

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SOLANO COUNTY

February 2020 <https://my.lww.org/california/solano-county>

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which neither supports nor opposes candidates or political parties. We encourage informed and active participation in government, work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and action.

Please watch for updates to these events, as things can change from time to time.

February 1st, 11am-1pm, workshop **Democracy Matters: Know the Value of Your Vote**, Bethel Community Church, 600 East Tabor Avenue, Fairfield presented by LWVSC. Get the facts before you vote. Come learn how to easily get up-to-date information on policy measures, and the candidates who support them so that you can decide who and what addresses the needs and opportunities for you and your community to thrive and prosper. LWVSC event open to all.



February 3rd at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, second meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The Topic will be *India and Pakistan*.

Feb. 5th, 7-8:30pm: **All-Vallejo Candidates Forum**, for Board of Supervisors District 1 and 2, cosponsored by the LWVSC and Vallejo Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at the Cal Maritime Anchor Center, 253 Georgia Street, Vallejo.

February 10th at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, third meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The topic will be *Red Sea Security*.

Feb. 12th, Wednesday, 1-3pm: Monthly Voter Service Team meeting, Barbara King's home, Fairfield. For more info contact vonwindgayle@gmail.com.

February 14th League of Women Voters 100th Anniversary and Day of Action

The LWVUS has declared a League Day of Action to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the League. The theme will be "Women Power the Vote!" Goals and activities will be developed in the coming months for state and local Leagues to participate in this high visibility opportunity. This day of action will complement any existing plans Leagues may have, staying true to our brand, and offering all Leagues the opportunity for engagement and celebration in honor of our centennial.

The League of Women Voters is a Women's Vote Centennial Initiative Taskforce partner, meaning that our League is too. For more ideas and opportunities to celebrate, check the LWVUS Anniversary page on their website or our new LWVDV website Anniversary page!

Calendar continued

The LWVUS has also announced a contest where local Leagues can win up to \$1000. Local Leagues just need to keep track of the activities we are doing to get out the vote and document with photos. If you are doing anything with the League.

February 20th 11am-12:30pm Membership Meeting via Zoom video conferencing. Please contact sandycoury@gmail.com for details.

February 24th at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, fourth meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The topic will be *Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking*

February 28th from 6:00 – 7:30 pm **Annual Meet Your Local Officials Benicia Event**, Estey Real Estate and Property Management, 216 1st St, Benicia, CA 94510

February 29th from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm **League of Women Voters Bay Area, League Day 2020: In Celebration of the League's 100th Anniversary** at the Dominican Center, 43326 Mission Blvd, Fremont, CA, 94539,. The theme is Looking Back, Moving Forward, Setting the Historical Setting. Susie and Steve Swatt, authors of *Paving the Way: Women's Struggle for Political Equality in California* will be keynote speakers. There will be panel discussions following the presentation. Panel I: Social Justice and Actions, Panel II Empowerment in the Workplace and Community, Panel III Political Empowerment.



All League members are encouraged to attend. Regular \$35 ticket includes packet, lunch and continental breakfast. The Dominican Center is adjacent to Ohlone College. AC Transit 217 bus from Fremont Bart leaving at 9:05 am on weekends will get you to Ohlone College at 9:45 am. To register go to lwvbayarea.org and click on *Buy My Ticket*.

March 1st and 2nd, Sunday and Monday: Texting parties throughout the county to remind voters of Election Day. See details below in the Voter Service section and contact Gayle Vaughn on Jan. 14 for information on how you can participate.

March 2nd at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, fifth meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The topic will be *U.S. Relations with the Northern Triangle*.

March 3rd California Primary Election Day For information on how you can participate in LWVSC's **Adopt-a-Poll** please contact Gayle Vaughn.

March 9th at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, sixth meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The topic will be *China's Road into Latin America*.

March 16th at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, seventh meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The topic will be *The Philippines and the U.S.*

March 23rd at 7:00 pm, **Great Decisions**, eighth meeting at the Benicia Public Library, Dona Benicia Room, 150 East L Street, Benicia. The final topic will be *Artificial Intelligence and Data*.

May 14th Annual Membership Meeting, details to come.

