

LWV® Voter of Southwest Santa Clara Valley

Serving Los Gatos, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, & Campbell

February, 2017

League of Women Voters A Partner in the Women's March

League of Women Voters

LWV Southwest Santa Clara Valley
P.O. Box 2865
Saratoga, CA 95070-0865
Telephone: 408-lwv-1842
www.lwv-sw-santaclara-valley.org
lwv.swscv@gmail.com

Bay Area League of Women Voters

Telephone: 510 839-1608
Fax: 510 839-1610
<http://lwvba.ca.lwvnet.org>

League of Women Voters California

Phone: 916 442-7215
Fax: 916 442-7362
<http://ca.lwv.org>

League of Women Voters

Phone: 202-429-1965
Fax: 202-429-0854
<http://www.lwv.org>

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Dave, Environment Chair, and Eleanor Yick, Action, holding the banner at the Women's March on January 21.



Cherri Nelson, Voter Editor, in front, left, of the Women's March Banner.



President's Letter

Thank you all for your unwavering support in sustaining the League's mission and our efforts to elevate our collective voice and advance our advocacy work for a better America.

The grassroots actions of the League are needed more now than ever before. As mentioned in our mission statement, we encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. Our local League is a leader in bringing information and transparency to our communities about our local elected politicians' financial campaigns during the past election season. In the past few weeks our League conducted a Local Campaign Finance Study. The Committee was busy doing interviews and gathering and sorting information from participating officials. Thanks to Tom and Danice Picraux and the rest of the committee for all their efforts. The result of the Study was reported during our Annual Program Planning Meeting. You can read more about this Study in next month's *Voter*.

Well, as you already might have heard, fake news is infiltrating and contaminating the media. This is not a new phenomenon. Unethical journalistic practices have existed in printed media for hundreds of years before the invention of the Internet. Fake news websites seek to mislead, **rather than entertain**, readers for financial and political or other gains. We can hear the public outcry about the danger of this hoax news and its effects in weakening our democratic values as we already have

seen in the recent presidential election. The deliberately published hoaxes are happening all over the world—not only in the United States—using social media for the purpose of misleading and spreading propaganda on small and mega scales. The fake news media are becoming one of the most powerful entities on earth.

Writing about fake news made me remember an incident that is still haunting me as I compose this letter. In 1983, I noticed the word "Arabs" among the test answers of my then six-years-old son. For a moment, I felt pleased that my son must be getting a good well-rounded education. Quickly, it turned into shock and disbelief after I asked him about what was the question for that answer. He said that the question was, "Who are the people who eat with their left hand only?" I questioned him then on how he could have answered such a false statement pointing out that he uses his right hand to eat and write! He said, "but Mom, the Teacher said so, and it is in the book!" I remember that on the following day I had a conversation with the teacher who showed me the book about *Facts in Life* [not sure of the exact title now]. The Teacher welcomed my remarks and wrote to the publisher, but I don't know what happened after that. How could anyone use false news under a facts title to execute their own propaganda by using children's texts? It should be considered a crime to rob children of their pure innocence and misinform a whole new generation. Or, are these false statements protected under the *First Amendment*? Are they?

I am wondering where are the rights of the public to know! We have noticed an increase in public interest in our

Continued on Next Page.

Correction

Please Note: We apologize for the error in the spelling of Low that should have been "Saratoga Mayor Emily Lo!" on page 5 of the January 2017 *Voter*.

2016-2017 Board of Directors

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Vice President, Barbara Lea

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Treasurer, Danice Picraux

Action, Eleanor Yick

Education, Eleanor Yick

Finance Drive, Tom Picraux

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Natural Resources, Meg Giberson

Observers, Raquel Durand

Programs, Sue Cooney

Public Relations, Eileen Barnes

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Great Decisions, Terry Zacccone

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Hospitality, Judy Zacccone

Immigration, Patty Weber

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Campbell: Jackie Costanzo

Los Gatos: Lynda Jandron

Monte Sereno: TBD

Saratoga: Raquel Durand

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 Kamala Harris
(415) 403-0100

<http://harris.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 Jan. 4, 2017

Treasurer: We are healthy and stable financially, with the budget on track! We thank the finance Committee for the guidance this past year.

