



Voter

of Southwest Santa Clara Valley



Serving Los Gatos, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, & Campbell

December, 2016

League of Women Voters

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Holiday Party

Saturday • December 3, 2015
5:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Home Of
Terry & Judy Zaccone
13046 Anza Drive, Saratoga

**Be Prepared to
Have a Good Time!**

Bring An Hors D'oeuvre,
A Savory, or A Sweet to Share

Refreshments
Will Be Served



President's Letter

I thank you all again for your tireless work to empower democracy all year long, especially during election seasons. Defending the value of democracy, which so many have fought and died for, will continue to be hard work. With this historic election has come an unprecedented danger to the very foundation of our democracy. It is sad and alarming to see how our country is becoming more divided, and our unity is getting shattered. This is not North versus South like in some other countries, nor is it the same with the two major political parties dividing our beloved nation?

"Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education." Franklin D. Roosevelt. With many challenges ahead of us, your involvement to shape our path forward is more important now than ever before. The values we all hold dear can and will be the building blocks forward. Rebuilding our divided communities will be an uphill battle, but we can and must do more to stand up for the rights of all Americans to participate in our democracy.

In California it doesn't matter who we choose as a president on our ballots! Can my voice be heard? Does my vote really count? Am I less of a citizen in a large state than in a smaller state? I hear these remarks and similar ones all the time from new voters. And what I noticed in general was that citizens are wondering if our Electoral College has outlasted its usefulness. The Electoral College has overruled the majority's choice for the

second time in the last five presidential elections. Should the majority vote rule in a democratic society where democracy protects the rights of all individuals? How do we see or comprehend the success of democracy? Eliminating the Electoral College means no swing states will get all the attention and all the campaign stops. If the electoral members are selected by the two main political parties, Republican and Democrat, what happens to all other voters—Independent, Green, Libertarian, etc.? In a democratic society, should all political parties have equal access and coverage?

Moving forward, I am very proud of the valuable programs that our League is bringing to the community. Our Water and Silicon Valley Clean Energy programs in November were very informative. Thanks to all those who got involved in presenting such high-quality programs to the residents of our area.

Clearly there is still much work to be done. Our Local Election Finance Study committee co-chaired by Tom & Danice Picraux has already started its meetings. The study will review and analyze information on election financing and reporting laws pertaining to our local city councils in Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga. They will review state laws and additional laws or policies instituted by nearby cities. To gain insight into current laws and policies, they will study the recent local election experience through interviews with candidates and analysis of campaign reporting. The goal is to understand best practices, educate our membership, and improve the transparency of local election financing and regulation. The results will be used to craft and suggest a best practices position on regulations for election financing and reporting. When concluded, the study will be submitted to our local elected officials for their consideration. Much appreciation to all members involved who work consistently to bring to our communities a higher level of information and transparency in the political arena.

I want to invite you to take advantage this year by signing up for the Annual

Continued on Next Page.

