



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.

July/August 2018

President's Message



The following speech was delivered at the annual meeting.

The year began with a new project, the Voter's Choice Act. We worked with LWVC Deputy Director **Dora Rose** and Voter's Choice California, a coalition of community groups, civil rights organizations, and the San Mateo County Elections Office. Our mission was education and outreach with a focus on underrepresented voters. **Marcia Leonhardt, Shirley DesMarais**, President LWVSSMC, and I started with a phone bank, calling over 100 agencies and organizations to invite them to our September 2017 meeting on the Voter's Choice Act. We continued to contact many of these organizations throughout the year. Our early efforts helped to create a community group, the Voter's Education and Outreach Advisory Committee (VEOAC) that works very closely with the San Mateo County Elections Office. The elections office has been very responsive to the suggestions from this group. The VEOAC is in the process of planning strategy for the November election so stay tuned if you would like to get involved.

Joyce Delyani and I took our voter registration table to the CSM Farmer's Market once a month and registered a voter every now and then but we mostly promoted our activities and handed out a ton of Voter's Edge bookmarks. I would say it was more of a public relations effort but one worth continuing because to be an effective organization, people need to know who we are and what we do.

We had quite a bit of contact with high school students who have become motivated to act by events over recent years that have affected their lives in a way that most of us cannot fathom. **Joyce Delyani** contacted the San Mateo students who were organizing the March for Our Lives Rally in Beresford Park and was joined by **Betty Bernstein** in registering the students. **Marie Baldisseri** and **Karyl Matsumoto** organized the voter registration drive at South San Francisco High School and they hope to do more in the Fall. Joyce and I went to an Aragon High School event on the Japanese-American incarceration to register students. (continued next page)

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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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Marie Baldisseri, Marta Bookbinder, Ann Loper, Maxine Turner, and Kathy Wheeler have done an excellent job in reviving the Observer Program and bringing it into the 21st century. They have developed a model with tools and assessments that hopefully will be shared with other Leagues. You should be reading about some of their results soon in the *Voter* and on our website.

Because there were only 5 state ballot measures and one regional measure on the primary ballot, we decided to combine our Pros and Cons presentations with a presentation on the Voter's Choice Act. **Pat Smith**, a member of the Voter's Choice Act committee, set up events with three libraries and several more libraries contacted us to do presentations. **Pedro Gonzalez**, another member of the Voter's Act committee, conducted an all Spanish presentation on the VCA at the SSF Learning Center. Thrive Alliance, a network of nonprofit organizations, businesses, government agencies, elected officials, and civic leaders, cosponsored our VCA/Pros&Cons event at the San Mateo Public Library. We scheduled an event at the Martin Luther King Community Center and drew in the support of the NAACP.

Thanks to a VCA grant from LWVC, we were able to rent translation devices for two events and to top it off, our own member, **Marta Bookbinder**, offered her services as a translator. I would like to thank our presenters, **Jackie Jacobberger, Betty Fleming, Susie Raye** and especially our Voter Service Director **Gayle Hardt**, who put together the Pros and Cons script. We had eleven events in different venues and the libraries would love to see us in the Fall.

Speaking of elections, I would like to extend many thanks to **Kathee Tyson** who, as the invisible hand behind our Voter's Edge site, solicits candidates and sometimes solicits them again and again for their campaign information which she then posts on our site along with other election information.

Thanks to our Program Director, **Susie Raye**, we have had excellent programs on a variety of topics such as civil discourse, Climate Change, and Census 2020. Hopefully you have seen some of our online postings of these events on NextDoor.com, the *Daily Journal*, and the *Patch* thanks to **Allison Ryan**. And speaking of public relations and communications, thanks to **Jackie Jacobberger** who creates the online voter and sends out the weekly updates and to **Joyce Delyani**, our master Tweeter extraordinaire. Speaking of the *Voter*, a big thank you to **Betty Bernstein** who picks up the *Voter* from the printer, assembles it, and gets it in the mail. Our redesigned website is available thanks to the hard work, tears, and frustrations of **Jackie Jacobberger**. It was not an intuitive task. (Editor's note: Our beautiful new website is now live at <https://lwvncsmc.org>. Don't forget to bookmark it!)