Announcements: Hana explained the legislative interviews process which must be done by March 10. Several board members volunteered. Cupertino and Sunnyvale will be contacted and may participate jointly.

Tom Picraux passed around a sign-up sheet for those wanting League business cards with the latest contact information.

The new brochures will soon be available to hand out to potential new members explaining the League with encouragement to join.

Programs: Potluck and presenter sign-ups began for Program Planning. Eleanor described the LWVC reorganization of the process.

Suggestions were made for speaker at the San Jose Women's Club program in April with Meg Giberson and Sue Clooney to follow up.

No February programs due to Program Planning and Bay Area League Day in January. Talk on Midpeninsula Open Space was suggested for March.

LWVC Convention delegates will be Hana, Tom Picraux, Barbara Lea and the new



President of our League. Three hotel rooms were reserved.

The three delegates to Bay Area League Day regional issues decisions are Tom & Danice Picraux, Hana.

Youth: Wanda Alexander presented more ideas for the five-member committee to consider youth involvement, such as honorary membership for political science students.

Finance Drive: Donation letter to include our League's activities. It was requested that the Board suggest possible donors. A letter to the newspaper about our drive will also be looked into.

Voter: The Board agreed with President Itani's suggestion that ads acquired now be extended into the next year as as an encouragement.

After discussion the Board decided that articles in the Voter should not be more than a half page.

It was also decided that the mission statement is to be updated to coincide with LWVUS changes.

Natural Resources: There is growing support in some quarters for only one tunnel under the Delta instead of twin tunnels.

Voter Services: New Facts for Voters brochures are being designed and will soon be printed. Several agreed to assist and take sections to research.

Nancy Rucker, Secretary

President's Letter (Cont.)

League. Our active communications team is busy exploring ways to effectively use social media to keep the public informed. Protecting our democracy depends on you. Watch out for Action Alert Emails from Eleanor Yick about important and pressing issues to act on. Please take a moment and voice your concerns from voting rights to clean air, health care to money in politics. The League's core issues will be at the forefront of battles in state houses and in Washington.

This is the season for our Financial Drive. Soon, Tom Picraux will be sending you a letter asking for donations. Please join us to protect Democracy by participating and making a generous donation.

"Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation." Loretta Scott King.

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

Program Planning 2017 – Report

Our League's most important meeting of the year, PROGRAM PLANNING, took place on Monday, January 23, 2017. Twenty-one of our members were in attendance as we worked to:

- a. review and assess the goals we set in January 2016;
- b. identify our goals for 2017 in alignment with the goals identified by LWVUS (Making Democracy Work: Voter Protection and mobilization, Election Reform, and Money in Politics) and LWVC (the 3 LWVUS areas plus Redistricting, Higher Education, Equity Issues, Housing, Criminal Justice System, Water, CEQA, State and Local Finances) that fall under three (3) broad areas: Governance, Natural Resources and Social Policy.

What goals did we set in 2016?

Danice and Tom Picraux reported Under Governance, Finance Campaign and Money in Politics, that we had successfully achieved our goals as evidenced by the work of our Local Finance Study Committee. Highlights of the study process and findings were presented. A final report will be submitted to the Board and summarized in next month's *Voter*. Although not discussed at Program Planning, our League members, again under the leadership of Danice and Tom Picraux, also participated in two LWVUS studies: Constitutional Amendment and Money in Politics.

Under Elections and Voting Rights, Kathy Murtfeldt reported that we held six candidate forums and eleven Pros and Cons meetings, supported the monthly New Citizens' Registration events, promoted the use of Voter's Edge and did outreach through publicity in both our *Voter*, website, Facebook and local outlets. The Top Two Primary and Instant Run-Off voting processes were discussed. A motion was made and approved to support a state study of these two voting systems.