2016-2017 Board of Directors

Officers

President, Hana Itani

Vice President, Barbara Lea

Secretary, Nancy Rucker

Treasurer, Danice Picraux

Action, Eleanor Yick

Education, Eleanor Yick

Finance Drive, Tom Picraux

Membership

Chata Alfaro & Sharon Graham

Natural Resources, Meg Giberson

Observers Chair, Raquel Durand

Programs, Sue Cooney

Public Relations, Eileen Barnes

Assistant, Nancy Rucker

Voter Editor, Cherri Nelson

Voters Service

Kathy Murtfeldt, Wendy Hendry

Nominating Committee

Chair, Pat White

Members

Lois Smallwood, Wanda Alexander

Off-Board

Bay Area Representative, Patty Weber

Circulation, Natalie Heling

Climate Change, Dave Yick

Clip 'n Come, Dale Hill

Database Manager, Zina Lou Dyer

Great Decisions, Terry Zacccone

Health Care, Barbara Lea

Hospitality, Judy Zacccone

Immigration, Patty Weber

Observers

Campbell: Jackie Costanzo

Los Gatos: Lynda Jandron

Saratoga: Raquel Durand

Outreach, Chata Alfaro

Publications, Gail Pedersen

Voter's Edge, Tom Picraux

Voters Service

Pros & Cons, T. Zacccone, E. Yick

Voter Registration, Jackie Costanzo

Web Site Pages

Cherri Nelson, Barbara Lea

2016-2017 Elected Officials

United States

President Barack Obama
(202) 456-1414

www.whitehouse.gov

Senator Dianne Feinstein
(415) 393-0707

www.feinstein.senate.gov

Senator Barbara Boxer
(415) 403-0100

<http://boxer.senate.gov>

Rep. Anna Eshoo
(408) 245-2339

(650) 323-2984

<http://eshoo.house.gov>

California

Governor Jerry Brown
(916) 445-2841

<http://gov.ca.gov>

Senator Jim Beall, Jr.
(408) 558-1295

<http://sd15.senate.ca.gov>

Assemblyman Evan Low
(408) 446-2810

<http://asmcd.org/members/a28/>

Santa Clara County

Supervisor Joe Simitian
(408) 299-5050

supervisor.simitian@bos.sccgov.org

Supervisor Mike Wasserman
(408) 299-5010

mike.wasserman@bos.sccgov.org

Supervisor Ken Yeager
(408) 299-5040

supervisor.yeager@bos.sccgov.org

SCC Registrar of Voters

Locate your elected officials by your street address:

<http://www.sccgov.org/sites/rov/Pages/Registrar-of-Voters.aspx>



Board Bytes

Meeting of Oct 5, 2016

Treasurer: Our budget continues to be stable, now having 116 members.



• **Announcements:** Hana thinks this election season will give us more visibility because of the numerous events we have held for the Pros & Cons and Candidates Forums. Approximately 800 people attended these Voters Service events! Eileen made the three area newspapers aware of these activities—which accounted for some of the great attendance.

• **Programs:** Details were finalized for the November programs; a flyer was requested for the Water Bond Spending program, and emphasis put on the opt-out aspect regarding information distribution of the SVCE event.

Board members were also reminded to each contribute a bottle of wine to the Holiday Party December 3.

The January Program Planning plans will be sorted out at the December Board meeting with Board members presenting the positions. A potluck sign-up sheet was passed around and soup will still be the main dish.

• **Education:** The Junior Statesman High School Program was introduced and discussed by Eleanor Yick for the possibility of the League having a presence at their conferences. Several members volunteered to attend a conference for research.

• **Membership:** Chata Alfaro will now do follow-up calls on the letters sent to possible new members. Eileen Barnes suggested having sign-up sheets for League interest at all events, with Hana further suggesting to have envelopes with the Join Form to hand out as well.

• **New Study:** Tom Picraux outlined meetings and ideas for the Money in Local Politics Study with our three City Council Members as advisors. They will be studying ways to help candidates participate in our local governments.

• **Observers:** Raquel still needs an observer to go to Monte Sereno city council meeting. You would not have to be a resident!

• **Voter/Social Media:** Cherri Nelson requested that the Board explore our Facebook & Web Site to make suggestions at future Board meetings on their use, to see if there is additional information needed to be displayed.

Nancy Rucker, Secretary

President's Letter (Cont.)

Bay Area League Day, which will take place locally on Saturday, January 28, 2017, at the Camden Community Center on 3369 Union Ave in San Jose. The topic/focus will be on Housing; you can read more about it on page 10.

Terry & Judy Zaconne and I welcome you to join us to celebrate together our 2016 Annual Holiday Party. This year I invited Lucy Porras, the Programs & Development Manager at CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations) of the

San Francisco Bay Area Office. Lucy will be speaking at 6:30 P.M. for 20 minutes and we'll have roughly 10 mins for Q&A in relation to CAIR's work, current cases, and plans for 2017. This promises to be a very informative discussion of one of the nation's hottest topics. I am looking forward to seeing you on Saturday, December 3, at 5:00 p.m. Don't miss it; plan to be there.

Hana Itani, President LWVSWSCV
408-lwv-1842, hana.lwv@gmail.com.

*"It is better to light a candle
than curse the darkness."*

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, (Member of LWV)

LWVSWSCV Holiday Party

Mark your calendar for our Annual League Holiday Party. Again this year **Judy and Terry Zaccone** will be hosting us at their home at **13046 Anza Drive in Saratoga**, near Cox Avenue. Following our usual tradition, please bring beverages of your choice and your favorite finger food—either sweet or savory. No charge for this event. Most of all be prepared to enjoy yourself!

