



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.

April 2018

General Meeting

Tuesday April 17, 2018
7-9 p.m.

Colma Community Center
1520 Hillside Boulevard, Colma

WIRE for Women

Women Helping Women Enter Public Office

Women are underrepresented on every level of government and politics in this country. On the national level, women comprise only 20% of the US Congress and only 24% of state legislatures. Only about 19% of mayoral positions across the country are held by women and women hold only 25% of statewide executive level positions. Why is this? Why don't more women run for office or get appointed to local Boards? More importantly, how do we change this imbalance so that women are equally represented in our government?

The answer may be with groups like WIRE. WIRE's goal is to accelerate the identification and recruitment of qualified women for public office.

Speaker: Carol Mayer Marshall, Founder and President of WIRE for Women

WIRE is a nonpartisan organization comprised of women and men committed to increasing the number of women in appointed and elected office in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. WIRE identifies and recruits candidates for public office and supports their efforts by providing a broad network of resources. For more information, go to the WIRE website at www.wireforwomen.com.

This meeting is open to the public. Please contact Susie Raye, Program Director for more information: program@lwnvncsmc.org 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

Office: 444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1, San Mateo CA 94401 • Phone: 650-342-5853 Email: LWVNCSMC@sbcglobal.net • Web site: www.lwnvncsmc.org.

President's Message



Our calendar is getting very full for the next two months as the primary nears. Now is the time to get involved and commit. Our goals are to get out the vote (GOTV) and inform the voters. This spring our Pros & Cons meetings are structured to do just that.

We are combining our unbiased Pros & Cons presentations with an overview of the Voters Choice Act to inform voters how, when, and where to vote. Because the voting model is different, we are using this opportunity to target underrepresented voters. We are extending our reach and becoming more proactive. Usually groups invite the League to make presentations. This spring, we are setting up our own events and inviting the public to come.

To be successful, we need a cadre of motivated members to help with these presentations. Our voter service director, **Gayle Hardt**, has set up a training session for VCA and Pros & Cons presentations. Ideally, we would like two people for each event. The pros & cons part is scripted and the VCA presentation is a simple outline. At many of these events, we will have someone from the San Mateo Elections office to assist. You would be surprised (or not) at the kinds of questions people ask about the election process. The younger generation is showing us the way by taking action. Let's join them.

Many of you may remember Stephen Colbert's comedy segment of "Know Your Congressperson." Well, the League has a straight version of "Know Your Legislator." The League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) prepares a list of four or five questions that local Leagues use to interview their state senators and assemblymembers. North and Central San Mateo is represented by five legislators: Senators Jerry Hill and Scott Wiener; and Assemblymembers Marc Berman, Kevin Mullin (new father of twin boys), and Phil Ting. I would like to thank **Marie Baldisseri** and **Jackie Jacobberger** for joining me in these interviews. Because the districts overlap with other Leagues, we were able to work with members of the San Francisco, South San Mateo, and Palo Alto Leagues. Next year, I will work harder to recruit more members to join in these interviews because it is an opportunity to sit down face to face with legislators, a chance that most citizens don't get! In this issue, the summaries of interviews with Senator Hill and Assemblymember Ting are printed. More to follow!

Finally, I would like to describe some interesting events that we were involved in during the rainy month of March:

- **Joyce Delyani** and I set up our voter registration table at Aragon High School at an event sponsored by the Asian-American parent group on the Japanese-American internment during World War II. There were between 75-100 students and teachers there on a Friday afternoon. The program featured the documentary *And Then They Came for Us*.
- **Joyce Delyani** worked with the students of the San Mateo High School District to set up a voter registration table at the March for Our Lives rally in Beresford Park on March 24. **Betty Bernstein** and **Allison Ryan** joined Joyce to register voters and solicit signatures for the Schools and Communities First Petition.
- **Marie Baldisseri** worked with San Mateo County Board Supervisor David Canepa and his staff to set up a table at the 2nd annual *District 5 Together: A World United Event* at Jefferson High School on March 31.

If you have an idea on how the League can reach out to the community, please let us know!

(president@lwvnscmc.org.)