Under Natural Resources, Meg Giberson reviewed the three community and membership educational programs that were focused on Water Issues. These program events featured well-known professionals in the fields of water use, storage, Proposition 1, groundwater augmentation, recycled water, freshwater flow, drought-tolerant landscaping, and loss of wild places.

Our League continues to be well represented by our Natural Resources Director at various local and state level meetings/conferences about Water Issues and informed via the monthly articles or reports that appear in our *Voter*. The key components of the transportation bond, Measure B, were also highlighted.

Under Social Policy, Barbara Lea and Eleanor Yick reviewed that after a series of Higher Education articles, as selected by our local Education Study Committee,

was published in the *Voter*, twenty members participated in the Consensus Meeting that was held to complete our role in the LWVC Study of Public Higher Education in California. Eleanor Yick chaired the committee for this statewide study. The new LWVC position on Public Higher Education in California, adopted in July 2016, will enable both the LWVC and our League to advocate on higher education issues. Ideas were generated on how we could best utilize this position at our local level.

Barbara Lea provided an update on Community Colleges and continues to keep us informed on a Single Payer Health Plan for California through her participation in a nationwide LWV Committee. Key components of the housing bond, Measure A, were highlighted.

After reviewing each of these areas, members discussed the next steps we can take in those areas as well as the two county-wide issues which will impact us because of the passage of Measure A (Housing) and Measure B (Transportation).

All of the ideas and/or suggestions generated at our Program Planning Day will be compiled into a Final Report and presented to our Board for approval and specific goal setting.

Eleanor Yick, Scribe
Director: Action & Education



President Hana Itani introducing organizer and moderator Eleanor Yick sitting to her right.



Tom and Danice Picraux giving a report on the Local Campaign Finance Study.

City & Town Council Observers

Campbell: January 2017 - The City is being forced to hold a Special Election on April 25, 2017, at a cost of \$463,400 due to an initiative measure to expand medical marijuana sale and cultivation in Campbell. The initiative calls for allowing up to three dispensaries in Campbell and for patients to grow up to 100 square feet of plants and caregivers up to 500 square feet. The estimated cost to the city for regulating these dispensaries is \$980,000 annually. Therefore the city has placed a gross receipts tax on the special election ballot which would allow it to add between 7% and 15% tax on the medical marijuana sold in Campbell to help offset the regulation costs. They also are placing a countermeasure on the ballot to allow for a two-year moratorium on dispensary licensing to study the land-use impact and set up law-enforcement and administrative personnel to handle the potential new businesses.

Jackie Costanzo, Observer

Los Gatos: January 2017 - Town Council decided to control "cut through beach

traffic" for 15 weekends this summer. Southbound traffic on Santa Cruz Avenue will be prevented from entering Hwy 17 by a closure at Wood Road on Saturday and Sunday for limited hours. Vehicles may still access southbound Hwy 17 from Hwy 9 or Lark Avenue. Data will be collected and analyzed by a consulting firm. Town staff will use this data analysis while working with Caltrans towards a more permanent solution to this problem.

The alternative idea of creating an "open street" space on Santa Cruz Avenue on those weekends will continue to be explored. This would involve closing Santa Cruz Ave from Hwy 9 to Wood Road and making it a walkable venue, vehicle-free, business customer friendly. The idea of weekend street festivals to draw people in was discussed.

Lynda Jandron, Observer

Saratoga: December 2016 - Approved resolution declaring hazardous vegetation



(weeds) as public nuisance and set a public meeting on this issue for the January 18, 2017 meeting.

Accepted and approved a Grant for an Emergency Easement access at Montalvo Arts Center property.

Recommended Hwy 9 Improvement Phase IV for construction management and awarded the contract to Belleci & Associates for \$139,849. Move to authorize staff to execute change orders for unforeseen circumstances up to \$13,000.