President Itani has invited the Programs & Development Manager of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Lucy Porras, to speak about her work and plans. She'll talk for 20 minutes with roughly 10 minutes for questions. Lucy's work at CAIR-SFBA is multi-faceted and fast-paced given the current political climate and the unfortunate realities of Islamophobia in our society. Her projects focus on proactive solutions to challenge injustices and provide community empowerment through extensive community outreach, youth development work, civic engagement opportunities, and volunteer recruitment and mobilization. Lucy also plans and manages the fundraising development of the organization.

She graduated Cum Laude from the University of Florida with a Bachelor's in Religion and a minor in Arabic Language

& Literature. During her time as an undergrad, she served as President of the Arabic Cultural Association where she developed original programming such as Arabic round-tables, Arab Film Month and children's Arabic story-time at the library. She was twice Islam Fair Chair as part of Islam Awareness Month. In the summer of 2011, she studied at the Arabic Language Institute in Fez, Morocco, where she polished her Arabic and French language skills.

Directions: Driving south on Saratoga Avenue, turn right onto Cox Avenue. Driving north on Saratoga Avenue, from highway 85, turn left onto Cox Avenue, or east. At the third street, turn left onto De Havilland Drive. Anza Drive is the second street on the left and only a left turn.

This is an especially good time for our many new members to get acquainted with everybody and for all of us to get together with old friends we may not have seen for awhile. It's also a wonderful time to bring prospective members—the more the merrier!

For questions contact Terry and Judy Zaccone at (408) 257-6575 or email tzaccone@pacbell.net and Zina Lou Dyer (408)356-2445 or zlgdyer@gmail.com.

Message from Helen Hutchison LWVC President

We need your help! For months, we've witnessed growing anti-government rhetoric in the media and in our public discourse. Accusations of "rigged elections" and "inherent corruption in our political process" have become commonplace. For many, memes have replaced journalism, and threats and insults have replaced political debate.

The challenges ahead of us are not for the faint of heart. We hope you will STAND WITH THE LEAGUE to support and defend all Californians regardless of their gender or race, regardless of how they worship or whom they love.

- Encourage your friends to become a **MEMBER!**
- Make a **donation** to defend our neighbors and protect our environment.

- Sign up for **ACTION ALERTS** and help us advocate on critical policy issues!

The League is not an end in itself. We are a training ground for democracy. That is what we have always been and that is what we will always be.

You can change the rules! This year alone, 25 of the bills we supported made it to the Governor's desk and 19 of those—from climate change to voting rights—were signed and will become California law.

Note: We will be holding our annual LWVSWSCV League's Finance Drive in February. Please consider donating. Your contributions help enable our local League to hold our informative monthly programs on vital issues, conduct studies, host candidate forums, and support League initiatives.

Editorial Opinion

LWVSWSCV members Barbara Lea and myself manage our League's web site. We were updating the calendar and uploading pertinent information during the elections. I was also busy furiously posting schedules for all our Voters Service events onto our Facebook page. **We were noticed!**

There were a few requests that came through our web site for conducting Pros & Cons at various locations such as libraries and community centers. And then there were a few requests for where videos could be found of the Candidate Forums we conducted, which I also uploaded. We were very busy in the updating of our social media. Contacts on my personal Facebook page, many friends, and friends of friends, were asking, either myself directly, or in general, why the League wasn't conducting the Presidential debates anymore.

On the National League's web site, I found the League's Press Release from the 1980s stating their refusal to "**help perpetrate a fraud**" when they pulled out of conducting the debates. I paraphrased it many times in my responses to those questioning posts. I would sometimes paste the URL to that Press Release. Social media is beginning to play a part in our League!

History: <http://lwv.org/content/league-women-voters-and-candidate-debates-changing-relationship>

Press Release: <http://lwv.org/press-releases/league-refuses-help-perpetrate-fraud>

There has been a positive outcome to this last Presidential election. Humanitarian non-profit organizations working for democratic causes are seeing a rise in membership and their level of donations beginning the day after the election results were announced. Our funtion, **Making Democracy Work®**, our mission to politically educate and advocate, is and will be needed even more in the coming years. The League of Women Voter is being noticed!