We always hear about the rights of democracy, but the major responsibility of it is participation – Wynton Marsalis

Ann Kuchins, President

Board Highlights

At the March board meeting:

- Heard a report on the Observer Corps regarding their observation of the City of Burlingame
- Learned that the Voter's Choice Act committee has scheduled two more presentations with assistance from the County and that we've received a VCA toolkit from the Secretary of State's office
- Heard that we received a letter from Gina Papan, the mayor of Millbrae, in response to the letter we sent the city regarding the Gateway Station Project
- Learned that Diana Stephens will be our point person with the LWVC for the *Schools and Community Services First* campaign
- Heard that the legislative interviews have been completed and will be written up for the *Voter*
- Approved Kristi Denham (Chairperson), Don Jacobberger, and Ann Kuchins as the budget committee

Jean Johnson, Secretary

Ballot Measures on the June 2018 Ballot and the Voter's Choice Act

The California Legislature has submitted 5 ballot measures for the June 2018 ballot. Our League will present an objective overview of the pros and cons of these measures before the June election in addition to information regarding the Voter's Choice Act.

The Voter's Choice Act (VCA), approved by California lawmakers in 2016, expands voters' options for how, when, and where they cast their ballots. San Mateo County is among the 13 counties participating in the June 2018 election. All registered voters in participating counties will be mailed a ballot and have the option to return it by mail or place it in a secure drop-box. Voters also will be able to vote in person at a limited number of vote centers, which will replace neighborhood polling places.

Vote centers will offer accessible voting equipment, language assistance, and voting materials in all legally required languages. Additionally Californians will be able to register and vote the same day at any vote center. All vote centers will be open from the Saturday before Election Day through Election Day. Some will be open a full 11 days, including the two weekends before Election Day.

VCA/Pros & Cons Training



The North and Central San Mateo County League of Women Voters is committed to informing the citizens of San Mateo County about the VCA and the ballot measures. Our voter service committee will hold a training on Saturday, April 14, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the League office (444 Peninsula Ave., Suite 1, San Mateo, CA) for people who are willing to present this information to the public. If you are interested in attending, please call Gayle Hardt, 650-477-2141 or email voterservice@lwvnscsmc.org.

Gayle Hardt, Voter Service Director

Schools and Communities First Campaign!

The campaign to reform Proposition 13 by closing the corporate property tax loophole is up and running. Our deadline is to submit signed petitions by the end of April to qualify for the November 2018 ballot. The signature process is fairly structured. The process is as follows:

1. Do not copy or download the petitions.
2. To get petitions, contact Ann Kuchins, president@lwnvncsmc.
3. On the petition, enter the county. Voters must be registered in that county. If a voter is from a different county, simply start a new petition with the new county name on it.
4. Voters must write the address where they live; NO P.O. BOXES!
5. Use blue or black ink only. Signatures in pencil, marker, or felt pens are invalid.
6. Check that voter signed the signature line under printed name.
7. Complete the Declaration of Circulator when you are done. You can have one signature or eight signatures.
8. Sort signatures by county. You might want to put a rubber band around them.
9. Keep track of the number of signatures and petition sheet by placing a post it or sheet of paper on top of the sorted stack.
10. Return petitions to one of the following by April 27:
 - Mail or drop in mailbox at LWV North and Central San Mateo:
444 Peninsula Avenue #1 San Mateo CA
 - Mail to LWVC:
League of Women Voters of California, 921 11th Street, Sacramento CA 94518

Welcome to Our New Members!

Jan Moorman
Dora Lapworth

Help Publicize the Voter's Choice Act

If you belong to an organization, please send this press release and request that they include it in their newsletter or other publication if it is appropriate. If you would like the electronic copy, please contact Ann Kuchins, president@lwnvncsmc.org.

Voting in San Mateo County is Changing in June 2018!

The Voter's Choice Act is a new law that means voters will have more chances to vote. ALL registered voters will receive a postage paid mail-in ballot in May. You can mail it in, take it to a secure Ballot Drop-Off Box, or drop it off at any Vote Center in San Mateo County. You can also register to vote and vote in any Vote Center in the county. Look for a list of Ballot Drop-Off Boxes and Vote Centers at smcacre.org. Polling places will be replaced by a fewer number of Vote Centers, but many will be open for more days. Remember: don't throw away your ballot as it has valuable information on how, where, and when to vote!

