



# VOTER

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 League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County

## Message from your Co-Presidents



**Co-President Cindy Marie Absey**



**Co-President Ann Havlik**

We hope you all are enjoying a relaxing summer and will be rested and ready to tackle the important challenges of the upcoming election cycle this fall. We are recruiting volunteers to work with our various League teams: Voter Registration, Voter’s Edge, Candidate Forums and Pro and Con Forums, poll workers, and our Civil Discourse Project.

To add to the excitement, we need to begin planning the commemoration and celebration of the League’s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2020—just 2 years way! Working together, we have proven we can accomplish great things. With your involvement and support, we look forward to our most successful and productive year yet.

## Building/Rebuilding Trust

**Deb Humphreys, Community Programs Chair, Carol Courcy, Charles Feltman, LWVSLO Civil Discourse Coaches**

“Building/Rebuilding Trust:” An Antidote for the Impact of Our Current Political Climate

*A New Civil Discourse Workshop/ Consulting Option*

How many of us are currently experiencing a fractured relationship with family, friends, colleagues, or political party as a result of the current political climate? Standing up for what we value is what Democracy is all about. It does not come without owning and expressing passionate beliefs and taking risks to act out these beliefs.

Is it a time for an alternative to blaming? Changing to a more productive political climate and healing relationships do not just happen without owning the responsibility to do some soul searching and skill development to walk proudly with our differences.

Because some of us may at times feel out of our League (pun intended), our Civil Discourse team

**Cont. “Building Trust,” p. 10**

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## Moderator Training Kicks Off Election Season



**Tom Carson Presents the Basics for Organizing and Presiding over a Successful Forum in April.**

### Ann Havlik

As one of our kick-offs for California's primary election season, our League held a moderator training on April 7<sup>th</sup> for interested volunteers on candidate forums and pros and cons forums. LWVC longtime member and former LWVC treasurer, Tom Carson, was our trainer.

He presented the basics for organizing and presiding over a forum as a moderator. He emphasized the following for having a successful forum: a written and signed agreement between the League and participants, setting the ground rules for how the forum is organized and the expected behavior of those involved, the responsibilities and duties of the moderator in setting the tone and keeping control, the duties and responsibilities of timers, the runners, and the sorters. The question and answer segment and discussions were very valuable.

Attendees at our workshop included not only members from our League, but from other leagues: Santa Barbara, Visalia, Bakersfield, and Santa Maria Valley. Tom's wife Chris Carson, current President of LWVUS, accompanied Tom. She gave us an update on the activities and accomplishments of the national league. We ended our day with lunch and socializing at the Spirit of San Luis restaurant.

If you would like to see Tom's PowerPoint slides, please email [annhavlik@aol.com](mailto:annhavlik@aol.com).



## Opinion: Civility Codes—They're a Start

**Ann Havlik and Cindy Marie Absey**

Bravo! Kudos to the mayors and city councils of the seven cities and the Board of Supervisors of San Luis Obispo County for adopting unanimously the Regional Code of Civility at a formal, public ceremony at the SLO County Public Library on June 21, 2018.

For five years the League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County has promoted the cause of civil discourse at public meetings and in political debate. We have drafted resolutions on Civility & Civil Discourse that we have seen adopted by the Board of Supervisors and city councils throughout the county. We have provided training workshops and

**Click here and scroll down to read the full text of the agenda item and [Civility Code](#) adopted by the SLO City Council.**

brochures on the "best practices" for civil discourse to agencies and organizations to help them run their meetings more productively. We provide a democracy concierge service at SLO City Council meetings that fosters respectful, constructive speech and encourages residents to make their voices heard.

Without civility we are unable to talk to each other, to hear each other, or to reason together. Without civility, consensus

*[Cont. "Opinion," p. 3](#)*



## Meet Your Mayor Event with Heidi Harmon

Nancy Welts

On April 16, the League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County participated in its fourth “Meet Your Mayor” event with San Luis Obispo Mayor Heidi Harmon. This series hosted by our League of Women Voters is to promote learning about local government and to give constituents an opportunity to meet their elected official. She shared with us that it was her involvement on our League’s Board that inspired her to run for mayor in 2016.

The “Meet Your Mayor” event featured a trolley tour of selected city locales, a “State of the City” video presentation, and lunch with Mayor Heidi Harmon. Mayor Harmon discussed

**[I]t was her involvement on our League’s Board that inspired her to run for mayor in 2016.**

the City of San Luis Obispo’s four major city goals for 2017-2019 including Climate Action, Housing Affordability, Multi-Modal Transportation, and Fiscal Sustainability and Responsibility. The other important objective for the City is Downtown Vitality.

This series was started in 2013 with Mayor Tom O’Malley and the re-opening of City Hall in Atascadero. Over the past few years we have held events with Mayors Shelly Higginbotham, (Pismo Beach) and Jamie Irons (Morro Bay). We look forward to visiting the mayors of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Paso Robles at a future date.



Mayor Heidi Harmon Led League Members on a Tour of Select San Luis Obispo Locales.