Many thanks go to our fundraising guru **Jackie Jacobberger** for organizing two events to count ballots in homeowners' association elections and I would also like to thank all the people who joined her in the counting.

Do you know what February 14, 2020 is? Visions of hearts are probably dancing in your head, but I know you know it's the 100th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. We need to start thinking of how to celebrate this awesome event and have a real blowout! If you have expertise in event planning, please let us know!

Next Fall we anticipate a large number of ballot measure Pros & Cons presentations on the November ballot along with some candidate forums. We will need your help as presenters, ushers, timekeepers, greeters, and moderators. We could also use help during the year in designing flyers, videotaping candidate forums, maintaining the website, and so many other things. You have a skill? Let us know!

People say to me all the time, "Keep up the good work." To do that, we need active and spirited members. We are learning firsthand just how fragile democracy is but to make democracy work, we need to work together. As a grassroots organization, we sow the seeds. Let us work to sow the seeds of an informed and active electorate. It begins right here in San Mateo County!

Ann Kuchins, President

Board Highlights

At the May board meeting:

- Learned that the Schools and Local Communities First Funding Act of 2018 proposed ballot initiative has been changed to the November 2020 election
- Appointed Ann Kuchins, Susie Raye, Gayle Hardt, and Marta Bookbinder as our delegates to the LWVUS Convention
- Approved changing the convention budget to \$5500 to accommodate sending 4 delegates to Convention
- Heard that the Pros & Cons and VCA presentations are going well with several more scheduled
- Discussed the hearings scheduled in various cities to discuss having city district elections
- Heard that we need to start planning for the LWV's 100th anniversary in 2020

At the July board meeting:

- Learned that Jacqueline Schneider has become a Lifetime Member
- Discussed having observers at the voting centers during the November election
- Approved the End of Year Financial Statement
- Appointed Marie Baldisseri and Joyce Delyani to the Nominating Committee
- Moved the September board meeting to Tuesday, September 4th because of Labor Day

Jean Johnson, Secretary

Sea Level Rise – Advocacy and Action

In February, the two San Mateo County League presidents signed a letter to the County Board of Supervisors, recommending acceptance of the County sea level rise vulnerability assessment. The Leagues had been part of the citizens advisory committee helping to create the assessment.

Cities and the County are beginning to take actions to reduce the impacts of sea level rise. Check out the County's web page at <http://www.seachangesmc.com/get-involved> to find a map showing actions that are now underway and events that are being held. Some of the actions involve a wide range of topics such as the following:

- Half Moon Bay will be hosting an event to show the location of future sea level.
- At Surfer's Beach a sand replenishment project will be implemented to reduce erosion and protect the beach.
- On the bay side, the City of San Mateo is evaluating its wastewater treatment plant to ensure functionality during flooding events and prevent illnesses from sewage backup.
- Foster City and San Mateo have levee projects to increase the height of shoreline levees to protect homes, schools, businesses, and community facilities.
- Burlingame is beginning its process to update its general plan and sea level rise will be a factor it will include. More information on Burlingame's general plan process can be found at <http://www.envisionburlingame.org>

Each League should check out the County's website and determine where your members want to know more and be involved. We can make a difference in helping to educate ourselves and the community and support efforts to reduce our vulnerability to sea level rise.

Ann Draper, LWV South San Mateo

San Mateo County Charter Review Committee

San Mateo has a charter which addresses governance of the County. Approximately every ten years, the Board of Supervisors creates a review committee to consider potential charter changes generated by both the Board of Supervisors and by the committee itself. In 2017, the Board created a review committee and designated one of the committee members to represent the Leagues in San Mateo County. Ann Draper is the representative from the Leagues to the committee. The term of the committee is from January to June 30, 2018. The Board had three topics for the committee to consider:

1. Should the recruitment requirements for a county executive as shown in the charter be changed?
Right now, the charter has specific recruitment requirements that are often hard to implement.
2. Should there be an appointed director of finance?
Several counties now have an appointed director of finance. San Mateo has an elected treasurer and an elected comptroller.
3. Should the elections functions be separated from the current structure that has an elected official as its head and has other duties including assessor and county clerk recorder?
Some counties have a separate appointed head of election services.

The committee heard a variety of ideas for additional Charter changes as proposed by members and by the public. After consideration, no new Charter changes were added.

