



Voter

of Southwest Santa Clara Valley



Serving Los Gatos, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, & Campbell

March, 2018

League of Women Voters

LWV Southwest Santa Clara Valley

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Saturday

March 10 • 3:00 P.M.

at the

Saratoga Library

13750 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga

**Free & Open
to the Public**

Spotting Fake News

with speaker

John H. McManus

Award Winning Author & Former Journalist

Fake and misleading news continues to spread online, particularly through social media as well as via talk radio. Learn how to detect a fabricated story which could falsely sway your outlook and ultimately your vote.

Co-sponsored by



Further Details on Page 4



President's Letter

It's been a great start to 2018 and we're excited to see what all we can accomplish together through the rest of this year. Thanks to your support, we continue to be vigilant in our mission to educate and empower voters!

Every year we send out an appeal to the community and members for donations. Most likely you have received it by now. Thanks to those who have responded. If you haven't yet, please consider making a contribution to help our League. There is so much to do, especially these days; and without your help and support, we cannot fulfill the League's missions and its needs.

I am so proud of the work we are doing. And thanks to all those who filled out our League participation survey! We couldn't do it without all of your participation, tireless efforts and support. For 98 years, Leaguers have been working to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives.

Thanks to all those who attended our Program Planning Meeting. Reports from these meetings help shape our organization's future. All reports from all the leagues in the nation are due on March 1. The program planning process is one of the ways through which the League focuses its grassroots work to align each part of the organization with the others and with the League's mission. Program Planning will culminate with adoption of a program of education and action at LWVUS Convention 2018, in Chicago. The input of League boards will help shape the proposed program of study

and action that will be submitted to convention delegates for debate and adoption. Five of our members will be going to the convention this year. Eleanor Yick, Gail Nishimura and I will be the delegates representing our League, and Barbara Lea and Dave Yick will also be attending.

Bay Area League Day was well attended by six from our League. There were many great speakers from different organizations who are coordinating their efforts to transform plans into actions (page 6).

I am so thrilled to see the rise of enthusiasm from our new members to come forward and give us help in making democracy work. Our newest member, Claudia Aiden, called me with one mission in her mind; to register high school students who will be 18 years old by November 6, 2018, to vote.

It is delightful to see another new member, Maria Ristow, accepting the position of Transportation Representative. We really needed her participation.

Also on Friday, February 23, I was at the Watermark Conference for Women at San Jose Convention Center with our new member Nicole Jakaby registering new voters and spreading the word about Voter's Edge. Nicole will be our Voter's Edge representative.

Continued on Next Page.

Welcome!

New Members

Claudia Aiden
Dana Chahidi
Nicole Jakaby

**We're so glad you have
joined the League!**

Two easy things new members can do for further participation:

1. Sign up for LWVC newsletters and action alerts, lwvc.org/stay-informed.
2. Like us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/LWVofCA.

2017-2018 Board of Directors

Officers & Directors

President, Hana Itani

Vice President, Barbara Lea

Secretary, Nancy Rucker

Treasurer, Danice Picraux

Action, Eleanor Yick

Education, Eleanor Yick

Finance Drive, Tom Picraux

Natural Resources, Meg Giberson

Observers, Raquel Durand

Programs, **TBD**

Public Relations, Gail Nishimura

Assistants:

Pat White & Nancy Rucker

Voter Editor, Cherri Nelson

Voters Service

Wendy Hendry, Sue Cooney

Nominating Committee

Chair, Pat White

Members

Sharon Graham, Gail Nishimura,
Lois Smallwood

Off-Board Chairs

Bay Area Representative, Patty Weber

Circulation, Natalie Heling

Clip 'n Come, Dale Hill

Database Manager, Zina Lou Dyer

Environment, Dave Yick

Great Decisions, Terry Zacccone

Health Care, Barbara Lea

Hospitality, Judy Zacccone

Immigration, **TBD**

Observers

Campbell: Jackie Costanzo

Los Gatos: Lynda Jandron

Monte Sereno: **TBD**

Saratoga: Raquel Durand

Youth Outreach, Wanda Alexander

Publications, Gail Pedersen

Voter's Edge, Tom Picraux

Voters Service

Pros & Cons, T. Zacccone, E. Yick

Voter Registration, Jackie Costanzo

Web Site

Cherri Nelson, Gail Nishimura

2016-2017 Elected Officials

United States

President Donald Trump
(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>

Assembly Member 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 Mar. 7, 2018

• **Treasurer:** Finances are still stable and healthy. Three more members joined using the convenience of PayPal.