### “Opinion,” from p. 2

and compromise are nearly impossible. Without civility, problems are left unsolved, citizens become alienated, and our democracy suffers. And while we enthusiastically commend our elected officials for the stand they have taken, we also encourage all candidates for public office to follow their lead and sign on to the Regional Code of Civility. By doing so they can help to ensure that this fall’s election campaigns focus on issues and policies, not personalities, and offer constructive solutions rather than hyperbole and invective.

The Code of Civility has been adopted. Now comes the hard part – sticking with it. We urge everyone in, or aspiring to, public office to keep a copy of the Regional Code of Civility handy and refer to it often. Post it at public meetings so those who attend will know what their local leaders have committed to do and hold them to it. We will all benefit from increased civility in our public spaces.

Thank  
you

Our sincere thanks to **Cindy Marie Absey, Stevie & Roger Anderson, Mary Beth Armstrong, Theresa Bachoc, Virginia Bass, Ray Bracken, Rose Marie Beuttler, Janice Carr, Susan Chandler, Valerie & Craig Endres, Sallie & Craig Harlan, Beverly Henry, Sara & Boyd Horne, Deb & Dave Humphreys, Juliane McAdam, Peggy Meniece, Ruth Nimeh, Emily Penfield, Wilda Rosene, Ken Schwartz (in memory of Martha Schwartz), Pat Shutt, Valerie & Gary Steenson, Donna Sullivan, Nancy Welts, Sharon Whitney, Mary Lou Wilhelm, and Sharon Winslow** for their generous gifts to our League. This wonderful support from such dedicated members is greatly appreciated.



## Two SLO League Members Attend LWVUS Convention in Chicago

Ann Havlik and Cindy Marie Absey

This was our first experience at a National Convention for the LWVUS, and what an experience it was! In addition to daylong plenary sessions conducting LWVUS business, most of the caucuses and workshops were held from 7:30 am until late into the evening. Many of our colleagues confided in us a similar reaction to their first national convention: “Don’t these people ever sleep?”

The convention theme was “Creating a More Perfect Democracy.” The many speakers were impressive and inspiring, beginning with a welcome by **Toni Preckwinkle**, Cook County Board President, and an address by **Ashley Allison**, executive VP for the

**Conversations with fellow delegates were stimulating, and the enthusiasm palpable.**

Leadership Council on “Fighting for Democracy in Uncertain Times.” A compelling panel discussion on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” was followed by an unforgettable speech entitled “The State of Women: Inspiring Future Leaders” by **Rosie Rios**, 43<sup>rd</sup> Treasurer of the United States. The keynote speaker at Saturday night’s banquet, **Elaine Weiss**, journalist and writer, shared excerpts from her latest book *The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*. She stayed to sign copies afterwards.

Conversations with fellow delegates were stimulating, and the enthusiasm palpable. The debate

about adding the non-recommended program of eliminating the Electoral College coincided with debate about NPVIC (National Popular Vote Interstate Compact). The elimination of the Electoral College has been a LWVUS position since 1970, but the majority of delegates at this convention preferred to spend LWVUS resources on the PVIC. However, a resolution for eliminating the Electoral College did pass.

Although the weather outside was daunting—very hot and humid—the climate inside the convention was warm and civil. Civil Discourse and Civility were a common theme. **Martha Cox**, LWV Director and LWV North County San Diego, presented a workshop on Sunday morning describing CD programs in San Diego and San Luis Obispo. Her workshop had standing room

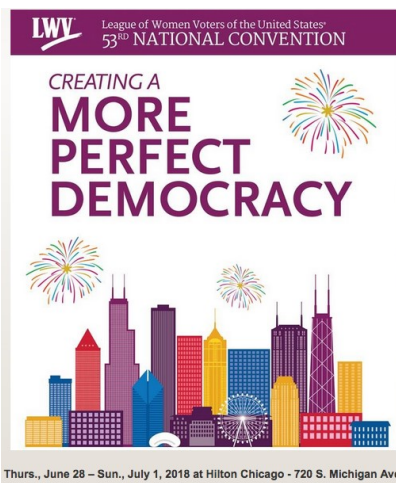
only. Many of the attendees were interested in our League’s CD workshops, brochures, and our San Luis Obispo City Coun-

**Many of the attendees were interested in our League’s CD workshops, brochures, and our Concierge program.**

cil Concierge program. They were also interested in hearing about the Oath of Civility that our Board of Supervisors and City Councils in SLO County had signed. Thank you **Nancy Welts** for sending us a box of our CD brochures that we shared with other delegates.

Overall, it was a wonderful experience and gave us the opportunity to meet delegates from around the country and California. Thank you for sending us as your LWVSLO representatives.

### From the National Convention in Chicago



Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters, was introduced with a new video, telling our collective story as an organization. Chris addressed the Convention attendees with a message of hope for the future of the organization.