Recommended action to accept three separate offers to dedicate a trail easement on the properties known as Cooper-Garrod winery and Garrod Farms, and adopted an acceptance resolution.

Recommended action to accept the list of Commission's qualifications and terms expiring in the calendar year of 2017.

Recommended to adopt a resolution for the formation of a Commission Facilities District authorizing the levy of special tax. Raquel Durand, Observer Chair

VTA Revising Transit Routes

VTA's transit service redesign is proposing to change when and where VTA buses and light rail trains run. On January 5, 2017, VTA's Board of Directors approved releasing a draft service plan for public comment. This proposed plan can be viewed at nextnetwork.vta.org. There are multiple ways you can provide your input on this draft. You can attend a public meeting. VTA staff will give an overview presentation, answer questions and accept input.

These public meetings are scheduled in our area:

Thursday, February 9 at 6:00 P.M.

LG Transportation & Parking Commission
LG Town Council Chambers
110 E. Main Street, Los Gatos

Monday, February 23 at 6:00 P.M.

Campbell Library
Community Room
77 Harrison Ave., Campbell

Public comments on this plan are being taken through February 20, 2017. A revised plan will be presented to the VTA Board later this spring, with implementation slated for fall 2017. **The proposed plan currently ends the Los Gatos route at Highway 9 and will not travel downtown.** This could severely impact Senior Transit options. Email VTA with questions or comments at community.outreach@vta.org

Volunteer Assistance

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.

* **Membership**, An assistant is needed. Please contact Sharon Graham at sharona.graham@gmail.com.

* **Observers**, Volunteer for the Monte Sereno Council Meetings. They can also be listen to on recordings. Contact Raquel Durand at sra_durand@yahoo.com

* **LWVC Convention**, mcx@lwvc.org

Water, Water... but not everywhere

"And it never failed that during the dry years the people forgot about the rich years, and during the wet years they lost all memory of the dry years. It was always that way."

As the drought dragged on for years, people often repeated that quotation from Steinbeck's *East of Eden*. We were trying to remind ourselves that one day it might *really* rain again.

The good news: The rains finally came. The bad news: Although many reservoirs are filling, groundwater levels in many parts of California remain seriously depleted. Drought caused some farmers to turn to pumping more groundwater to replace missing imported water, causing significant draining of aquifers. However, groundwater depletion is not new.

As an example, early proponents of the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) said the project's imported water would

ameliorate groundwater pumping in the San Joaquin Valley. However, when the CVP supply arrived in 1951, it did not "rescue" developed acreage that was threatened by water shortage as promised. Rather, with water from the CVP, agriculture brought new lands into production, and "the mining of groundwater and agricultural expansion accelerated throughout the valley... [at] a rate acknowledged by both state and federal experts as 'far in excess of replenishment.' In large areas, the very surface of the land subsided as much as thirty feet as water was pumped out..."¹

The trend continues, with 16 times more new irrigation wells drilled in the San Joaquin Valley in recent years (2,478 wells in 2015 vs. 161 in 2011, according to DWR). NASA reported in 2015 that the San Joaquin Valley was sinking faster than ever before. California water officials have noted that this has damaged infrastructure

such as bridges, aqueducts and even well casings—not to mention causing a permanently-reduced underground storage capacity.

With agriculture using a much higher percentage of human-use ("developed") water in California than urban areas (estimates vary from 62-80%), solutions are critical, but slow in coming. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), signed into law in 2014, does not require sustainable management of groundwater until 2042.

But, as one expert says, "water is the whole ball game—climate change first and foremost will manifest itself in water issues. Too much, too little, too saline, too warm, too polluted. If we don't figure out our most pressing issues in water, we won't adapt successfully to the changes in climate that we know are coming..."

Meg Giberson, Natural Resources Director

¹Norris Hundley, *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water, a History* (University of California Press, 2001), 277-279.