June 20th, LWVSC Garage Sale, Clock Tower 1189 Washington St, Benicia, details to come.

From the President

Miles Medders

Important
Message

Hello League'rs and Associates!

What a start to the year! The 100th Anniversary of the League is in just a few weeks! (We'll be celebrating that at our Annual Membership Meeting in May.) The 38th state, Virginia, ratified the ERA! While there appears to be controversy over the next step, a major barrier has been crossed in the adoption of the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. The 2020 election cycle has begun, we will have held our first Candidate Forums in Benicia and Vacaville by the time this newsletter is posted fulfilling one of our essential functions of helping voters make informed choices, check the Calendar for more events in the future. We held our Annual Program Planning Meeting, which unfortunately was competing with a debate on CNN.

At our Program Planning Meeting, there was a lively and focused discussion on the priorities for the coming year. Craig Paterson did a great job leading us in a fun, stimulating process of setting our priorities, read more about it below in this newsletter.

This year we will be working on providing educational forums on the priorities selected as well as identifying actions that are available. For example later in February or early March we intend to set up a meeting with the LWV California, Climate Change Program Director, Diz Swift, to talk about current issues and opportunities for engagement in addressing this critical area. If you're interested in that let me know, I'll make a list and notify you when the meeting is scheduled, also if you have 'not available days' include that, I'll try to accommodate as many as possible.

Membership Committee



This committee is focused on expanding our League to match the rich diversity of Solano County and thanks to its committed and vigorous efforts and the support of other committees, our League's goal of increasing the diversity and inclusion of our membership and community affiliations is yielding good results. Here's the latest updates:

Last month, Rosalind Reid was at Solano Community College on Club Day in the "Fishbowl," a perfect opportunity to do some networking with students. As a result, we were kindly invited to attend club meetings to encourage voter registration and publicize League activities. Marilee is looking into faculty department meeting schedules in search of a direct connection with interested instructors. Alice Fried and Marilee are planning a get-together with Ana Petero, a Communications instructor at SCC, regarding social media and our developing High School Civics Scholarship program. Ana is already giving her students class credit for volunteering at our regular Wednesday tabling at the Fairfield campus!

Thanks to the determined work of Membership Committee members Jesse Branch, Margo McGlone, and Alice Fried we have forged an important new tie with the Bethel Community Church and Pastor Gilmore. As a result, LWVSC is presenting a community workshop on February 1st **Democracy Matters: Know the Value of Your Vote.**

Knowing that keeping members in good standing is as important as outreach to new members, in January we contacted members to remind them to renew their memberships. This is an ongoing effort.

The Membership Committee meets monthly. For more information and/or to join us, please contact Margo McGlone at margowmc@comcast.net.

Voter Services Committee

Report on Voter Registration



Vallejo High School: On Jan. 14th members of the Vallejo Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority joined half a dozen League members throughout the day to make presentations and register or preregister students to vote. Students were eager to learn the differences between parties and understand how a Non Party Preference status could affect which ballot for President they would receive. We came away with 54 completed forms.

Fairfield Adult School: Close to a dozen League members were called out to make our presentation and help with registration in a multipurpose room filled with close to a hundred students. It was a very busy hour!

Youth Voter Registration continues through the middle of this month, when volunteers will be visiting four schools in Fairfield and Vacaville.

It's gratifying to see young people become involved as well as be **recognized by the National League of Women Voters with a \$700 grant** to continue our spring efforts.

Adopt-a-poll

The LWVSC will be adopting a poll in Benicia by providing all of the staff necessary to run the poll. The VS team is working on adopting another poll in North County as of this writing. Not only is this helpful to the voting process, it is a pretty good fund raiser for the League as the money earned by the paid volunteers is donated back to the League. It's a win-win! Thanks to all those who have volunteered and are taking training.

Speaker's Bureau

Did you know we have been acting as a speaker's bureau? Various members of the board and voter services team have been responding to requests by other clubs and groups to explain the voting process and what's on the primary ballot. If you have a group that is interested, don't hesitate to contact one of the board members listed at the end of the newsletter. Civics isn't just for kids!