Ann Draper, LWV South San Mateo

Welcome to Our New Members!

Barbara Fatum
Linda Franklyn
Diana Gregory
Pam Keim

Midterm Elections November 2018 Candidate Forum Training

November 6, 2018 is an important election not only nationally but locally as well. Effective January 1, 2018, all of California's cities, K-12 school districts, community college districts, and special districts moved their election dates to a statewide election (primary or general) held during an even-numbered year. This was due to the passage of Senate Bill 415 (California Voter Participation Rights Act), which was approved by the California Senate and Assembly and signed by Governor Brown in 2015. (For more information on district elections, see [District Elections Coming for Local Jurisdictions, p. 5.](#))

This means our League will probably have more candidate forums this November than we have had in the past. To prepare for this, voter service will be holding a candidate forum training on Saturday, August 25, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the LWV North and Central San Mateo County League office, 444 Peninsula Ave. Suite 1, San Mateo, CA 94401. This will include training for moderators, timekeepers, and ushers. You do not have to commit to any of the positions if you attend. If you have not been to any of our candidate forums, this is an excellent opportunity to learn procedures and possibly volunteer to help at some of the forums in your area. If you would like to participate, please contact Voter Services Director, Gayle Hardt, at hardtlaw1@aol.com or 650-477-2141.

Gayle Hardt

District Elections Coming for Local Jurisdictions

The May 2018 *Voter* reported on actions to implement district elections for some government agencies in the area served by our League. The change is in response to the threat of legal action if the jurisdictions do not voluntarily adopt district elections. The legal threat alleges that the at-large election systems violate the California Voting Rights Act.

San Mateo Community College District	The San Mateo County Community College District has established districts and will hold its first election of trustees by district in the coming election, November 2018. Trustees for Areas 2 and 4 will be up for election this year, with Trustees for Areas 1, 3, and 5 to be elected in November 2020.	Find out what area you are in and more about the decision at https://smccd.edu/boardoftrustees/notice-hearing-by-trustee-area-elections.php .
City of South San Francisco	<p>The South San Francisco City Council officially passed its ordinance on July 11, 2018 and chose the map for the districts. Districts 2 and 4 will have elections in November 2020, and Districts 1, 3, and 5 will have elections in November 2022. The current districts are based on the 2010 census. However, adjustments in district lines will be made in 2021 as needed after the 2020 census.</p> <p>At the General Municipal election on Tuesday, November 6, 2018, South San Francisco voters will choose: three members of the City Council for full terms of four years; one City Clerk for a full term of four years; and one City Treasurer for a full term of four years.</p> <p>In 2020, voters will elect two members of the City Council for full four year terms.</p>	Find out more at http://www.ssf.net/government/district-elections .
City of Half Moon Bay	<p>The City of Half Moon Bay has chosen a different model and will create four council districts with the mayor to be elected at-large. This means that each of four council members will be elected by voters within that candidate's district, while the mayor would be elected by all voters within the City.</p> <p>Public hearings are scheduled on July 17 and August 21 to present and solicit public input on the initial draft maps and proposed election sequencing. The Council will select the map and introduce the ordinance making the change on Tuesday, September 4.</p>	Find out more at https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/519/District-Based-Elections .
San Mateo County Harbor District	The San Mateo County Harbor District is also moving from at-large to district elections. The district is holding a series of public meetings to seek public input on potential maps and the process for implementation in the 2020 and 2022 elections.	Find out more at https://www.smharbor.com/districted-elections .

Jackie Jacobberger

Primary Election Update

The big question is whether the implementation of the Voter's Choice Act was a success. There was a 44% voter turnout for the 2018 primary compared to 29.5% in 2015, which was all vote by mail (VBM), and 27.4% in 2015, which followed the traditional precinct voting model. At first glance, it appears that the Voter's Choice Act was a huge success in terms of turnout but on closer examination, not that great as the average turnout in counties in California, most of which did not implement the Voter's Choice Act, increased by 12%. It appears that voters were motivated to come out to vote.