Cherr Nelson, Voter Editor

City & Town Council Observers

Campbell: November 1 – Council voted to continue discussion about raising the minimum wage in the city along with other cities in Santa Clara County. This regional approach would increase the minimum wage to reach \$15 per hour by 2019, three years ahead of a plan signed into law earlier this year by Governor Jerry Brown. The council had questions they would like answered before they continue their discussion of this issue. The discussion will continue during the December 6 Council meeting.

Jackie Costanzo, Observer

Los Gatos: December 27 - Council accepted a \$500,000 grant from VTA to upgrade traffic signals throughout the town. Grant funds will be dispersed over a period of time, concluding in 2020. Council member Jensen reported that with county Measure B approval, further meetings with VTA

will be held to plan future projects.

After staff presentation and discussion, Council decided against raising minimum wage within our community any earlier than mandated by the state (\$15/hr in year 2022).

November 15 – By unanimous votes, Marico Sayoc was appointed Mayor and Rob Rennie was appointed Vice Mayor for the next year.

Lynda Jandron, Observer

Monte Sereno: Observer Needed

Saratoga: September 21 – The Council passed an Ordinance mandating that newly built houses include a locking mail box as part of the Safety Plan announced in



earlier meetings. In an effort to implement the new secure Neighborhood Watch program, the City authorized new grants of \$15,000 annually, and up to \$300 per neighborhood. Council member Miller confirmed that the Finance Committee transfer these funds from the Council Discretionary Fund. Neighborhoods can make requests to the city starting January of 2017.

The Council proposed taking citizens complaints about high water rates to the CPUC and to reach out to Senator Jim Beall and Assemblyman Evan Low.

The City of Saratoga is currently accepting applications to fill an opening at the Heritage Preservation Committee as well as another applicant needed to sit on the Traffic Safety Commission.

Raquel Durand, Observer Chair

Volunteer Opportunities

Below are a few ways to participate and/or contribute to our League:

* **Voters Service**, Register voters at the New Citizen's ceremonies. Contact Jackie Costanzo at jjc717@aol.com.

* **Local Elections Finance Study**, If interested in participating in this money-in-politics study at the local level, contact Danice & Tom Picraux at dpicraux@gmail.com or (408) 356-8129.

* **Observers**, A volunteer is needed to observe the Monte Sereno Council meetings. If you can't attend the meetings, you can listen to a recording on the cities web page. Contact Raquel Durand at sra_durand@yahoo.com

Clean Energy Delivered Right to Your Home!



We all want to fight global warming and help save our environment, but how do we do it? On November 14, at the Campbell City Council Chambers, our League sponsored a Panel Discussion about a way to do this. Speaking were Liz Gibbons and Rob Rennie, both members of our League and on the Board of Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE), as well as Misty Mersich, the SVCE Communications Manager.

What is Silicon Valley Green Energy? SVCE is a new non-profit agency, which will provide us with carbon-free electricity at a lower price—from wind, solar, etc. The communities participating in this new partnership are Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, Santa Clara County, Saratoga, and Sunnyvale.

SVCE will provide the electricity, PG&E will, however, provide the transmission and continue to send bills

and provide customer service and maintenance.

You can remain with PG&E if you prefer. You will be receiving notices asking if you want to opt out. If you do nothing, you will automatically be using the new SVCE service. SVCE promises “cleaner, greener energy, a locally run service, and at a lower cost.” This lower cost (which is possible because the agency is non-profit without the overhead which PG&E has) is guaranteed for two years. When Sonoma and Marin passed their two-year mark, their rates continued to remain lower than PG&E.

For detailed information, go to www.SVCleanEnergy.org. The agency welcomes questions while they are in this current planning stage.

Barbara Lea, Vice President

Correction

Please Note: Phone number in the *Member Directory*!

Shirley Hill (408) 264-2601

Climate Change Update: Let's Start a Minimalist Movement

Over the past year, most of my articles have covered climate change from a national and global perspective. For a change, this month's article will focus on actions that we can do individually and collectively to reduce the amount of resources that we consume in our daily lives.

Feeling depressed and powerless??? With the recent election results many of us, including myself, believe that recent climate initiatives, such as the Paris Climate Agreements, will be rolled back. Perhaps we should find opportunities in areas that we CAN control. At a recent Los Gatos Toastmasters Club event, I heard a speech by Jeff Eisenbaum. It was about how we can each take steps to improve our lives and to reduce our material and energy consumption. Following is an excerpt from this inspiring speech:

Has the American Dream been hijacked?