[Click here to view this beautifully made video.](#)



## 34 New Members Join the League

Patti Dale

Things are going well in the membership department ! The League is ending our 2017-18 fiscal year with a substantial increase in new members. We have 34 new members compared to 20 at this point last year for a total membership of 127. Membership renewal this year continued at about the same rate as in years past. Importantly, League members frequently were mentioned as contacts in membership applications.

To me, the thing that sets 2017-18's new members apart from those of other years is how quickly most have become involved in League activities. They are all motivated to contribute and make a difference in our government – whether local, state or national.

Thirteen new members have joined the League since the last *Voter* Membership report in March. In a bit of a change, only three, **Evelyn Justesen, Carol Mortensen** and **Ellen Rosten** are from San Luis Obispo. The Five Cities area is ably represented by **Bonita Ernst, Haley Green, Shirley Povondra**, and **Carol Schmidt**, while Cambria and Morro Bay contributed **Nancy E. Johnson, Leslie Richards, Megan Souza** and **Eric Powers**. Especially good news is the increase in members from North County where the League has been trying to increase its presence. We welcome **Christopher E. Cobey** of Paso Robles and *Anne Quinn of Atascadero*.

[Cont. "Membership," p. 10](#)

## Donations (Not What You Were Thinking)

Mary Beth Armstrong

When you saw the title "Donations," I'll bet you thought I was going to ask you to donate to LWVSLO or tell you how desperately we need donations on the local level. Sorry to disappoint you, but I really wanted to tell you about a book that made a huge impression on me: *Give Us the Ballot*, by Ari Berman (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2015).

Mr. Berman is a political correspondent for *The Nation* and an investigative journalism fellow at the Nation Institute. His book chronicles the history of the Voting Rights Act and the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision that key parts of it were unconstitutional. His focus is on all the dirty tricks being employed today, especially across southern states in America, to limit the voting rights of poor people.

LWVUS has read the book! They invited Mr. Berman to be the keynote speaker at their national convention in 2016 where he received a standing ovation.

LWVUS is also fighting hard to counter the measures some states have enacted to suppress the vote. Here are a few quotes from the LWVUS website, which highlight their efforts to expand voters' rights and fight gerrymandering and voter suppression:

[Cont. "Donations," p. 11](#)

## Affordable Housing Update

Nancy Welts

The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County kicked off the 2017-2018 program year with our Opening Meeting held last September. This meeting featured Scott Smith, Executive Director Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO), who was our keynote speaker and gave us a presentation on affordable and workforce housing in our community. This article is a follow-up to recap what has happened locally with affordable and workforce housing since our Opening Meeting.

Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO), which was established in June 1968, celebrates 50 years of helping residents in our community! We are pleased that HASLO has reached this important milestone and are proud to have supported them for the past fifty

[Cont. "Housing," p. 11](#)

### League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County

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Cindy Marie Absey

Membership: Meta Nisbet  
Voter Editor: David Humphreys

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## Adopt-a-Poll Rolls On with SLO Members



SLO League Members in Morro Bay



Arroyo Grande Workers at the Polls

### Patti Dale

Good News! The League has received two \$528 checks from the SLO County Clerk-Recorder's office for services performed on June 5, 2018, California Primary Election day. We supplied the workers for two Adopt-A-Poll precincts, one in Arroyo Grande and the other in Morro Bay. In addition to working their shifts, all the volunteers attended an earlier training session given by the county.

One of the secrets shared by all the Poll Workers is that working on election day not only gives you a sense of pride and patriotism, it is also a lot of fun. Our voters are all good humored, courteous and almost without fail thank us for our service. Voting is uplifting!

Don't despair, you can still share in the fun! The smaller Primary Election only required four workers per hour, but the General Election always attracts more voters and will require five workers per hour. Therefore, we will need two or three more people at each site. Also there are rumors the League may sign up for three precincts on Nov. 6. **Julie Rodewald** has indicated she will serve as precinct in-

spector if enough people are willing to help.

So join your friends and come to an Adopt-a-Poll gathering. Marilee, Tony, Janice, Rosemary, Valerie, Donna, Mary Beth, Gail, Shirley, Patti, Vallerie, Gary, Sallie, Nancy, Jean, Bud, Patti T, Carrie, Megan, Barbara and Julie will be waiting to welcome you! [Contact Patti ([paticaaake@aol.com](mailto:paticaaake@aol.com)) or Marilee ([marileehyman@gmail.com](mailto:marileehyman@gmail.com)) or Julie ([julie0513@sbcglobal.net](mailto:julie0513@sbcglobal.net)) to join a team.]



Like Us on Facebook!

Check us out at "LWVSLO" at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Stay up to date on League activities and matters of importance to all of us here in San Luis Obispo County.

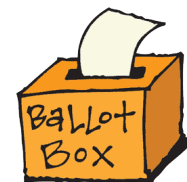
## High School Voter Registration

### Julie Rodewald

The High School Voter Registration Team ended the school year with a real bang. On May 21, the last day for voters to register for the June 5 primary, the team descended on Arroyo Grande High School and spoke to nine senior classes throughout the day. 129 students completed voter registration cards, and 49 signed pledge cards to vote in future elections. This one-day effort brings this year's totals to 689 students registered or pre-registered (16-17-year olds) and 298 student pledges to vote in future elections.