Program Planning: The Board voted approval on the four reviewed proposals and the minutes which will now be sent to LWVUS.

Clip 'n Come: After hearing from participants, the Board decided to keep the name as it is!

Great Decisions: Gail Nishimura was asked to put the evening meeting's address on the website. Good attendance and participation is being reported.

Annual Meeting: The Health of the Valley is the chosen theme. Ideas for speakers were being considered—possibly panelists from the excellent Bay Area League.

As a possible part of business, a LWVUS representative will talk on the LWV 100-year anniversary and distribute PR materials for it.

Legislative Interviews: Questions have been received from LWVC and dates set with our two representatives. Barbara Lea suggested one of our elective questions



be on the lack of support for SB 562, the California Health Care bill.

Finance Drive: Ideas for possible donors were requested. A real estate company was suggested as a donor/sponsor for *Facts For Voters*. Request for donations will be announced at the March program.

Nominating Committee: Maria Ristow is our Voter's Edge representative for the upcoming election season.

Zina Lou Dyer requested an intern to train for the membership data base system. New software which would also be useful for publication distribution will be explored.

Membership: Privacy concerns were reviewed again due to a member complaint. The Board is on alert to be more careful on listings of personal information. Eleanor Yick reported on results of the member survey.

Natural Resources: Meg Giberson is working on an April program on water issues. Eleanor Yick suggested it was time to focus about the PUC around water rates.

County Council sent a letter on restrictions and will now be the League's spokesperson at any local government or organizational hearings within Santa Clara County.

Cherri Nelson, *Voter Editor*

President's Letter (Cont.)

I cannot finish my letter without talking about the tragic mass shootings that take place like the one last week in Parkland, Florida. They have become all too common. Educators School Safety Network says it has recorded about 50 threats a day on average since the shooting at Marjory Stone Mason Douglas High School, where 17 people were killed. The organization says California leads the list of schools that have had an increase in threats. Police said they recovered a firearm from the home of an 11-year-old boy who had barricaded himself in a Santa Cruz classroom on February 20 and planned to harm specific students."

Why can an 11 year old have access to firearms? Isn't that shocking? These are not toys! I watched a video about a 13 year

old named Jack who was hired to make a point! He was sent to a convenience store with his mom driving him around to buy beer. He failed, not being of age. Then he was sent to another store to buy cigarettes, with no luck. Later he failed trying to buy an adult magazine. Also he was denied the purchase of a Lottery ticket. But then he was sent to a gun show, where within minutes, easily and legally, he was able to purchase a 22 caliber rifle from a private seller and walked away with it. Shocking indeed!

Thanks to Margaret Bard for leading our March Program on Fake News (Page 4). I am looking forward to seeing you at the Saratoga Library on Saturday, March 10, at 3 o'clock.

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

Education



SCC Education Committee

The SCC Education Committee meets bi-monthly throughout the year in Mountain View. A representative from each of the five Leagues in SCC, along with some Board members from local school districts, meet to discuss current topics in education, report on attendance at various conferences, highlight upcoming conferences, and share articles that are of interest to all who follow education trends both in California and nationwide. Ellen Wheeler from the MV/LA League chairs the committee.

Below is an edited copy of a report submitted by Julie Cates on Governor Brown's budget and early childhood education in Santa Clara County.

Budget Report

Governor Brown released the proposed State Budget for 2018-2019 (From California Budget & Policy Center)

- **Child Care/Preschool:** Proposed budget includes one-time funding for competitive grants for child care and preschool providers. Budget also provides slight increase in payment rate for ECE providers contracting directly with the state, while continuing multiyear plan (approved in 2016-17 budget) to begin reinvesting in child care and preschool programs.

- **K-12 Education:** Budget proposal provides funding to support full implementation of Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). With \$2.9 billion increase in annual funding in 2018-19, state reaches full implementation two years faster than the eight years originally estimated.

- **Community College System:** Governor allocates \$175 million in 2018-19 for new funding formula for California Community Colleges. Proposed 2018-19 budget also provides \$120 million, including \$100 million in one-time funding, to establish a fully online community college.

- **UCs and CSUs:** Proposed budget includes modest funding increases for CSU and UC. Governor increases funding for both institutions by \$92.1 million

Spotting Fake News

Given what we're learning about Russia's effort to use our freedom of speech and the press against us, this program is an educational service to the community. With the plummeting public trust in the reality-based media, Professor John McManus will talk to us on how to spot fake news.

