnson, Secretary

Voter Service

It's been an active couple of months for Voter Services and we accomplished quite a bit. We provided moderators, time keepers and ushers for 12 candidate forums and presented the Pros and Cons on 15 occasions. They were all well received with many compliments on how well the forums were run and how the pros & cons helped them understand some very complicated ballot measures. I want to acknowledge **Ann Kuchins** for creating the PowerPoint presentation we used for the ballot measures and **Jackie Jacobberger** for her expertise and attention to detail.

We want to thank all of you who helped at these events: **Karen Bertrand, Marie Baldisseri, Chelsea Bonini, Joyce Delyani, Betty Fleming, Margie Gater, Jackie Jacobberger, Don Jacobberger, Jean Johnson, Ann Kuchins, Georgi La Berge, Mary Nobriga, Susie Raye, Shirley Roberson, Sandra Shapiro, Afsoon Shahrदार, Pat Smith, Kathee Tyson, and Kathy Wheeler**. We couldn't have accomplished all we did without you.

Gayle Hardt, Voter Service Director

Fall Voter Registration Report

It was a busy October for our voter registration volunteers. **Ann Kuchins, Susie Raye, Sandra Shapiro** and I tabled at the CSM Farmers' Market, the San Mateo Adult School, the San Mateo County Pride Center and a San Mateo Main Library panel discussion on race and politics, at the invitation of the African American Library Association. We also held three pop-up voter registration events at the Burlingame Library.

Despite the high number of voters already registered in San Mateo County, we found that our services were still much needed. Among those we registered were new U.S. citizens, new county residents, and voters who needed to reregister after changing addresses within the county. We had the privilege of preregistering three 16-year-olds -- twin sisters and their friend — on the same day at the Burlingame Library; the three shared a birthday, which fell on that day, and they told us that they had made a pact to preregister when they turned 16!

The total number of voters we registered in October — about 15 — might seem small. But consider: If we had not been at a particular venue on a particular time and day, those eligible voters might have gone without exercising their right to vote in this crucial midterm election.

An important responsibility of voter registration volunteers is being a source of information for voters in San Mateo County. And there was a huge demand for information this fall, due to an Elections Department error that led to

the late mailing of ballots. The number one question we answered from anxious voters was, "Where is my ballot?" But there were many other questions from voters, everything from, "Where should our college-dwelling 18-year-old register?" to "How can I find information on the Propositions?" Voter registration volunteers are, above all, problem solvers. Join us next election season!

Joyce Delyani, Voter Registration and Social Media 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>) in addition to the following resources.

Voters Edge: Find information about the candidates and measures on your ballot (<http://votersedge.org/ca>). In addition, find out who is supporting candidates and measures, who is financing candidates and measures, and where the money is coming from.

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>).

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.

Jackie Jacobberger and Ann Kuchins

Welcome to Our New Members!

Deirdre L. Conley
Patricia Paquette



Voter Girl Project



At the 2018 LWV national convention I attended a talk about Voter Girl, an exciting new collaboration between the League of Women Voters and the Girl Scouts.

What is the Voter Girl Project?

So you might be wondering, what is Voter Girl? This is a project created by LWV of Kent, Ohio.

The Voter Girl Project is a fun and rewarding class activity in which Leagues collaborate with their local Girl Scout councils. The one-day class is available for all scout levels—from Daisies to Ambassadors—with a curriculum appropriate for each level. (Ambassadors must complete work outside the class to complete the badge requirements.)

League members use their knowledge of voting and advocacy to help scouts earn citizenship badges that promote the ideals Leagues cherish.

A curriculum guide has been developed by teachers and communicators with backgrounds in diversity and elementary and higher education. League leaders receive marketing materials and operation tips that have been tested.

Best of all, scouts bring to the event their curiosity and determination to learn. Our League develops “a high-profile community event that draws interest from media, parents and public officials.”

Our local League has purchased Voter Girl and we are starting our event planning with the local Girl Scout council. Our first meeting will be a joint meeting of League members and Girl Scout leaders in November after the election. I’m now looking for League members who would like to participate, whether on the planning or helping on the event day. Our tentative event date is late April 2019. Please let me know if you are interested (See the Member Handbook for contact information).

Susie Raye, Vice President

Homeowners Elections

The League is serving as Inspector of Elections for the Woodlake Association in San Mateo again this year. The annual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 14 at 7 pm. We need six to eight volunteers who are willing to spend two or three hours that evening. Helping with this project requires no special expertise, just willingness to follow the instructions. The hardest part is opening the envelopes. It is also an opportunity to get to know other League members as you work together in teams.