Since the League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County began the high school outreach in March 2017, the team has visited local high schools on 22 different occasions and registered or pre-registered 1,076 students. 471 students have signed pledge cards to vote in future elections, and those who provided either a cell phone number or an email address, were sent two reminders about voting leading up to the June 5 Primary Election.

While the team won't be visiting high schools over the summer, we will be busy revising the Power-Point presentation and conducting additional training. If you are interested in joining this exciting and rewarding effort, please contact **Julie Rodewald** at [voterregistration@lwvslo.org](mailto:voterregistration@lwvslo.org) or (805) 235-5463.





Marilee Hyman



Your New Board of Directors



Ann Havlik



59 Members & Guests



Vera Wallen



Nancy Welts



Stephanie Finucane



Mayor Heidi Harmon

## 59 Members and Guests Attend League Annual Meeting

Vallerie Steenson

Fifty-nine members and guests attended the 2018 Annual Meeting and lunch at the Madonna Inn on June 9. Co-Presidents **Marilee Hyman** and **Ann Havlik** chaired the meeting. Ms. Hyman announced special guests State League Secretary and our MTA Caroline De Llamas, State League Treasurer Jacquie Canfield, Morro Bay City Council Member **Marlys McPherson**, San Luis Obispo

Mayor **Heidi Harmon**, Cal Poly Journalism Department Chair **Mary Glick** and *Tribune* Opinion Page Editor Stephanie Finucane, our speaker. **Sharon Whitney** served as Parliamentarian and **Ruth Nimeh** as Timer. **Cindy Betonte** and Marlys McPherson were appointed to read and approve the minutes of the meeting. **Janice Carr**, from last year's

committee, announced that she and **Sallie Harlan** had read and approved the minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting.

Co-President Ann Havlik reviewed the year in pictures, featuring the Opening Meeting in September, the holiday event in December (a fundraiser for the

[Cont. "Annual," p. 12](#)



## League Committees 2018-19

### Standing Committees

<b>Audit / Financial Review</b> Chair: Janice Carr (off-Board)	Boyd Horne, Sallie Harlan, Mary Beth Armstrong (consultant)	<b>Budget</b> Chair: Glenn Silloway (off Board)	Boyd Horne, Janice Carr, Mary Beth Armstrong ( <i>ex officio</i> ), Ann Havlik ( <i>ex officio</i> ), Cindy Marie Absey ( <i>ex officio</i> )
<b>Nominating</b> Chair: Valerie Endres (off-Board)	Vera Wallen, Sallie Harlan, Mary Beth Armstrong, Meta Nisbet	<b>Program</b> Co-chairs: Deb Humphreys, Richard Moore	All Board
<b>Speakers' Bureau</b> Chair: TBD	Nancy Welts, Richard Moore, Barbara Spagnola, Ann Havlik ( <i>ex officio</i> ), Cindy Marie Absey ( <i>ex officio</i> )	<b>Rules</b> Chair: Sharon Whitney	Mary Beth Armstrong, Boyd Horne, Vallerie Steenson, Ann Havlik ( <i>ex officio</i> ), Cindy Marie Absey ( <i>ex officio</i> )

### Program Committees

**Civil Discourse Task Force: Co-Chairs: Sharon Kimball, Deb Humphreys—Civil Discourse Team:** Cindy Marie Absey (*ex officio*), Cindy Betonte, Janice Carr, Adena Chen (Cal Poly Student), Carol Courcy, Mary Lynn Crandall, Patti Dale, Susan Devine, Ellen Edwards, Charles Feltman, Ann Havlik (*ex officio*), Barb Hawkins, Dave Humphreys, Marlys McPherson, Meta Nisbet, Carrie Pardo, Haley Green Preston, Julie Rodewald, Glenn Silloway, Barbara Spagnola, and Nancy Welts.

<b>Development &amp; Fundraising</b> Chair: TBD	Boyd Horne Wilda Rosene Board members	<b>Government Policy</b> Chair Observer Corp: TBD	TBD (2)
<b>Membership</b> Chair: Meta Nisbet	Vallerie Steenson, Patti Dale	<b>Natural Resources</b> Chair: TBD	All Board
<i>Subcommittees</i>			
New Member Mentors	Marilee Hyman		
National Database	Patti Dale		
<b>Social Policy</b> Chair: TBD	All Board	<b>Communications</b> Chair: Richard Moore	
<b>Voter Services</b> Chair : Nancy Welts	Julie Rodewald Patti Dale Marilee Hyman	<i>Subcommittees</i>	
		Public Relations <i>VOTER</i> Web site / Internet Facebook	Vallerie Steenson Dave Humphreys Glenn Silloway/Nancy Welts Nancy Welts