Learning to filter the digital deluge has become a necessary life skill. Technology is accelerating waves of change through every part of society, from how we learn to how much we earn. What hasn't changed, however, is the power conveyed by knowledge and the danger to self and society caused by ignorance and misinformation.

Speaker's Biography

A former journalist, media researcher, professor, news critic and author, John McManus P.h.D., researches, writes, and speaks about the intersection of journalism, technology, and democracy. In 2000, he founded and directed **GradeTheNews.org** at Stanford University, a website that accomplished for the San Francisco Bay Area what Consumer Reports does for toaster ovens—rating the most popular newscasts and newspapers.

He earned his BA at Holy Cross College, an MA at the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. at Stanford University. Professor McManus tells us that as professional journalism recedes, it's becoming

in the coming year, though with the expectation that they will implement certain improvements.

Conference Report

- **The Learning Policy Institute** hosted a conference in Sacramento to announce the release of its 100+-page report *Building Child Care Systems*. The Learning Policy Institute released *Building an Early Learning System that Works: Next Steps for California* at this forum. This new report complements LPI's earlier report on early care and education (ECE), *Understanding California's Early Care and Education System*, which provides a comprehensive overview of the state's ECE system. The



much more difficult to know what to trust. His research has focused on news quality, ethics and particularly how markets—for

advertisers, investors, consumers and sources—shape news.

His work has appeared in many professional and academic reviews and publications. His first book won The Society of Professional Journalists' Research Award in 1994 and 2009. A second edition of his book, *Don't Be Fooled: A Citizen's Guide to News and Information in the Digital Age*, was recently republished.

This event is **free and open to the general public**. The Saratoga Library is located at 13650 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga. ADA parking is available at the Saratoga Library. Should the library's parking lot be full, then additional parking can be found across Saratoga Avenue at Saint Andrews Church.

For questions, contact: lww.swscv@gmail.com or 408-LWV (598)-1842 or the Saratoga Library www.sccl.org/saratoga (408) 867-6126.

Cherri Nelson, Voter Editor

earlier report found that California's ECE system is complex and fragmented, and fails to provide hundreds of thousands of children with the quality early learning experiences they need. See the Brief at: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/building-early-learning-system-california-report>.

- **Santa Clara County Children's Summit** at Foothill College on Friday, March 9 at 8:00A.M. Theme: With Equity & Justice for All. For more information: www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-santa-clara-county-childrens-summit-tickets-41974187926.

Eleanor Yick, Education Chair

City & Town Council Observers

Campbell: The Council approved a transportation improvement plan by a 3-2 vote that identifies potential sidewalk, streetscape and pedestrian projects in and around downtown. The Public Works Director indicated that having the plan will help Campbell compete for grants to build these projects. There are 14 recommended projects in the plan which was created by Transportation Consultants. One project would provide signage to direct drivers toward parking garages, and another would provide improvements to curbs to accommodate pedestrians and to meet ADA compliance.

The Civic Center Master Plan was the top priority for 2018 as determined by the City Council. The City will ask the voters in November whether they support a new library or police headquarters. There's been ongoing discussions to find a way to improve or construct new facilities for the library, police department and City Hall.

Jackie Costanzo, Observer

Los Gatos: Jan. 16, In compliance with state housing law, the Town Council voted unanimously to amend zoning regulations for accessory dwelling units. These units can be created within, or added onto, an existing primary residence, or

be completely detached from it. Square footage can vary from 150 to 1200. Height and parking allowance were also addressed. It's hoped existing unlawful units will be brought into compliance and counted in the Town's regional housing numbers. Public comments varied. Some wished to have extended family share properties. Others want to have renters to help financially. Some spoke of the detrimental results regarding increased density and congestion in Town.



Feb. 6, Town Council considered five different proposals for housing developments on the Town-owned Dittos Lane property. The majority of councilmembers favored Below Market Price proposals. Two groups were asked to bring back further information on their proposal to support teacher housing and Habitat for Humanity. Lynda Jandron, Observer

Saratoga: Feb. 7, Council authorized the City Manager to supervise volunteer tree planting events through 2020. Partnering with Our City Forest in 2016, the has planted 1,450 so far in a project to recover trees lost to drought.

There was discussion on appointing a representative and alternative if joining the newly formed West Valley Clean

City & Town Councils

Members are encouraged to attend the Council meetings of the cities that our League serves.

Campbell City Council

1st & 3rd Tuesdays – 7:30P.M.

Los Gatos Town Council

1st & 3rd Tuesdays – 7:00P.M.

Monte Sereno City Council

1st & 3rd Tuesdays – 7:00P.M.