Texting Parties

On the Sunday and Monday before the March 3 primary, volunteers will be gathering in three different locations, Benicia, Vacaville, and Fairfield to text the several thousand students who signed up with us for a text reminder to vote. We need some volunteers to help out. Please consider bringing your cell phone and participating in going through lists of interested voters and send group texts "Remember to vote on March 3, League of Women Voters Solano County." It's as simple as that. Session times will be determined by hosts and the volunteers, either Sunday afternoon or Monday after 4pm. Most sessions take less than two hours. If you would like to help with this important activity, please contact vonwindgayle@gmail.com by Feb. 27, to be assigned to a session near you. If you would like to host a text party in Vallejo, please contact vonwindgayle@gmail.com. Thanks for helping. Democracy is not a spectator sport.



Voter Services Committee continued

What's on the Ballot: Candidates and Prop 13

As you probably know, the March 3rd election is a Primary election, which means the Presidential candidates for each primary are on the ballot, as are the candidates for the party's county central committees. You will receive a ballot based on your registered party. If you have registered as Non Party Preference your ballot will not have any Presidential or county central committee candidates on it at all. You can "cross vote" and request a Democratic, American Independent, or Libertarian ballot. Contact the Solano County Registrar of Voters if you want to "cross vote."

Other candidates on the ballot include our Representative to the US House of Representatives, State Senator, State Assemblyperson, County Supervisors for District 1, 2, and 5, county judges, and one statewide bond measure.

The measure, which is unfortunately named Proposition 13 doesn't have anything to do with property taxes. According to the LWVC.org site, Proposition 13 would authorize \$15 billion for construction and modernization of school and college facilities in California. It includes \$9 billion for preschool and K-12 schools and \$6 billion for California's public higher education system. The funds will be split evenly among the 114 community colleges, the 23-campus California State University and the 10 campuses of the University of California. The California State League encourages a yes vote on the measure.



Voters Edge

To find out more about the candidates running in the election, Voter's Edge is an excellent resource for both county and state offices. Our own 4 member Voter's Edge team is hard at work gathering information from local candidates and inputting data on to the site. Take a look at Voter's Edge California, votersedge.org.

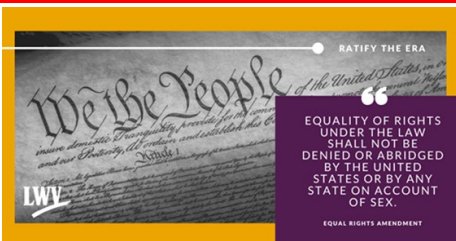
Prop 13 in November

Just to make things confusing there are two Proposition 13s, the one on the primary ballot (see above) and the one from decades ago which restricted increase in property taxes. The LWVC is cosponsoring a reform to the "old" Prop. 13 and is currently gathering petition signatures to get it on the November 2020 ballot. Helen Hutchinson explained in an email:

"The LWVC, as part of a statewide coalition, is gathering signatures for an updated version of the **Schools & Communities First** measure. This measure deals with property taxes, in particular property taxes on commercial and industrial property. It changes some of the parts of the infamous Prop 13 passed in 1978.

The original version of Schools & Communities First — for which we gathered signatures in 2018 — is qualified for the November 2020 ballot. When the updated version qualifies, the original version will be withdrawn. The updates are because we want to have the strongest measure possible on the ballot. The original version qualified very early, so we had a year to talk with people about it. Over that year, it became clear, that while the measure is good, there were some tweaks we could make that would make it even better. A quick summary of the change is:

- An expanded explanation of the measure (findings, and purpose and intent)
- Assurance that every school will receive some increased money; the minimum is \$100 per student per year
- Adjusted dates to reflect the 2020 (instead of 2018) election
- Clarification in the language about zoning to ensure that residential property is protected from reassessment, and to deal with mixed-use properties."
- Expansion of the relief for small businesses — expanding the exemption from reassessment to properties with an assessed value of \$3 million or less
- Expanded phase in period and provisions to assist assessors."



National League: ERA Deadline Extension

Virginia just became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, 38 years after the Congress-determined deadline. As stated on the LWVUS Facebook page, “When the ERA passed Congress in 1972, lawmakers attached a 1977 ratification deadline to it, which they later extended to

1982. Earlier this month, the League of Women Voters of the United States sent a letter to the United States Congress urging them to remove the ratification deadline on the ERA.”