**Voter Service Volunteers:** Mary Beth Armstrong, Janice Carr, Jean Chinnici, Lee Chivens, Patti Dale, Colleen Ehrenberg, Bud Hankins, Harriet Hankins, Sallie Harlan, Ann Havlik, Neil Havlik, Boyd Horne, Marilee Hyman, Trudy Jarratt, Sharon Kimball, Elinor Kogan, Janet Kourakis, Juliane McAdam, Carrie Pardo, Anne Riswold, Glenn Silloway, Gary Steenson, Vallerie Steenson, Donna Sullivan, Vera Wallen, Nancy Welts, Sharon Whitney





## Embracing the Heat: Reframing Incivility with CD

Deb Humphreys & Sharon Kimball

More than once this past year, we have heard remarks about how today's political climate has in fact been a call to action to get more involved, embrace the "heat" as an opportunity to get to the core of disagreements, and to engage with others openly and in new ways. Having some heat is necessary for change. Our League now offers a variety of workshops on how to constructively manage the "heat."

"Hats off" to our local San Luis Obispo CO City Mayors for making a promise to follow a new SLO Regional Civility

Code. What started as a League initiative to inform and increase visibility about civil discourse has been now shaped by local officials to reflect the city's culture and needs. We notice a difference when we attend City Council Meetings where we observe that officials and the public can engage in spirited dialogue within a respectful environment.

Our League's Concierge Service for the SLO City Council meetings, has proved to provide a welcoming entry where the public can review meeting

agendas, speaking protocol, and sometimes benefit from a non-partisan sounding board for issues and public statements. The Concierge Service seems to also have an impact on encouraging full participation while discouraging the kind of "heat" that distracts from engagement.

Our Civil Discourse effort this year has also provided many opportunities to empower folks to hang in there with the "heat" in the spirit of influencing change by going deeper with

[Cont. "Reframing," p. 10](#)

**High School Voter Registration Volunteers:** Mary Beth Armstrong, Linda Busek, Janice Carr, Gail Cheda, Karen Coffey, Mary Lynn Crandall, Patti Dale, Betty DeHahn, Susan Devine, Naomi Hoffman, Deb Humphreys, Evy Justensen, Sharon Kimball, Juliane McAdams, Ruth Nimeh, Carrie Pardo, Julie Rodewald, Carol Schmidt, Barbara Spagnola, Michelle Turner, Vera Wallen, Nancy Welts, Sharon Whitney, Rosemary Wrenn

**Voter's Edge:** Ann Havlik, Julie Rodewald, Shelly Higginbotham

**Adopt-a-Poll:** Patti Dale, Marilee Hyman, Julie Rodewald

**Candidate Forum Moderators:** Mary Beth Armstrong, Marilee Hyman, Trudy Jarratt, Sharon Whitney

**Pros and Cons Presenters:** Gail Cheda, Vera Wallen, Valerie Endres, Marilee Hyman, Nancy Welts

### General Member Meetings

#### Opening Meeting September 2018

Co-chairs: TBD (2)

Mary Beth Armstrong, Patti Dale, Ann Havlik, (*ex officio*), Cindy Marie Absey, (*ex officio*)

#### Humankind Fundraiser 2018

Chair: Julie Rodewald

Susan Devine

#### Holiday Party 2018

Chair: TBD

TBD

#### Program Planning 2019

Co-Chairs: Deb Humphreys, Richard Moore

Ann Havlik (*ex officio*), Cindy Marie Absey (*ex officio*)

#### Annual Meeting 2019

Co-Chairs: Ann Havlik (*ex officio*)  
Cindy Marie Absey (*ex officio*)

Mary Beth Armstrong, Vallerie Steenson, TBD (2)



**“Building Trust,” from p. 1**

is now offering customized workshop and /or coaching to help rebuild and strengthen trust.

Here are a few hints from the workshop and coaching content:

How do we go about taking care of ourselves and restoring valued relationships when our differences with those we care about or depend upon strongly differ? Developing, strengthening, and rebuilding trusting relationships require improved skills and attention to CARING for others, demonstrating COMPETENCY in our areas of responsibility, being RELIABLE in following through with what WE promise, and SINCERITY in speaking the truth in what we believe.

Our League coaches have recently completed a trust training certification program developed by Charles Feltman, author of *The Thin Book of Trust* and recent League member, along with colleagues who are experts in building, maintaining, and restoring trust. This allow us to spread the word to a larger community. Our mission is to help all to take responsibility for building and rebuilding trust.

Please contact Sharon Kimball or Deb Humphreys, Co-Directors, Civil Discourse with your interest in or questions about how we can shape this offering to fit your needs.

League donations are expected and much appreciated for these workshops, consulting, or coaching engagements.

**“Membership,” from p. 5**

Recently, we initiated a Mentor Program to help guide our many “newbies” into active participation. In fact, our continued good fortune in attracting high quality, industrious new members has been difficult to keep up with.