In 1931, James Truslow Adams, in his definition of the American Dream, said that, "life should be **Better** and **Richer** and **Fuller** for everyone." I doubt that he was thinking about the next iPhone with the word **Better**... the even bigger, big screen TV when he said **Richer**... or a shiny new car with his use of the word **Fuller**. Why? Because the most important things aren't things. Yet, the average American household has over 300,000 items in it. Are we happier, better off, more content... or are we stressed, overwhelmed, and in debt? How do we alter the course of a lifetime spent accumulating? After defining minimalism as well as why it's relevant, we'll strategize how you

can incorporate it into your life to create positive change.

Anyone here have a junk drawer at home? Anyone with an empty closet... or empty drawer?

WHAT: Minimalism is ridding ourselves of that which doesn't add value to our lives or bring us happiness.

WHY: Why strive to be a minimalist?

- **Mental** – Simplify our lives so that we have less clutter, less stress, and less time wasted chasing moving targets like fashion or the latest gadgets.

- **Financial** – There's a saying... **Spending money we don't have to buy things we don't need to impress people we don't like.** Sounds ludicrous... but not when you consider that there are people, departments, and entire companies that dedicate themselves to convincing us of a need... the need to feel better, look better, be smarter, make more money, etc. It's used to sell us clothes, jewelry, consumer electronics, cars, boats and all of the accessories for these items. If we **TRULY NEEDED** these things, would we need someone to convince us? Instead, what if we asked ourselves if this new phone, with the added functionality that likely won't even be used, is worth \$500 dollars of my freedom? Do I really need a stand to hang my bananas?

- **Environmental** – The world now consumes about 80 billion new pieces of clothing every year. This is 400% more than the amount we consumed just two decades ago. The average American now generates 82 pounds of textile waste each year. That adds

up to more than 11 million tons of textile waste from the U.S. alone.

HOW: Don't waste your time with 1 item a day. For the truly brave, there is the Packing Party—pretend that you are planning to move. Put your things in labeled boxes; kitchenware, shoes, T-Shirts, electronics, etc. When you need it, you pull it out of the box and leave it out. After 60 days, what's left in boxes goes. The things I didn't use were no longer in my way and I didn't miss them. Because it was hard, it's made me more selective and deliberate about what I bring into my house. Will I really use it? Picture how and how often. Does it **TRULY** fill a void, solve a problem, and make my life better? If the answer is **NO**, then I don't buy it.

Remember that there is nothing wrong with stuff. Just don't put it first. It takes the focus away from what truly matters... our health, our relationships with others, connection to our community, and the pursuit of our passions... The **THINGS** that actually **DO** make us happy... If you can narrow down your sense of need, you can buy yourself an incredible amount of freedom.

I usually don't make New Year's Resolutions. But Jeff's speech has motivated me to embrace this Minimalist Movement. Let's encourage our relatives and friends to follow Jeff's example by recycling what we don't need and acquiring only what we truly need.

I wish for all of you a **Better, Richer and Fuller New Year!!!**

Dave Yick, Environment Chair

New Citizens Voter Registration

November 17 was the New Citizen Ceremonies at the Heritage Theater in Campbell. Thanks to the following members for their community service in helping new citizens register to vote this month: Dan Hendry, Eleanor Yick, Terry Cabrinha, Judy Zacccone, Sue Cooney, Kay Duffy, Jackie Costanzo and Bill Hoeft (stepping in for Maria Simon as she recuperates from a double knee replacement) and Chata Alfaro.

Jackie Costanzo, Voter Registration jjc717@aol.com

THANK YOU!

Having Our Water and Drinking It, Too!

Despite the drought, we can have our water and drink it, too. Sustainable water is possible.

With great bursts of humor and a fast-paced delivery, Professor Buzz Thompson of Stanford presented facts showing that by conserving, storing water appropriately, and diversifying our water sources, we can address our water challenges using supplies currently available to us.

During his November 12 speech to our League, he pointed out that conservation is the most reliable and cheapest sustainable water strategy and could save urban California two million acre-feet per year (2 maf/y). (Two million acre-feet is the equivalent of two million football fields covered by water to a depth of one foot). Outdoor cutbacks—such as less lawn and more drought-tolerant plants—represent the easiest water savings. Reducing waste, such as by fixing leaks both indoors and out, can help our water bottom line. Low-flow toilets can also lower indoor use dramatically.