“Women have waited decades to see the ERA pass, and this is the perfect way to kick off 2020, a year that celebrates 100 years of women’s voting rights,” said **Chris Carson, President of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States**. “It’s time for Congress to remove the ERA deadline and make this dream a reality.”

Day of Action -Feb 14th

The LWVUS has declared a League Day of Action to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the League. The theme will be “Women Power the Vote!” Goals and activities will be developed in the coming months for state and local Leagues to participate in this high visibility opportunity. This day of action will complement any existing plans Leagues may have, staying true to our brand, and offering all Leagues the opportunity for engagement and celebration in honor of our centennial.

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The LWVUS has also announced a contest where local Leagues can win up to \$1000. Local Leagues just need to keep track of the activities we are doing to get out the vote and document with photos. If you are doing anything with the League between now and Feb. 14, please take photos to share.

Voter Sign Distribution

Yard signs are popping up all over and the League VOTE! signs among them. We have over 100 available. If you would like one, please contact one of our voter service area representatives. Then a volunteer from our delivery team will bring you a sign and we will pick it up after the election. If you want to keep your sign to use again for other elections, you can do that for a \$5 cash donation given to your delivery person. Area Representatives are:

Barbara King, Fairfield, bking2520@comcast.net;

Becky Cecena, Vacaville, redmustang502001@aol.com ; and

Gayle Vaughan, Benicia and Vallejo, vonwindgayle@gmail.com

Voter Service Leadership, Gayle Vaughn, Chair; Becky Cecena, Deputy Chair
Voter Service Area Coordinators

Gayle Vaughan: Benicia/Vallejo: vonwindgayle@gmail.com

Carole Paterson: Fairfield: vjocarole@yahoo.com

Barbara King: Fairfield: bking2520@comcast.net

Becky Cecena: Vacaville: redmustang502001@aol.com

Mona Whitney: Rio Vista: mona.whitney@yahoo.com

Debra Schwab: Dixon/Rio Vista: debra15933@yahoo.com





Communications Committee

-- LWVSC Publicity at Work!

Marilee Scholl, as well as being our Solano Community College liaison, is also our intrepid publicist. Each month Marilee sends a full press release to our list of local media and organizations with which the LWVSC works, highlighting current public League events and League stories. Starting in January, she also started sending brief event update alerts to that list. We've got so much election year/event content that the release & events calendars are already being cut-&-pasted by the Reporter, the Republic, & the Times-Herald.

Marilee is also gathering our members' *most memorable* stories and impressions of the League in a paragraph or so. These are perfect additions for our press releases. If you can come up with *one bright memory* please share it with Marilee at: mail4marilee@yahoo.com.

For information on joining our committee, please contact Sandy at sandycoury@gmail.com.

Program & Planning Committee

As you can tell from the events calendar, the PP&E Committee is very active -- bringing candidate forums, workshops, and educational meetings to our members and communities.

Here's a brief follow up report on our January 14th **Annual Program Planning Meeting**

From moderator Craig Paterson, Deputy PP&E Chair.



Annual Program Planning Meeting Priorities Set For 2020

An energetic gathering of League of Women Voters Solano County members has set three program priorities for LWVSC for 2020: Climate Change, Homelessness and Housing, and Voter Rights and Education. All received overwhelming approval from member participants as the top priorities in this election year.

League members came together at the Solano County Office of Education in Fairfield on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 to identify and prioritize issues in preparation for the current program year. Members present were from Vallejo, Benicia, Fairfield, Vacaville, and unincorporated county areas.

Issues for consideration in the planning session were initially taken from a list of existing positions established by LWV United States and LWV California. Participants nominated issues from the floor to be discussed in small groups. At the end of the session, members voted for the issues they felt were most relevant, important, timely, and inclusive for the whole of Solano County.

The planning session was moderated by Craig Paterson, Fairfield member and Deputy Chair of the Program Planning and Event committee. Other issues the group identified and considered were campaign finances, mental health care, criminal justice, public libraries, and redistricting. A full report of the session will be prepared and available for distribution in early February.