This message brought to you by the League of Women Voters of North & Central San Mateo County and San Francisco Peninsula People Power.



Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars! LWVNCSMC's Annual Meeting will be held on **Saturday, June 2**, from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

Legislative Interview with Senator Jerry Hill

February 12, 2018



Question 1: Money Bail Reform

Currently, release pending trial is based on an arrestee's capacity to post money bail. Do you support legislative changes to a risk-assessment based system, so that release is contingent on preventing violence in the community, rather the arrestee's finances?

Answer: "Absolutely, I voted for SB 10, Senator Herzberg's bill; it passed 26-11. Now it's sitting in the appropriations committee of the Assembly. Money bail has proved to be so discriminatory.

When we talk about recidivism and prison having a revolving door, the money bail system is part of the reason for that. It is so sad. I strongly, strongly support it. It's time to end this predatory system and solve it."

As an aside, Hill added that the smaller bondsmen have [gone after Sen. Bob Hertzberg](#) (D- Van Nuys) as the author of the legislation.

Question 2: CEQA Reform

What is your view regarding the use of CEQA to delay affordable housing projects? While recent legislative changes have streamlined the CEQA process for in-fill projects, do you think other legislative changes to CEQA are needed?

Answer: Sen. Hill said he learned some things a couple of years ago when he co-authored SB 122 which tried to make some changes with CEQA to streamline the process. The problems with CEQA, he said, are not about good environmental quality review and attention to policies to protect communities.

The problem is that CEQA has been hijacked by organized labor, by some environmental groups, and by communities and neighborhoods who engage in what many call NIMBY-ism (not in my backyard). By hijacking CEQA, people are able to extort what they want, or to delay projects through lawsuits.

Streamlining the CEQA approach for affordable housing is an area where forward movement can be made, he added. It's an approach that requires timely resolutions to objections and lawsuits - as long as the current protections in place are included with any proposed legislation. He observed that many groups don't want to see the CEQA process streamlined because it takes away their power of time and delay. "Affordable housing is just one segment of those projects that have been delayed and can't be delayed in the future. So I support the streamlining of CEQA as long as we maintain the protections that are included in it, and we can do that."

Follow-up Question: Do you support SB 827 and SB 828?

Answer. Sen. Hill said he understood that Senator Weiner's legislation had been seen by some cities as draconian and taking away local control of land-use decisions. He said he hasn't read the bill in detail. He added that, generally, when trying to get bills passed, legislators start with what is optimum, then sometimes they go beyond that, knowing that it will be amended and generally changed from what was authored. So legislators aim to get the optimum idea they started with that way. Some areas [of those Wiener bills] may go too far. At the end of the day, with amendments, it may move the ball forward on housing. He observed that many cities haven't been doing much on their own. Millbrae added [only] ten units of affordable housing in the last ten years. Is this [SB 827 & SB 828] the right bill? Hill said it was too early for him to have an opinion because of the expected changes, but he was certainly supportive of the concept. "I've learned that some cities are more comfortable with Sacramento creating mandates around affordable housing," he said. "It's very hard to be on the city council and vote for affordable housing when the community members are against it. If Sacramento mandates certain things be done, it's easier for city councils."

Question 3: Sea Level Rise

We need a regional, coordinated effort of several state agencies. And since the threat is swift in terms of typical infrastructure projects, we need to coordinate now. What is the path forward to assure continuity of infrastructure as we approach 2050 and beyond? What can be done legislatively?

Answer: We've done a number of things over the last couple of years to try and move toward a more thoughtful and regional planning approach. Some examples include the CA Climate Adaption Strategy; the CA Ocean Conservancy funding of some projects; Measure AA [passed June 2016 - \$12 parcel tax,] which provides the resources on a regional basis to come together on pollution, habitat and restoration [for the San Francisco Bay].

The Bay Area [Resilient By Design](#) is to address climate change and earthquake impacts. And the Bay Conservation & Development Commission, Coastal Conservancy, the San Francisco Estuary Institute are all doing things. Are we doing enough? No.

Legislative Interview with Assemblymember Phil Ting

**Question: Money Bail Reform**

Currently, release pending trial is based on an arrestee's capacity to post money bail. Do you support legislative changes to a risk-assessment based system, so that release is contingent on preventing violence in the community, rather the arrestee's finances?