In San Mateo County, the total number of votes cast was 172,076. Here are some facts:

- 92.7% of the votes were VBM; 45% of these ballots were received during the period between Election Day and June 8. Most of the mail-in ballots came in four days before the election and the three days after the election indicating that voters waited until the end of the voting period to vote.
- 7.3% of voters voted at the vote centers. The vote centers were generally busier on the weekdays.
- Over 28,533 ballots were physically dropped off at the ballot drop boxes or vote centers.
- San Mateo County was the only county to use the Accessible Vote by Mail System (AVBM) where you can download accessible software to your computer, fill out your ballot, and then mail it in or drop it off. There was a significant increase in the use of the software.
- At the vote centers, there were some technical difficulties in the name lookup and with a slow printer but nothing drastic.

Ann Kuchins

Housing Update

Affordable Housing for Seniors near Peninsula Hospital in Burlingame

The Peninsula Health Care District is planning to build units of senior housing next to Peninsula Hospital. The district receives property tax from San Bruno, Millbrae, Burlingame, Hillsborough, San Mateo, and Foster City. Their only oversight is the San Mateo County Grand Jury. Past donations were used to build Peninsula Hospital and other health related organizations.

To date, the district has been unwilling to commit to affordable housing. The need for affordable housing is grouped as follows: Very low income, low income, and moderate income. Definitions of dollar income for each group must be determined but must be considered variable.

In this case, the challenge is to increase affordable housing for seniors and elderly including the disabled. The percentages of affordable units being asked for might range from 10% to 35%. If units are provided for the very low income, the 10% range is more likely; the higher percentage would probably require the middle income limit. Building smaller units with fewer amenities could provide units for the lowest income.

The reasons in favor of this proposal include the following:

- The district would use public dollars for public good and not for investment.
- Affordable housing is needed for seniors as they are evicted from rental units as rents increase and long-term residents are leaving their cities for more affordable housing.
- The housing crisis is hitting teachers, medical and health care personnel, city employees, including emergency personnel such as police and firemen, and it is creating a major health crisis for seniors. The Peninsula Health Care District needs to focus housing for these groups of people, not on providing housing for the wealthy.

Supporters	Challengers
Housing for All, Burlingame City Councils of San Mateo, San Bruno, Foster City,	Peninsula Health Care District CEO and Board of Directors: They have a new focus on commercial

Hillsborough , Millbrae, and Burlingame Ray Park residents in Burlingame San Mateo County Commission on Aging San Mateo County of Supervisors	facilities that compete with private industry including a wellness center on this site that serves the wealthiest people. They want the profits to pay for health programs
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The district is sending out requests for proposals for the 300 senior units. It is important to get affordable housing developers involved. The district has estimated but not committed to 15% affordability with no deed restrictions mentioned. The recently-built Trousdale assisted living facility has some units that are affordable at \$74,000 per year. Please watch for discussion in your communities and encourage affordable housing units.

Carolyn Crow's Testimony at Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, June 7, 2018

(Representing LWVNCSMC, also a member of Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County)

Please give priority processing to affordable housing development along transportation corridors and increase housing density along them.

- Recognizing the need for housing very low income, low income and moderate income people, consider 15% to 35% affordable units in developments—recognizing that the lower percentages are needed for very low income units.
- Build smaller units with fewer amenities to enable housing for very low income people including seniors and low wage workers.
- Disabled people need to live nearer transit stations. Such sites are also beneficial to Cal Train and transit workers, teachers, nurses, veterans.
- Encourage adaptive reuse in commercially zoned areas, e.g. building conversions, residential use above commercial establishments, and air rights dedication to enable building over existing uses.

Carolyn Crow, LWVNCSMC Representative LWVSSMC Housing Committee

Get Us Moving Update

The May 2018 Voter reported on the Get Us Moving (GUM) program in San Mateo County. During the past nine months there were public meetings and surveys designed to increase community awareness of current transportation conditions, programs, services, and solutions and to help identify and prioritize transportation funding needs in the county.

GUM was spearheaded by SamTrans and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors in a joint effort with local cities, partner agencies, and other stakeholders including regional leaders, transportation experts, employers of all sizes, non-profit groups and volunteer community members. The two Leagues in San Mateo County were represented by Barbara Wallis (South County) and Jackie Jacobberger (North & Central County).