We will also serve as Inspector of Elections for the Shelter Creek Condominium Association in San Bruno. Their annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2019. Again, volunteers are needed to count ballots that night.

We are paid for providing this service to homeowner associations (HOAs) and the funds raised allow the League to continue providing its service to the community. These projects also reduce the need to organize other fundraising efforts.

If we are to continue these projects for HOAs in future years, we must develop a team of members who are willing to learn the process from the beginning and the specific laws and requirements governing these elections. A workshop will be scheduled during the coming months for those interested in learning more.

To volunteer for either of these dates, or if you are interested in attending a workshop, please contact me: (phone or email in the Member Handbook or leave a message on the League phone).

Jackie Jacobberger, Treasurer

Action

The League's legislative wrap-up appears at lwvc.org under the **Legislation/Bills** tab. So much has been worked on that it is easy to lose track and wonder if any progress is being made. One takeaway from reading this summary is the amount of time the League and its coalition partners have spent to bring about change. Water issues may take decades and still not be fully resolved. Election reform is almost a constant, whether it is dealing with campaign financing, big money's influence on elections, or one of the many other tweaks to influence voters without letting them know who is doing the tweaking or why. This wrap-up lets you see that progress is being made. Not everything was decided this year, but there is always the next session. Persistence is the key.

Locally, the LWV Bay Area flagship event is taking place February 9, 2019. The topic is *Bay Area, A Region in Action—Equity in Practice*, and will cover equity issues that have shaped the Bay Area from red-lining practices to equity markers. More information to come.

Diana Stephens, Action Director

2018-19 Member Handbooks

Member handbooks were distributed during October to all members. Be sure to check your listing and let us know about any errors. Please correct the email for Joyce Delyani on pages 2 and 3. Her correct email is on page 7 of the handbook.

We also have two new members who joined after the handbook went to the printer. Welcome to Deirdre Conley and Patricia Paquette. Because the *Voter* is posted online, personal information is not included. An update will be distributed later to members.

Jackie Jacobberger

Mark your calendar!



Celebrate the Season, and join us at our

Holiday Membership Party

Day, December 11, 2018; Time 6:00 PM;

Place: The historic Victorian home of Wally and Linda Jansen, 809 Lawrence Rd. San Mateo 94402

Observer Corps Report

(Part 2 of a 4-part series)

The October 2018 edition of the *Voter* reported the Observer Corps findings from its review of The City of Burlingame; the first of four reports. This month the Corps is proud to report results from its evaluation of the South San Francisco Unified School District. Future editions of the *Voter* will report findings from reviews of other local government agencies.

Sunshine is a League priority. The League of Women Voters has been an active champion of openness in government throughout its history. The League's Principles include the necessity that "government bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible." Over the years, the League has supported various federal, state and local initiatives to expand open government requirements and has fought against proposals aimed at limiting access to public information.

Our nation's access laws are only as good as we, the people, demand them to be. Protecting the public's access to information—either written public documents or access to governmental meetings—is fundamental to the League's mission and is essential to the health of our democracy. Securing information from government agencies and officials has never been easy, and much of the public is not well informed about the breadth of publicly held information that might affect them, or how to access it. Our mission is to collaborate with local government agencies to improve transparency, as well as public access while enhancing government accountability. A win-win.

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.

Government Agency: South San Francisco Unified School District

Access & Transparency

Agendas

- The School District's meeting agenda is posted in surrounding libraries in various cities to accommodate and give access to all served by SSF Unified.
 - Note: The School District's boundary goes beyond the City of South San Francisco to include parts of Colma, Daly City, and San Bruno.
- All documents supporting agenda items are available online and can be accessed 3 days prior to meetings as required by law.
- Complete hard copies of the agenda (including attachments) are available upon request.

Minutes

- Complete and comprehensive. Posted online accurately and timely.

Online

- Agendas and minutes are posted online as far back as 2004.
- SSF Unified's website upgraded August 2018. User-friendly, supports students and their parents as well as the school district employees.
- Website provides:
 - Calendar of upcoming deadlines and events
 - *Find Your School* - school area maps and a street directory to assist parents with enrollment information
 - Complete multilingual enrollment and registration information

- Directories: Staff, Human Resources, Technology, and Nutrition Services
- Community Resources: DACA, PTA, student tutorials, school newsletters, and more

Signage

- Rooms, offices clearly marked.