Remember the Membership Questionnaire we were all asked to complete in early winter? One of the questions was “Would you be willing to mentor a new member?” I subsequently assigned 2 new members to everyone who responded; however, since then we have added another 11 new members from all over the county! I need more mentors. Think about volunteering for this important job. This is a short term (one-year) obligation with no strings attached. Mentoring can entail as little as a phone call or two to inquire about their needs and remind them of upcoming events. Face-to-face coffee dates or breakfast meetings are optional. Won’t you consider helping us out?

Submitted by Patti Dale, [paticaaake@aol.com](mailto:paticaaake@aol.com) or 805-772-3701.

**“Reframing,” from p. 9**

important issues and relationships. As promised, our Civil Discourse team has met regularly to design and deliver a number of CD -to-Go workshops locally and to the public and other Leagues. These workshops provide tools and resources that can be immediately used and shared with others. In order to reach an even greater audience, we are exploring the use of Zoom conferencing technology to have virtual workshops.

Our exciting new partnership with The National Institute of Civil Discourse, Tuscon, Arizona, is opening up new learning and resource sharing so that our Civil Discourse Team can expand our learning, communications, and offerings. They offer monthly Zoom teleconference dialogue opportunities to share resources, ideas, successes, and challenges. We have so much that we can learn from each other to expand our influence and recharge our collective batteries.

So, welcome “the heat” in today’s political climate as a way to engage, empower and influence productive change. Civil Discourse can be the armor that allows us to go deep, take more risks, and better serve our community.

**LWVSLO Endorses Upgrade to Locality Pay**

Until now, healthcare professionals in our area have been reimbursed by the government at a rate lower than that of professionals in urban areas. As a result, we have been losing doctors and nurses, and our residents often have to drive great distances to find care.

But because LWVSLO has a long-standing position in support of an integrated and comprehensive county health system, our League has written a letter in support of changing our level of reimbursement to equal that of the Los Angeles—Long Beach locality pay area. Higher salaries for healthcare professionals will better serve our veterans, elderly, low-income families, and all residents.



Housing, from p. 5

years. A little bit of our local League history—in May 1968 our League conducted public forums on housing issues and studied public housing, and in June 1968, voters approved the creation of the San Luis Obispo Housing Authority (which now exists as HASLO).

The Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO) is committed to improving the communities of San Luis Obispo County by providing quality affordable housing and resident services. HASLO provides rental housing and a home ownership opportunities. Their clients include families, seniors, veterans and the disabled. They are proud to operate collaborations focused on housing and services for the homeless, mental health clients, and persons in recovery from substance abuse disorders. Their staff is committed to excellence in both program design and service delivery in order to ensure positive, community-focused outcomes. (For more information on HASLO visit <http://www.haslo.org>.)

Iron Works Apartments is now accepting applications. There is a lot of community excitement around this project which consists of a 46-unit apartment complex with 1, 2, and 3 bedroom affordable apartments located at 3682 Broad Street in San Luis Obispo. Move-ins should start on September 1. (For more information you can go to [www.ironworksslo.com](http://www.ironworksslo.com).)

In May, the waiting list opened for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as Sec-

tion 8). This list opens up every few years for a couple weeks for applicants, and a lottery is held for selection of these vouchers with a preference given to local applicants and to veterans. Five hundred were selected for processing over the next two years out of 3,400 applications received. This shows that there is strong demand for these assistance-based pro-

grams. HASLO also administers the Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) program in our county. Monies to fund these types of programs come from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds. Overall in our county, HASLO is able to subsidize the rent for over 2,200 households (approximately 5,000

[Cont. "Housing," p. 12](#)

"Donations," from p. 5**Voting Rights**

"We fight to increase voters' access to the polls, including early voting, automatic and online voter registration."

**Redistricting**

"Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population. We oppose partisan and racial gerrymandering that strip rights away from voters."

**Fighting Voter Suppression**

"We challenge all efforts and tactics that threaten our democracy and limit the ability of voters to exercise their right to vote."

How does LWVUS carry out the fights listed above? Often through the courts. They are challenging laws that restrict voters' rights, that make registering to vote unbelievable onerous, and that gerrymander districts to ensure victories for parties instead of victories for voters. But legal

actions can be terribly expensive. Hence, I am really appealing to you to not only obtain and read Mr. Berman's book, but to also consider donating to LWVUS so they can continue their important work in this area. Contributions can be sent to:

LWVUS; 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1,000; Washington D.C. 20036-4508.

*Be aware, LWVUS is still organized under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. Hence, deductions to them are not tax deductible.*

Here is where I remind you, however, that **LWVSLO is a 501(c)(3) organization**, and if you prefer to make your donations to us, they are tax deductible, as are your dues, assuming you itemize your deductions. Another reminder: A large portion of your dues is sent to LWVUS and LWVC as "Per Member Payments" (PMP) every year.



[“Annual,” from 7](#)

League at Humankind in San Luis Obispo), the Program Planning meeting in January, “Meet Your Mayor” with Mayor Heidi Harmon in April, and our participation in events organized by Women’s March SLO and by local students to protest gun violence.