Professor Thompson promoted the benefits of storing water in groundwater aquifers.

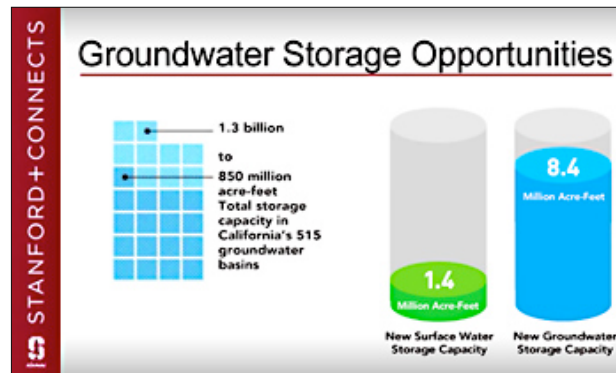
New surface storage that might be built using the \$2.7 billion from the 2014 water bond (Proposition 1) would supply only 1.4 maf of new water storage. However, new groundwater storage capacity could provide 8.4 maf of new storage capacity

—using the same amount of money. We could get about seven times more water storage from proposed underground storage than from proposed new surface reservoir storage.

Diversifying our sources will mean using more water recycling, such as wastewater reuse. Prof. Thompson pointed to Singapore, which supplies 1.6 million people with

Pricing is the best way to manage water sustainability, we were told, especially since we aren't paying for the cost of water, just for its delivery. Implementing a more "fair" price using tiered rates (charging more for higher water use) may, however, run afoul of the mandates of Proposition 218.

Despite the availability of all the above tools, it was clear that solutions remain politically tough. Draft regulations are currently under review that will affect which storage projects will be funded under Prop 1. These draft "regs" favor conventional water surface storage plans that do not reflect other options mentioned above. Indeed, as Proposition 1 was written, it does not favor available



recycled wastewater; its wastewater reuse allows industries to reduce their costs because of the high level of purity of the recycled water. Singapore also bottles recycled water and calls it "NEWater" (its public utility says this water exceeds USEPA and WHO guidelines for quality). Orange County, California, recycles 103,000 af/y—over eight times what Santa Clara County's advanced wastewater plant processes per year.

newer techniques and technologies. Also, some holders of water rights in California are not eager to change the formulas that permit inexpensive water to flow to agriculture.

A video on this subject featuring Professor Thompson and a Stanford colleague is available at <http://stanfordconnects.stanford.edu/watch/water-west-addressing-accumulating-threats-west%e2%80%99s-water-supply>.

Meg Giberson, Natural Resources

Single-payer Health Care, What Do You Know?

This article is the third and last in a series on myths and lies about single-payer health care.

What are the Myths and Lies about Single Payer?

• **Myth** – Single payer will cover less than the insurance I have now.

Wrong – For the majority of Americans, single payer will be a vast improvement. All medically necessary care would be funded through the single payer, including doctor visits, hospital care, prescriptions, mental health services, nursing home care, rehab, home care, eye care and dental care. An enlightened single payer will

also result in a sharp increase in public health funding to prevent disease. No more bills, No more deductibles. No more co-pays.

• **Myth** – Single payer will cost me more than I am paying now for private health insurance.

Wrong – The vast majority of Americans will pay about the same or less than they are paying now. Instead of paying premiums to a private health insurance company, most of us will pay a similar or

smaller amount in taxes. So, right now, if you are paying \$8,000 in premiums for a family of four with a \$4,000 deductible, your yearly liability is at least \$12,000. You will probably pay less than that in taxes to fund a universal single payer system. There will be no deductible. And you can go to see any doctor or check into any hospital in the United States.

Source: Public Citizen, 1600 – 20th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009

Barbara Lea, Health Care

Year-End Legislative/Advocacy Report

Frequently, League members question why so much of our dues are sent to the state and national leagues. When we think of the League's primary missions to **promote and protect every citizens' right to vote and advocate for and against legislation or policy proposals aligned in accordance with our League positions**, we benefitted from the extensive legislative research the League is able to do thanks to our financial support. Our League addressed both of these missions during this past election cycle.