Climate Change Update: Should Fossil Fuel Subsidies Be Eliminated?

In researching for a climate change presentation that I recently made, I came across these interesting facts:

One of the main issues raised with alternative energy sources is that they are more expensive and that fossil fuels are cheaper. But as reported by the *IMF* (International Monetary Fund) *Survey* dated 7/17/15 "(fossil) energy subsidies are dramatically higher than previously thought. The upward revision is partly due to factoring in new World Health Organization estimates on harm to health from pollution exposure.

"Subsidies are projected to remain high, despite sharp declines in international energy prices. The (global) estimate for 2015 was **\$5.3 trillion (6.5% of global GDP)**. High growth in energy consumption, especially coal, inflation and real income growth, and persistent

undercharging for environmental costs are all key factors.

The bulk of energy subsidies in most countries are due to undercharging for domestic environmental damage, including local air pollution...

Eliminating global energy subsidies could reduce deaths related to fossil-fuel emissions by over 50% and fossil-fuel related carbon emissions by over 20%. The revenue gain from eliminating energy subsidies is projected to be US\$2.9 trillion (3.6% of global GDP) in 2015. This offers huge potential for reducing other taxes or strengthening revenues... Advanced economies would gain enough revenue to halve corporate income tax or cover one quarter of public health spending.

It is generally in a country's own interest to move ahead unilaterally with

energy subsidy reform. Top subsidizers in percent of GDP and in per capita subsidies stand to gain the most. The benefits will mostly accrue at the local level, by reducing local pollution and generating much-needed revenues. Energy subsidy reform can also contribute to carbon emissions reduction and help countries make pledges (Paris 2015 UN climate conference). To achieve significant carbon emissions cuts at the global level, it would be essential for top subsidizers in dollar terms to play a leading role." *date*

Next Month's Climate Change Column will address some further ideas for addressing fossil fuel subsidies and the climate challenge that we are all facing.

Dave Yick, Environment Chair

For full article and access to the Study: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2015/NEW070215A.htm>

LWV UN Delegates

Commission on the Status of Women: Upcoming Events

The focus of the United Nations turns toward women and gender issues during the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York, March 13-24, 2017. The priority theme of the meetings will be Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work.



The League of Women Voters can register up to 20 members to attend Commission meetings and events in the UN. Please contact Suzanne Stassevitch at smstass@mac.com if you're interested in attending as a LWV UN Delegate. All League members can also self-register to attend more than 450 NGO events, panels and trainings conducted outside the UN complex and in parallel with the Commission meetings. Registration is open through March 3, 2017.

Lunch with League Protecting Our Civil Liberties

guest speaker:

Nayna Gupta

Attorney for the ACLU of Northern California

**Wednesday, February 7
12 - 1:30pm**

at the First Congregational Church
1985 Louis Rd, Palo Alto, CA



Attorney Gupta is a graduate of Stanford law school and is the Racial Justice Fellow at the ACLU of Northern California. Ms. Gupta will discuss racial justice issues including ACLU's work on racial profiling and bias within the San Francisco Police Department.

If you would like to order a vegetarian wrap or chicken wrap from Lyfe Kitchen, please send a check for \$11 to LWVPA, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209, Palo Alto, CA, 94303. OR to pay by PayPal, go to: <http://lwvpaloalto.org/donation.html>, click on the top Donate button and put "Lunch with League" in the space for special instructions. Please be sure to indicate either on your check or in the special instructions, whether you'd like a chicken or vegetarian wrap.



Lonely Implements

Did you come to the Program Planning meeting and generously bring soup or other goodies to share? And did you perhaps leave something there at the Church? We have two ladles, two knives, and a plastic cup. If you are on the Board, these lonely implements will come to the next meeting. Or, if that doesn't work for you, call Barbara Lea at 408-354-2287.