Highlights of the year were our Voter Service and Civil Discourse activities. We held candidate forums, many in collaboration with the Latino Outreach Council, managed two Adopt-a-Polls, and continued the successful high school voter registration project. The League was lauded by the *Tribune* editorial page for our voter service; “fair and unflappable” they

**The League was lauded by the *Tribune* editorial page for our voter service; “fair and unflappable” they called us.**

called us. The Civil Discourse team led by **Sharon Kimball** and **Deb Humphreys** inaugurated the Democracy Concierge Service at SLO City Council meetings and facilitated translation of the civil discourse brochure into Spanish. They conducted workshops in Avila Beach, for the Monterey & Salinas Leagues in Monterey, and another workshop in Visalia for the Leagues of Tulare, Kern and Fresno counties on June 16.

We have worked with mayors, city councils and chambers of commerce on a regional “Civility Initiative” adopted at a public ceremony on June 21. We held regional training for Voter’s Edge and for forum moderators. We upgraded our website, revitalized the

*VOTER*, and initiated monthly *News Briefs* to keep our membership informed and involved. We sent two voting delegates to the National Convention in Chicago June 28 – July 1. The theme, “Creating a More Perfect Democracy,” emphasized voting rights, expanding the vote, and combating voter suppression.

Ms. Hyman introduced **Cindy Marie Absey**, who will succeed Ms. Hyman as Co-President for 2018 – 2019. Ms. Absey, a current Board member, was elected by the Board to be Co-President.

Treasurer **Mary Beth Armstrong** presented the financials statements as of May 31, 2018 and notes to the statements explaining the accounting methods used. Budget Chair **Glenn Siloway** presented the budget for 2018 – 2019. New to this year’s budget are separate income and expenses accounts for Civil Discourse. We have anticipated revenue for five Adopt-a-Polls (2 in June 2018, with the revenue received after July 1 and 3 in November 2018). Dues revenue and PMP expenses are based on membership as of February 1,

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[Housing, from p. 11](#)

people) each month in our county. Households must meet certain edibility and income requirements to qualify.

Also in May was the groundbreaking ceremony for Bishop Street Studios (the old Sunny Acres Orphanage site behind General Hospital). This is a 34-unit complex located at 1720 Bishop Street which consists of one-person apartments for adults living with mental illness. Construction is going well so far with an anticipated completion date of summer/early fall 2019. Once a client moves in, Transitions Mental Health Association (THMA) will provide a variety of supportive services to help residents live independently. (For more information you can go to <http://www.bishopstreetstudios.org>.)

HASLO has also joined with Restorative Partners to purchase a large home to provide transitional housing for nine formerly incarcerated women discharged from our county jail system. Restorative Partners will be providing support and reentry services to these women. Escrow is anticipated to close in September. (For more information you can go to [www.restorativepartners.org](http://www.restorativepartners.org).)

Other Housing Programs and Services available through San Luis Obispo County agencies are:

[Transitions Mental Health Association \(TMHA\) Supportive Housing Programs](#)

[Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo \(CAPSLO\) Supportive Housing Program](#)

[Peoples' Self-Help Housing](#)



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2018, and dues of \$70 for individuals and \$105 for household memberships. Mr. Silloway noted that of our \$20,000 budget, we pay about \$6,000 in PMP to State and National. He pointed out the \$3,292 expenditure for State Convention used to balance the budget, and he thanked members for their generosity this year which exceeded by more than \$4,000 what we had anticipated with the 2017 – 2018 budget.

Program Committee Co-Chair Deb Humphreys presented the Board recommended program for 2018 – 2019. The members agreed that we will retain all existing position statements and conduct no new local studies. We also agreed to adopt the four areas for emphasis and action outlined in the program: Voter Empowerment & Education; Civic Education and Defense of Democratic Institutions and Principles; Civil discourse and the Reduction of Political & Social Polarization; and League Recruitment, Exposition & Exposure.

VP and Voter Service Director **Vera Wallen** presented the Sara Horne Award for Voter Service for 2018 to Communications Director **Nancy Welts** for her outstanding work on candidate forums and Pros & Cons presentations this year.

Nominating Committee member Nancy Welts presented the report on behalf of Committee Chair **Sharon Winslow** and the committee. Officers elected to two-year terms ending in 2020 are Second Vice President Deb Humphreys and Treasurer Mary Beth Armstrong. Directors elected to two-

year terms ending in 2020 are **David Humphreys, Richard Moore, Meta Nisbet and Julie Rodewald**. **Valerie Endres** was elected chair, and **Sallie Harlan** and **Vera Wallen** members of the Nominating Committee for 2018 – 2019.

Two guests announced upcoming events that the League is participating in. **Mayor Harmon** described the “Civility Initiative,” a regional code of conduct that the Board of Supervisors and the Mayors and City Councils of all seven cities will pledge to uphold at a ceremony on June 21 at 2:00 pm at the SLO Library. She commended the League for advocating so strongly for civility and invited all League members to attend the June 21 event. **Mary Glick** spoke about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Jim Hayes Symposium to be held at Cal Poly on October 12, 2018. The topic is “Is Journalism Broken?” and panelists include the ombudsman for the Center for Public Broadcasting and representatives from VOX Media and Reveal Investigative Scholarships. League members are invited to attend.