Answer:

I voted in favor of Assemblymember Rob Bonta's legislation (AB 42 Pretrial Release) and would have voted for Senator Bob Hertzberg's bill (SB 10 Pretrial Release). This is the first time that judges have dealt with the equity issue. Public safety is key, but currently, if you have money for bail, you can be let out. We should align our goals with public safety and not with the ability to pay.

Question: CEQA Reform

What is your view regarding the use of CEQA to delay affordable housing projects? While recent legislative changes have streamlined the CEQA process for in-fill projects, do you think other legislative changes to CEQA are needed?

It's an urban myth that if we get rid of CEQA, we can build housing and not have a housing problem. It is neighborhood and city opposition that is the primary driver in curbing housing; not CEQA. CEQA does not testify at city councils. Streamlining is appropriate because we have significant neighborhood challenges. We should look at a policy and see if it is doing its job. Because of CEQA, we have a better environment. When entities sue for reasons not related to environment, then that is a problem. We should look at each situation case by case. You cannot legislate with a thousand "what ifs." Take a look at a situation and adjust; try to find compromise. Housing is complicated as neighbors living there have a voice but not the neighbors who will move in.

Question: Sea Level Rise

We need a regional, coordinated effort of several state agencies. And since the threat is swift in terms of typical infrastructure projects, we need to coordinate now. What is the path forward to assure continuity of infrastructure as we approach 2050 and beyond? What can be done legislatively?

Answer: We have to go back to the cause of sea level rise; have to attack the problem which is climate change as was done in AB and SB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. We need a regional body to address the problem. We have ABAG (Association of Bay Area Governments) and MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission). However, we need to spend the bulk of our time figuring out how to control greenhouse gases to reduce sea levels. San Francisco would have to spend billions of dollars to reinforce the bay but the challenge is to

work on a regional basis. Some legislators in areas like the Central Valley are not interested in sea level rise but they have their own pollution problems and they too are concerned about greenhouse gases and water.

In regards to waste management, we need to look at the bay and see what under water. It's waste water and a variety of other things as well.

We do have legislation to make change. I have a bill to ban combustion engine cars in 2040 (AB 1745, Clean Cars 2040 Act).

The California Coastal Commission is in charge of the coast and we probably don't want another bureaucratic agency involved. Wetlands restoration is one of the best ways to deal with sea level rise.

Question: Major Issues and Personal Priorities

What other major issues do you think the legislature must deal with in 2018? What are your personal priorities?

Answer: Assemblymember Ting referenced the following issues and priorities:

- Electric vehicle legislation
- Public safety, specifically the use of body cameras
- Clean up the loopholes in Proposition 47, Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act. This proposition decriminalized shoplifting but now we have rings of emboldened shoplifters.
- Housing
- Homeless: I am working with 11 mayors to get more money.
- Education: Higher education needs to be more affordable. Give universities more money. For early education, create a path so kids are prepared for kindergarten.
- Criminal justice: There is an inequity in prison spending versus education spending. A large amount of money is spent on 120,000 prisoners and the results are dismal. The cost for corrections continues to rise. There should be more money for rehabilitation and mental health to get better results.
- Gun safety: I am reintroducing a bill that would expand gun violence restraining orders to allow teachers, administrators, mental health workers, and other workplace personnel to obtain a restraining order to get guns out of dangerous peoples' hands.

2020 census: President Trump is planning on asking whether a person is a US citizen on the census form. This seems a harmless question but it is bound to keep people from participating in the census leading to an undercount. This is an area where organizations like the League of Women Voters can help educate people about the importance of participating in the census.

April Calendar

Date	Time	Description	Place
Monday April 2	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Board Meeting All members welcome	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Saturday April 7	9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Voter Registration at the CSM Farmer's Market	CSM Farmer's Market 1700 West Hillsdale Blvd, San Mateo
Wednesday April 11	Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Brown Bag Lunch with the League Topic: Trade	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Saturday April 14	10:30 – Noon	VCA/ Pros & Cons Training	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Tuesday April 17	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	General Meeting WIRE for Women: Women Helping Women Enter Public Office	Colma Community Center 1520 Hillside Boulevard, Colma

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

League of Women Voters
Of North & Central
San Mateo County
444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1
San Mateo, CA 94401-1679