Our League, under the direction of Wendy Hendry and Kathy Murfeldt, hosted nine (9) Candidate Forums which allowed our local communities direct access to local candidates running for state senate and assembly representation, city/town councils and school board trustees.

Our League, under the direction of Terry Zaccone and Eleanor Yick, hosted thirteen (13) Pros and Cons sessions to provide our communities with non-biased pros and cons of the 17 state ballot propositions, 2 local county measures and 2 local measures impacting Campbell and Los Gatos voters. It is estimated that approximately 800 people attended these 13 events.

Thanks to the extensive research conducted at the state level and our positions, LWVC actively supported 8 of the ballot propositions with a yes vote, recommended a negative vote on 3 of them, was neutral on one and took no position on 5 propositions because we did not have a position statement related to their content.

Happily, the following propositions that the League supported passed: 51, 54, 55, 57, 58, 63, and 67. Unfortunately, Proposition 62 eliminating the death penalty did not pass.

But, as the 2016 legislative year comes to a close, the LWVC is further delighted to report a number of other victories—and a few areas where further work is needed.

Government

Among the LWVC successes in our Government program areas were significant bills affecting **Money in Politics**, **Voting Rights**, and **Redistricting**.

Public financing of campaigns is now a possibility throughout California! The Governor signed **SB 1107** (Allen) to remove a ban on public financing for general law cities, counties, districts, and the state which can help level the playing field for candidates. Helping local jurisdictions adopt the public financing plan most appropriate for them will be a good action project for local Leagues in the coming year.

Cal-Access, the state's online database of campaign finance and lobbying information, will be modernized and made user-friendly and easy to access by **SB 1349** (Hertzberg). Replacing Cal-Access will improve campaign finance transparency and help voters make informed choices at the ballot box. (While we wait for this major revision to occur, you will find the Power Search button on the Secretary of State's website very helpful.)

People with low-level felonies, the League co-sponsored **AB 2466** (Weber), which clarifies that those who are sentenced to county jails or local supervision through the criminal justice realignment law of 2011 can register and vote. Only felons in state prison or on state parole are barred.

Our State's voting process will be revised and modernized by **SB 450** (Allen), which will make voting more accessible and convenient with vote-by-mail ballots, drop-off boxes, early voting, and vote centers, starting in 14 counties in 2018. This reform focuses on improving voter experience and is modeled after a Colorado program that has increased turnout while lowering costs. It will be available to other counties (with a variation for Los Angeles County) in 2020.

Redistricting is another area of marked advances. All California cities and counties can now establish effective independent redistricting commissions, thanks to **SB 1108** (Allen). **SB 958** (Lara) establishes a Citizens Redistricting Commission for Los Angeles County modeled after the state's commission.

The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) promotes better representation and protects voting rights by stipulating when local

governments must change from at-large to district-based elections. The LWVC supported three bills to improve and streamline that process. **AB 2220** (Cooper) and **AB 2389** (Ridley-Thomas) allow cities and special districts, respectively, to make the change without prior voter approval. **AB 350** (Alejo) improves public input on district boundaries and scheduling of staggered-term elections and establishes procedures for initiating a CVRA enforcement action.

Permitting local ranked choice voting, we regret that Governor Brown **VETOED** bill **SB 1288** (Leno).

Establishing local contribution limits, **AB 2523** (Mullin), And we are sad that the bill **FAILED** to pass the Senate, but local districts are nonetheless able to enact their own limits if they choose.

Natural Resources

One of the League's highest priorities for this biennium has been action on **climate change**. After a productive 2015, further progress seemed elusive until this year's session was nearly over. But League members statewide helped boost a pair of bills that passed in late August and were signed by the Governor with appropriate fanfare in September.

SB 32 (Pavley) extends the landmark **Global Warming Solutions Act**, AB 32 of 2006, by setting a target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Its companion bill, **AB 197** (E. Garcia), protects disadvantaged communities and those most affected by air pollution and includes the social costs of carbon as a factor for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of GHG reduction measures. It also requires more transparency and accountability of the California Air Resources Board.

Sustainable water, this was another priority for education and advocacy adopted by LWVC Convention 2015. We are pleased that Governor Brown signed these League-supported bills:

- **AB 2480** (Bloom) puts funding of watershed restoration projects on an equal basis with other water infrastructure

Continued on Next Page.