The PP&E Committee meets monthly. For more information and/or to join us, please contact Julie Hartford at juliehartford@gmail.com.

January we contacted members to remind them to renew their memberships. This is an ongoing effort.

The Membership Committee meets monthly. For more information and/or to join us, please contact Margo McGlone at margowmc@comcast.net.

UPDATE: Ad Hoc Committee working with Benicia Open Government Commission regarding Campaign Finance reported by June Mejias, LWVSC representative to the Ad Hoc Committee.

First, there was a City Council race in Benicia in 2018! Secondly, one of the candidates became the target of a "smear campaign", a complaint was filed with the FPPC by a voter (or voters) and it also resulted in public outcry. The candidate who suffered the "smear" campaign was outspent by thousands of dollars in corporate and pact monies. One of the sitting Council members urged the Benicia Open Government Commission to examine the current Benicia Campaign Finance Ordinances. It was also recommended that an "Ad Hoc" committee be formed to work with the OGC and *Mayor Patterson ordered that said committee include a member of the LWV*. I became "that" member, while four other "members" were approved by the OGC to serve as well.



We began our first meeting in March of 2019. At the very first meeting we were visited by an attorney from Sacramento who was well-versed in campaign finance law. He did not give us much in the way of "confidence" as a means of "effecting change" to a system steeped in legalities that stifle real challenges to set laws!

Thereafter, our ad hoc committee met with two members of the OGC for monthly meetings that also included a member of the Benicia City Attorney's office, who taped each two hour session. We discussed all of the concerns given us from the public and worked on proposing amendments to the city's current ordinances. Our findings were then turned over to the Benicia City Attorney's Office in October, 2019, to thereafter to be presented to the City Council for their review. Finally, on Tuesday, January 7th, 2020, this matter was on the agenda of the Council's meeting!

I attended that meeting and viewed the meeting that was archived in the Benicia TV videos. I watched that video three times for clarity of the actual discussion and voting by the Council members. All four "hearings" were frustrating as the legal jargon that was used between the city's Assistant Attorney and the council members was hard to understand. Also, when the actual voting was going on, often council members did not have microphones "on" so they were hard to hear. While it was the intent for me, at least, to effect change in the campaign ordinances, I did not feel much was accomplished! (State laws do "hobble" citizens!)

One important note: During the council meeting, Mayor Patterson stressed her feelings in wanting to work with the OGC and in "conjunction with the League of Women Voters" to foster better practices for addressing and fixing problems.

"Stay tuned!"

GREAT DECISIONS 2020

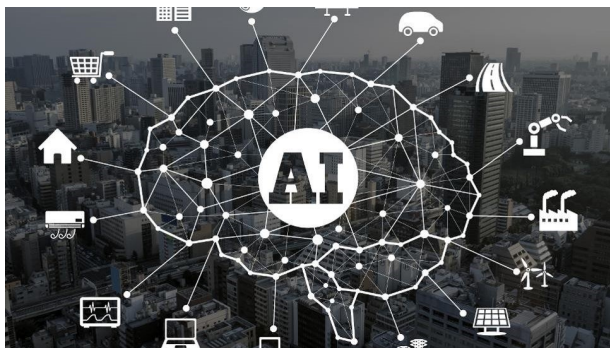
GREAT DECISIONS 2020 CONTINUES AT THE BENICIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Great Decisions, the Foreign Policy Association's international affairs discussion group, sponsored jointly by Benicia Public Library and the League of Women Voters Solano County will continue weekly meetings on Mondays at 7:00 PM at the Dona Benicia meeting room through Monday March 23rd. There will be no meeting on February 17th because the Library will be closed for the Presidents' Holiday.

Books have arrived for all those who indicated they wished to purchase books through our program. If you ordered a book but have not picked it up books will be available at meetings or by contacting Judy Potter, judy.potter@gmail.com or Niles Medders, nilesmedders@gmail.com.