The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area Education Fund publishes the *Bay Area Monitor* six times a year. The publication covers policies, plans, programs, and legislation that affect quality of life in the Bay Area and beyond.

The *Monitor* is provided to readers for free, both in print and online (www.bayareamonitor.org).

Subscribe to the Monitor; bayareamonitor.org/subscribe.

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Contact us for more information: (510) 839-1608 • editor@bayareamonitor.org

Sisters Across the Straits

Save the Date For This Incredible Experience!

May 22-28, 2017



The Capitol Building in the beautiful city of Havana, Cuba.

Cuba with the League

Registration to Close February 22

All Sisters Across the Straits participants must be members of the League of Women Voters, which can include Leagues in other states. This means that all travelers on our trips share the same sense of civic engagement and can-do attitude that is the signature characteristic of a League member. Travelers often enter as strangers, but they routinely leave as close friends.

For Details and to Register, Visit <http://thefloridavoter.org/trips-events-listing/travel-to-cuba/>

Question? Contact:
lwwfevents@gmail.com or (850) 224-2545

Join the League of Women Voters or Give a Gift of Membership

Name: _____ Date: _____
 Membership Renewal: ☐ New Member: ☐ Check# _____
 An (Elected or Appointed) Public Official: ☐ Yes ☐ No
 Address: _____
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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.

Mail this coupon with your dues to:

LWV Southwest Santa Clara Valley
 PO Box 2865
 Saratoga, CA 95070-0865

| | |
|---|----------|
| \$ _____ Individual | \$80.00 |
| \$ _____ Household | \$120.00 |
| \$ _____ Student | \$30.00 |
| \$ _____ Voter Mailed to You | \$20.00 |
| \$ _____ Total Enclosed | |
| \$ _____ Donation to LWV-SWSCV Ed Fund (include as a separate check) | |



Clip n' Come

Looking for good conversation? Enjoy delicious pot luck lunches?

If you answered "Yes" to these two questions, it's time for you to attend one of our Clip 'n Come meetings. At our last meeting at Natalie Heling's home, the following members were there: Natalie, Barbara Lea, Lois Smallwood, Raquel Durand, Dale Hill, Gail Nishimura and Cherri Nelson; and we discussed the following topics:

- Fake News • The Midnight Health Care Vote • Transgender Issues
- Dr. Sidney Drell, an expert in Nuclear Arms Control
- Poorly Performing Schools in California with an Overall Score of C-
- Naming of US Cabinet Members
- Conservative Christmas Announcement about Welcoming a New King.

We would love to have you join the group at our next Clip 'n Come meeting on Thursday, February 9, at Pat White's Home.

Barbara Lea, Vice President

Support LWV SWSCV Supporters!

We appreciate the support of the following businesses and business professionals!
Please remember to mention seeing the ad in our *Voter* when you utilize their services.



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Najat Badriyeh
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michael.cummings.hldj@statefarm.com
Fax 408 358 7447

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®

❧ Event Calendar ❧

- Feb 1 Wed **Board Meeting**, 10:00 A.M. Saratoga Fire Station
- Feb 7 Wed **Protecting Our Civil Liberties – Nayna Gupta** 12-1:30P.M.
First Congregational Church, 1985 Louis Rd. Palo Alto
R.S.V.P. for luncheon, details on page 7.
- Feb 9 Thu **Clip 'n Come**, Noon, Bring Salad/Food & Clipping to Share
Home of Pat White, 1754 Glen Una Ave., San Jose
Call (408) 265-7121 • **Please let hostess know you will be coming.**

Contact Information for LWVSWSCV

Email:

lwv.swscv@gmail.com

Web:

www.lwv-sw-santaclara-valley.org

Phone:

408-lwv-1842/408-598-1842

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/lwvswscv

Twitter: [lwv_swscv](https://twitter.com/lwv_swscv)

The League of Women Voters: a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.
Vision, Beliefs and Intentions: The goal of the League of Women Voters is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

Women's March January 21, 2017