Final Congestion Relief Plan

On Wednesday, July 11 the SamTrans Board of Directors approved placing a measure on the November 2018 ballot to invest approximately \$2.4 billion from a new half-cent sales tax designed to relieve traffic congestion in San Mateo County. The Congestion Relief Plan that would be funded by the tax measure reflects priorities identified through the nine-month Get Us Moving process which included extensive outreach around the County and feedback from tens-of-thousands of County residents. The Board of Supervisors is expected to consider the Plan and associated ballot measure at its July 24 meeting.

The League does not have a position on the measure at this time. Any position of support would have to be approved by the boards of both San Mateo Leagues, based on any relevant League positions.

Find information about the measure at [http://www.samtrans.com/Planning/Get Us Moving San Mateo County.html](http://www.samtrans.com/Planning/Get_Us_Moving_San_Mateo_County.html)

Jackie Jacobberger

LWV National Convention 2018

Marta Bookbinder, Gayle Hardt, Susie Raye, and I headed out to Chicago in late June for the National Convention and what a convention it was! There was an all-time high of over 1,000 delegates who seemed especially eager to connect and interact with delegates from other Leagues.

Some of the workshops and speakers were focused on implementing ideas outlined in the League's *Assessment and Transformation Roadmap* (https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-06/lwv_transformation_roadmap.pdf), a document that examines how the League can transform to meet the challenges both internally and externally to keep our organization relevant. The first interactive workshop, *Developing Mobilizing Skills to Win in 2018*, covered the differences between organizing and mobilizing. Organizing is the building of intentional public relations to grow power for collection action. It entails connecting with people, building relationships, building trust, and understanding what motivates people. Mobilizing is about knowing who a person is, what they care about, and why they care so that when you ask someone to engage, it is based on a personal connection and knowledge of what that person wants.

A second workshop was entitled *Using a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Lens to Strengthen Social Impact and Collaboration*. The League is focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion as key to engaging all people in carrying out our mission to make democracy work. The workshop focused on developing our individual personal skills such as exploring our individual biases, communicating across differences, and listening at different levels. We were counseled to reflect on what matters to us and how we want to show up.

Some of the most encouraging news came from the budget report. At the 2016 convention, the Convention approved a \$448,000 operating deficit. This was before the 2016 election. Now, there is an operating surplus of over 3 million for LWVUS and the Education Fund (EF) combined. The combined reserves for LWVUS and EF exceed \$9 million.

Some other significant actions taken at the Convention, that will give you an idea of what was on peoples' minds, are as follows:

- A motion to add "Advocacy for the National Popular Vote Compact" as an amendment to the 2018-2020 LWVUS Program, Making Democracy Work®/Improving Elections passed.
- It was resolved that the LWVUS "urgently affirms" its position to abolish the Electoral College.
- A motion to ensure that when the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is ratified by the 38th state, that the League will take the required steps to see the Amendment through any challenges and that it will be added to the U.S. Constitution in "clear, bold, black and white."
- It was resolved that the LWVUS supports an emphasis on the ERA from now until the ERA is ratified and that LWVUS supports efforts to remove the time limits for ratification.
- It was resolved that the LWVUS make gun control, gun safety, and gun ownership limitations a lobbying priority.
- A motion to support efforts to price carbon emissions, whatever viable pricing mechanism that is, passed.
- It was resolved that the League of Women Voters reaffirms its commitment to the constitutional right of privacy to make reproductive choices.

The Convention organizers built in time so that delegates could participate in the Keep Families Together rally in Chicago. 60,000 people attended this rally.



Ann Kuchins

Schools and Communities First Initiative Update



Our League collected approximately 170 signatures for the Schools and Communities First Initiative. Many thanks to the following who turned in petitions:

- Betty Bernstein**
- Joyce Delyani**
- Betty Fleming**
- Michele Garside**
- Jackie Jacobberger**
- Ann Kuchins**

- Sheila Musselman**
- Allison Ryan**
- Helen Schneider**
- Pat Smith**
- Diana Stephens**

August Calendar

Date	Time	Description	Place
Monday August 6	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Board Meeting All members welcome	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401
Saturday August 25	10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Candidate Forum Training	444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1 San Mateo CA 94401

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. <i>Dues are tax deductible.</i>) Mail to: LWVNCSMC 444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1, San Mateo, CA 94401	

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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