If you ordered a book but have decided you do not want the book please let us know. We have people who are interested in books but were unable to order before we submitted our order. There are three copies of the book in the reference section of the library so that those who would like to read the chapter for meetings but do not have access to a briefing book can read the chapter at the library. The call number is R 327.73 Great year 2020. If you need help locating the book check with a librarian. If

you would like to purchase a book let Niles or Judy know and we will try to connect you to a book as we have cancellations.



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The topics for February are: Feb 3rd India and Pakistan, Feb. 10th Red Sea Security, Feb.24th Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. Topics for March are: March 2nd U.S. Relations with the Northern Triangle, March 9th China's Road into Latin America, March 16th The Philippines and the U.S., and March 23rd, Artificial Intelligence and Data.

Everyone is welcome. No expertise required. We view a documentary prepared by the Foreign Policy Association and have an open-ended discussion about issues presented in the video and covered by the chapter in the briefing book. You are welcome to come to the meeting, view the video and participate in the discussion at your own discretion. Hope to see many people at the library on February 3rd and beyond!!! Any questions please feel free to email me at judy.potter@gmail.com.



Ready to roll up your sleeves and get involved? Important Volunteer activities are available to suit your skills and time – from just an hour or two a month or more. **Contact the committee chairs to find an opportunity that works for you!**

Communications Committee Volunteers Needed

Exciting volunteer work is available for a few hours or more a month.

Contact sandycoury@gmail.com for information.

Social Media. Speak Facebook and Twitter? Help us bring our social media presence back to life!

Just post 2-3 times per month on our new LWV Solano County pages on your schedule.

Website. Have some website savvy and 5-6 hours per month to volunteer? We need you.

Event Flyers. Have a flair for copy and/or some desktop graphics skills and a few hours each month, then we need you.

Member Welcome Kits. Reach out to new / renewing members with informational emails and calls.

Membership Committee Volunteers Needed

Help us continue to grow and diversify our Solano County League! For more information, please contact Margo McGlone at margowmc@comcast.net.

Tabling at Solano Community College (SCC), Fairfield. Wednesdays from 11am-1pm we staff a table at the Student Center which has proved very productive. If you can help one week or many, please contact Marilee Scholl our SCC liaison at mail4marilee@yahoo.com.

Outreach to New Members. Set your own hours and help us onboard and involve our members with friendly calls, emails, and other outreach.

Diversity and Inclusion Outreach. Help our vigorous efforts to build a diverse and inclusive membership and community connections that reflect the diversity of our county.

Membership Committee. Help us grow and diversify our league as part of our committee. If you don't see an opportunity that fits your interests or time resources, give Margo a buzz, there are many other important tasks where we can use your valuable help.



Program Planning & Events (PP&E) Volunteers Needed

There are **so many ways to volunteer with the Events Committee.** We are often looking for volunteers to:

- greet and check in people at events and hand out name tags
- bake cookies or sweets for events
- staff information and registration tables
- set up and clean up before and after our events
- help us with logistics and planning.

Special Request: *We would love to have a photographer to take pictures at our events.*

Please call Julie Hartford 925 786-5531 to volunteer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President, Niles Medders: nilesmedders@gmail.com

Vice President, Julie Hartford, and PP&E Co-Chair: juliehartford@gmail.com

Treasurer, Judy Potter: judy.potter@gmail.com

Secretary, Alice Labay

Program Planning & Events Co-Chairs

Julie Hartford: juliehartford@gmail.com

Craig Paterson: craig_paterson@yahoo.com

Membership, Margo McGlone: margowmc@comcast.net

Communications, Sandy Coury: sandycoury@gmail.com

High School Civics Competition, Alice Fried: alicefried89@gmail.com

Voter Service

Gayle Vaughn, Chair: vonwindgayle@gmail.com

Becky Cecena, Deputy Chair: redmustang502001@aol.com



Voter Newsletter

Leslie Lessenger, Sandy Coury, Niles Medders

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS GUIDELINES

Due by the 17th of the month

Email submissions to Sandy Coury, sandycoury@gmail.com

Content must be League Business Only

Include What, Where, When, and Why in first paragraph.

Length should be 200 words or less.

Please use WORD; Calibri 12 pt. is preferred.

Simple formatting only.

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Alec MacDonald, Editor of Bay Area Monitor

editor@bayareamonitor.org