Saratoga City Council

1st & 3rd Wednesday – 7:00P.M.

Water Program. The cities of Saratoga, Los Gatos, Campbell and Monte Sereno would acquire this jurisdiction from West Valley Sanitation District when turned over by June 30. All four cities are currently leaning towards creating a joint powers authority for this.

Staff recommended Council accept the completion of the Highway 9 improvements project. Construction was implemented to become Americans With Disabilities Act compliant on pedestrian paths, berms, retaining walls, driveway modifications, and improved signage and traffic markings.

Raquel Durand, Observer Chair

The Nominating Committee News

Following are a few of the volunteers needed by our League. If you have an interest in any of the opportunities, contact the person listed. If you have an upcoming League project or event you would like to solicit volunteers for, then please contact Gail Nishimura. Send descriptive information, and it will be posted in an email blast and occasionally the *Voter*.

NextDoor Events Posts: For Cupertino/San Jose area requiring posting before League events and can be done from home taking about 15-20 minutes each time. If interested contact Gail Nishimura.

Secretary: A Board position responsible for taking the minutes once a month at Board meetings, 2 hours, the annual meeting and program planning event. The secretary also writes and submits the Board Bytes article for the *Voter*/newsletter based on the minutes. In addition, the secretary collects

our League's mail from the post office, makes routine phone calls and correspondence, and prepares the Board roster for distribution to the Board. Board meetings are approximately 1.5 hours, with varied time for other activities. For the July 2018 - May 2019 term. Contact: Pat White

Membership Chair: A Board position responsible for the recruitment and mentoring of new members. Also requires follow-up calls to members who have not renewed their membership as needed. Besides 2 hours at the once-a-month Board meetings, the time required varies for other responsibilities. Board meetings are held in Saratoga, and other activities take place wherever the Membership Chair decides.

This position is for the July 2018 - May 2019 term. Contact: Gail Nishimura.

Gail Nishimura, Nominating Committee Member

News Flash Reforming Proposition 13



We're engaged in the fight of a generation. **We have 8 weeks to collect 100,000 signatures!** The California League has joined in a broad grassroots coalition, including PICO California, California Calls, Advancement Project California and Evolve California to pass a ballot measure to reform Proposition 13.

This November, voters will finally have the opportunity to reform Prop 13—closing a corporate loophole that has allowed big business to pocket billions of dollars annually and restoring that funding to our local communities.

The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018 will provide up to \$10 billion every year in new funding for schools, health clinics, local services, and infrastructure.

Our measure received title and summary from the Attorney General recently. Now we need each League's help to get it on the ballot and ensure it passes in November!

Reforming Prop 13 is the California League's highest priority—and we can't do it without you!

What can you do to help? **Fill out our local League participation survey** and let us know if your League will:

- sign up to gather signatures
- get endorsements from your local elected officials
- **donate to support the Schools and Communities First campaign committee**

Watch for an email next week with more information about how your League can support signature-gathering.

Sincerely,
Helen L. Hutchison, President, LWVC

A Good Day at Bay Area League Day

The time to travel to Oakland for a visit to Laney College is on a Saturday when there is no traffic! Off we went on Saturday, February 3—Eleanor Yick, Dave Yick, Raquel Durand, Hana Itani, Cherri Nelson, and myself—to a very informative Bay Area League Day.



The topic was Regional Government, and the speakers were excellent. Think about how congested the nine counties of the Bay Area are and how sparsely populated they were when all of our separate communities were first incorporated—during the time of mimeograph machines, as one of the speakers commented. Policies which need to be developed and enforced include air quality, filling of the Bay, transportation, land use, etc., etc., etc. And in the midst of everything else, they merged ABAG and MTC—two organizations with different pay rates, union affiliations, and a real blending of two cultures. What dedication that took!

Most of the speakers were truly dedicated to the citizens' quality of life, including how much time workers in the area spend in traffic and how much time they are able to spend with their families. They all seemed to say that no progress can be made unless we all learn to plan together!

A high point of the day was the drop-in visit of Libby Schaff, Mayor of Oakland. She reiterated what earlier speakers said, "We must put aside our egos with our cities and learn to think regionally. You may not have a displacement crisis in your city yet, but you will. Two-thirds of the people working in Oakland drive in."

For me, this was the most informative Bay Area League Day I have attended!