Year-End Legislative/Advocacy Report (Cont.)

- **SB 7** (Wolk) requires individual water meters in new multifamily housing
- **SB 1262** (Pavley) requires that groundwater sustainability be considered in water supply and land use planning.

We were disappointed by the Governor's **VETO** of **SB 900** (Jackson), which would have required the removal and remediation of coastal hazards caused by abandoned ("legacy") oil and gas wells.

Social Policy

A major disappointment was the failure of the legislature and governor to come together on a way to increase the supply of low-income housing. A May budget proposal by Governor Brown that tied funds for housing to a proposal to

streamline the approval of certain housing projects was unpopular with labor, environmentalists, and others, and **NO AGREEMENT** was reached before the legislative session ended.

The League supported bills to increase **low-income housing tax credits—AB 2817** (Chiu)—and to authorize local ordinances requiring the inclusion of low-income homes in housing developments—**AB 2502** (Mullin)—but they **DID NOT MAKE IT** through the process this year.

Reduce truancy and support students who are at risk of dropping out of school or are victims of crime, the Governor, on the positive side, signed two League-supported bills, **AB 1014** (Thurmond)

and **SB 527** (Liu), that establish a grant program using funds from Proposition 47 of 2014.

Charter Schools, the League supported **AB 709** (Gipson), requirements to abide by open meeting and the disclosure rules followed by other public schools; League support was on the basis of our positions on open government and preK-12 education. Unfortunately, the Governor **VETOED** this bill.

Every one of our League members can do more at the local level to support the advocacy work of the League? How? It's simple... by responding to the Action Alerts from both LWVC and LWVUS that I send out throughout the year.

Eleanor Yick, Action Chair


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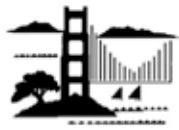
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We Thrive on Next Generation Challenges



**League of Women Voters
of the Bay Area**
www.lwvbayarea.org



Bay Area League Day – Focus on Housing

Saturday • January 28, 2017 • 8:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Camden Community Center

3369 Union Avenue, San Jose

Keynote Speaker

Tony Thurmond

Assemblymember, District 15

Four Panel discussions on the current housing situation in the Bay Area

Panel One: Measuring the Affordability Gap & Its Impact

Panel Two: The Relationship Between Housing Production & Affordability, & Displacement in the San Francisco Bay Area

Panel Three: State, Regional & Local Roles in Addressing Affordability

Panel Four: The Agenda Moving Forward

Pre-registration: \$35 includes lunch • Pre-registration: \$20 without lunch

Day of the Event: \$40 with lunch • Day of the Event: \$25 without lunch

PayPal options will be available in soon. Your credit card can be processed without an account.

Check the LWV Bay Area web site, <http://lwvbayarea.org>, for further information.

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or Give a Gift of Membership

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Membership year is from July 1 to June 30. Members joining after January 1 shall pay one-half the annual dues amount. Dues and contributions to the League are not tax deductible. Contributions to the Education Fund are deductible to the extent allowed by law. Joining at the local level makes

you a member at all levels: County, Bay Area, State, and National. Financial assistance is available; please address questions regarding membership to Chata Alfaro at calfaro@aol.com or call 408-374-5077 and Sharon Graham at sharona.graham@gmail.com or call 408-204-2585.

❧ Event Calendar ❧

- Dec 3 Sat **Holiday Party**, 5:00 P.M. Finger Food Potluck & Beverages!
Terry & Judy Zacccone's Home, 13046 Anza Drive, Saratoga
- Dec 7 Wed **Board Meeting**, 10:00 A.M. Saratoga Fire Station, Saratoga
- Dec 8 Thu **Clip 'n Come**, Noon, Bring Salad/Food & Clipping to Share
Home of Anne Stewart, 295 Belvue Dr., Los Gatos
Call (408) 358-3177 • **Please let hostess know you will be coming.**

❧ Save the Date ❧

- Jan 23 Mon **"Souper" Program Planning Meeting**, 9:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
Saratoga Federated Church, Saratoga
- Jan 28 Sat **BALD – Focus on Housing**, 8:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.
Assy. Tom Thurmond, Camden Community Center
3369 Union Ave. San Jose



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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization of women and men, neither supports nor opposes any political party or political candidate. The League though, does take action on some issues after extensive study. It encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.