Stephanie Finucane, Opinion Page Editor of the *Tribune* asked, “What will happen if local newspapers go away?” Who will hold local officials, school boards, local unions and others accountable? She described the decline in print journalism: print circulation is the lowest it’s been since 1945; more jobs have been lost in journalism than in the coal industry. But there are now

also new models for journalism, and while we don’t want to see print disappear, these new models offer some positive, heretofore unavailable options. News consumers can access news and updates more quickly. There can be links to other sources of information, and news can reach a broader audience. All new sources of news are not necessarily bad, and the *Tribune* has been gratified by the steady increase in

[R]eaders need to know they can trust the information they get; the media cannot be driven solely by what is most popular (gets the most clicks)....

“page-viewer clicks” they are getting. But there are concerns: readers need to know they can trust the information they get; the media cannot be driven solely by what is most popular (gets the most clicks) when selecting stories; and we all, the media and the public, must deal with the chilling effect on journalism that is evident in the current climate of division and acrimony. We must protect the “public square” that is local media. Questions focused on the *Tribune*’s relationship with McClatchy, monitoring the comment section for civility and ensuring a safe space for readers’ views, and the criteria used to select letters to the editor. Ms. Havlik presented Ms. Finucane with a basket of goodies from local businesses.



## CD-to-Go Photo Gallery from Avila Beach and Visalia Workshops



Avila Beach



Avila Beach



Visalia



Visalia

## League of Women Voters Reaffirms Call for Abolition of the Electoral College

### Local League leaders attend national convention in Chicago

Co-Presidents Ann Havlik and Cindy Marie Absey represented the League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County at the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) 53rd National Convention held in Chicago June 28 – July 1. The event kicked off a two-year celebration of the coming 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2020 of women gaining the right to vote and the establishment of the League of Women Voters. More than 1,000 League leaders from 49 states and the District of Columbia attended the convention.

Over the four-day Convention, delegates voted on the national organization's priorities. Convention

attendees discussed the Electoral College system of electing the U.S. President and Vice President and overwhelmingly passed a resolution reaffirming the League's long-held position that the Electoral College should be abolished in favor of a popular vote for President.

"The Electoral College discourages people from voting because they feel their votes do not count, and it magnifies the divisiveness in our country by emphasizing a false blue state/red state divide," said Ms. Havlik.

The League of Women Voters first called for an end to the Electoral College in favor of a popular vote system in 1970.

The issue received more attention after the 2000 and 2016 Presidential elections, when the winners in the Electoral College lost the popular vote. The League's position on the Electoral College is just one part of its Campaign for Making Democracy Work®, which includes ensuring a free, fair, and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters.

The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County is a non-partisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information contact the League at [info@lwvslo.org](mailto:info@lwvslo.org) or go to the website [www.lwvslo.org](http://www.lwvslo.org).



## Board of Directors 2018-2019

<p><b>Ann Havlik</b> Co-President (2017-19)</p> <p><b>Sharon Kimball</b> 1st Vice President Civil Discourse (2017-2019)</p> <p><b>Mary Beth Armstrong</b> Treasurer (2018-20)</p> <p><b>Boyd Horne</b> At Large (2017-19)</p> <p><b>Richard Moore</b> Communications Director (2018-20)</p> <p><b>Meta Nisbet</b> Membership Director (2018-2020)</p>	<p><b>Cindy Marie Absey</b> Co-President (2018-19)</p> <p><b>Debora Humphreys</b> 2nd Vice President Program Planning (2018-20)</p> <p><b>Vallerie Steenson</b> Secretary (2017-19)</p> <p><b>Nancy Welts</b> Voter Services (2018-20)</p> <p><b>David Humphreys</b> <i>VOTER</i> Editor (2018-20)</p> <p><b>Julie Rodewald</b> At Large (2018-20)</p>
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### Join the League

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Very Important)

Do not include my information in the League Directory.

**Please select your class of Membership.**  
 A voting member is at least 18 and a citizen.

**Annual Dues:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$70.00 Individual Annual Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$120.00 Two-member Household
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 Associate Member  
 (Under 18 or not a citizen)

LWVSLO is a 501 (C)3 organization, and dues are tax deductible for those who itemize.

I want to support the work of the League of Women Voters with a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Make Payment to:

League of Women Voters San Luis Obispo County  
 (LWV of SLO County)

P.O. Box 4210

San Luis Obispo, CA 93403

Thank You for Your Support!

Membership in the LWV of SLO County entitles you to national, state, and local membership in the League. Membership extends from July 1 of any calendar year through June 30 of the next year.

The League is nonpartisan. We do not support or oppose candidates. Join us! Add your voice to the work of the most respected and effective grassroots organization.