Parking

- District Office – parking and public access. Parking may not be found during school hours. Students' and staff's cars fill the lot; very little to no street parking available.
- District Meetings – parking and signage. Meetings are rotated from school to school and held quarterly at the City Council Chamber. Parking at the Baden school location may be difficult for newcomers. When meetings are held at other school locations and at the Council Chambers, plenty of well lighted parking. Published directions to meetings locations is excellent.

Contact Information

- District's website provides an excellent directory to all services, departments, officials, and staff. The directories make contact easy via email, phone, and letter.

Public Transportation to Council Meetings

- No public transportation to the Baden school location in evening hours; the District has not been made aware of public transit being an issue to meeting attendance.
- Public transportation is available when meetings are held at other locations during daytime hours.

ADL Compliance

- Plenty of handicap parking, close to entrances. No stairs.

ESL and Non-English Speaking Accommodations

- Translator sits with meeting greeters; translator services immediately available during public meetings.
- Meeting attendees who wish to speak before the Board find instructions are available in both English and Spanish.

Accountability

- Staff and resource directories are complete, accurate and up-to-date.
- District inquiries are routed for answering. Received and directed appropriately.
- Board meetings provide the community with an open forum for discussion of the issues/an avenue to express concerns.
- Meetings are televised quarterly. Audio recordings are made of all meetings and are available immediately to the public online. Sound quality, excellent.
- Meeting records are kept permanently.
- Documents are available online from 2004 to present.

Comments

- The SSF Unified School District posts tutorials for all grades on their website to assist parents helping their children with homework; a valuable service to strive for success in students' education.
- An audio file of Board meetings is streamed simultaneously when the Board is in session. The audio file is clear - easy to follow.
- SSFUSD has designed a vital emergency communications protocol: posting emergency procedures on their website; and establishing a bilingual messaging (Robocall) to parents to alert them immediately of any emergency.

Recommendations

- Recommended adding a statement to the agenda when meetings are held at the Baden school that there’s overflow parking in the Adult School’s lot.
- Give instructions to libraries on how to access the full packet (all attachments) of Board meeting agendas via the libraries ‘computers.

Overall Rating – Excellent

Marie Baldisseri, Membership Director

November Calendar

Date	Time	Description	Place
Monday Nov. 5	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Board Meeting All members welcome	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Tuesday Nov. 13	6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.	Skyline College: Promise Scholars and SparkPoint Programs	840 W. Orange South San Francisco CA 94080
Wednesday Nov. 14	Noon – 1:-00 p.m.	Brown Bag Lunch with the League Topic: Is the Bay Area really progressive on housing? (See: https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/article/San-Francisco-Bay-Area-is-not-progressive-on-13319525.php?utm_campaign=email-premium&utm_source=CMS%20Sharing%20Button&utm_medium=social)	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401



Figure 1: California Values Act Speakers: Councilmember Ann Schneider (Millbrae), Supervisor Carole Groom, Raquel Ortega, ACLU

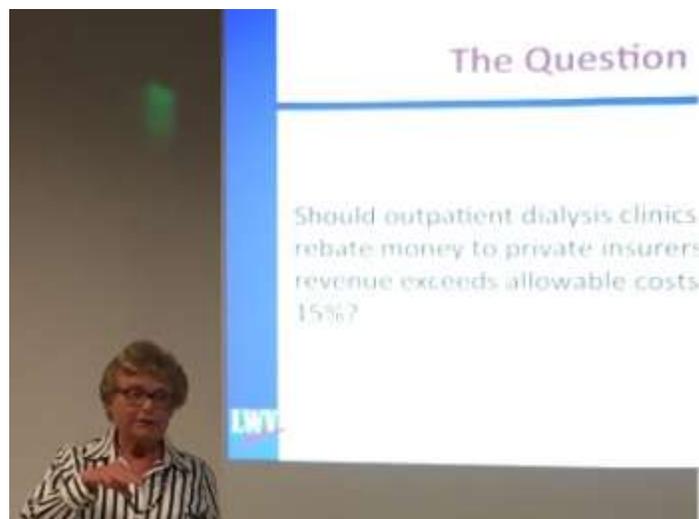


Figure 2: Pros & Cons Presentation

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 \$ _____ (<i>\$75 one member; \$115 two members, same household; \$40 each additional member, same household. Dues are tax deductible.</i>) Mail to: LWVNCSMC 444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1, San Mateo, CA 94401	

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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