Barbara Lea, Vice President

Let's Read • Let's Meet • Let's Talk A Political Book Club

The next League of Women Voters Book Club will be held one week later in the month of March. That means we will be meeting on Monday, March 19, the third Monday, instead of the usual second Monday. The meeting will still be held at the Wesley Manor in Campbell at 7:00 P.M. The book selected for next month's reading is titled **On Tyranny** by Timothy Snyder. The book can be purchased on Amazon. All are welcome to join us for a lively discussion.

Wendy Hendry, Coordinator

! This Is An Election Year !

There will be many opportunities for you to assist with activities such as Pros & Cons presentations, Candidates' Forums and the Voters Guide that we prepare—just let any Board member know if you have a passion in a particular area of the League.

Immigration: Sanctuary Cities

Communities that have chosen to call themselves Sanctuary Cities are following a time-honored tradition. Were you aware that cities have so-designated themselves that way for thousands and thousands of years? Ancient Jewish cities found it necessary to provide a place where their people could claim asylum from authority so long as they stayed within the city's boundaries. This tradition has remained in use until the present time.

At present, there are approximately 300 such designations in the United States, including Sanctuary Cities, Sanctuary Counties, and Sanctuary States. The first city in the U.S. to pass a sanctuary resolution was Berkeley in 1971. In 1979 the Los Angeles Police Department was instructed to ban the process of asking people for their immigration status. San Francisco became a Sanctuary City in 1989 and passed a law that only immigrants holding a violent felony conviction could be turned over to federal immigration officials for deportation. In October of last year, the Governor declared the State of California to be a Sanctuary State.

In January of this year the Department of Justice, on the order of President Trump, threatened to subpoena the State of California for all records protecting illegal migrants. At the same time, the President threatened to cut off any federal funds granted to California. In addition, the Justice Department notified 23 jurisdictions in the state, telling them that they might be in violation of federal law for blocking communications between local police departments with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The end result is that there are multiple lawsuits in progress, with a good amount finishing in California's favor. It has been decided not to stop ICE investigations at local police stations and businesses, but to allow local citizen activist groups to be present for every ICE raid, ready to take photos and record pertinent information of all confrontations.

Patty Weber, Immigration

Meet Our New Member

submitted by Barbara Lea, Vice President

Each month we plan to have a few biographies of our wonderful new members who have joined in 2017 and 2018. If you are a new member and have not yet sent in your short biography, please do so—or I will plague you with phone calls! Also those who have never had a bio published here are very welcome to tell us your story. Barbara Lea

Maria Ladle Ristow

Maria grew up in Chicago and walked, biked, and took public transit as her primary form of transportation until moving to California in 1987. Working as an engineer in the semiconductor industry and commuting from Los Gatos to Palo Alto from 1987 to 1997, she was dismayed at the lack of transit options in this valley of high tech, where the single-occupancy vehicle seems to rule.

For the next 20 years, as a stay-at-home Mom and community volunteer, Maria has served her community in a continuously spreading circle, from co-op preschool board member, to soccer and volleyball coach and LGUSL Rec Commissioner while her children were in grade and high school. In the past few years she has served the Town of Los Gatos in various capacities, including as member of the Housing Element Advisory Board,

the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and the Transportation and Parking Commission. She also volunteers with Los Gatos Safe Routes to School.

She is interested in finding better and more sustainable answers than single-occupancy vehicle trips, which are trapping this valley in hours of gridlock each week. She also follows the issues of funding repairs and new infrastructure.

Maria is also a member of a local political activist group, the Los Gatos Community Alliance, which promotes information for residents on matters of development and other Town issues.

Maria joined the League of Women Voters because the League's Pro and Con presentations convinced her this is an effective organization at both the local and regional/national level.

Annual Finance Drive *Donate!*

February 1 – March 31 • *Reminder!!*

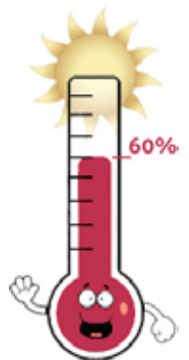
Our Finance Drive is in full swing and we are making excellent progress towards our goal. If you haven't yet had a chance to contribute, please take a moment to do so now.

Your 2018 donations will enable us to continue the important work to politically educate the public for this election year, such as:

- Local Candidate Forums
- Ballot Pros & Cons Presentations
- Voter's Edge Website
- *Facts for Voters* Publication

You may also donate online right now at www.lwv-sw-santaclara-valley.org. If you have already made your contribution to the League, thank you very much for your support.

Tom Picraux, Finance Drive



Water Costs: How Much is Too Much!

Our League members have questioned our area's rising water costs. The local provider for many of us is investor-owned (private) San Jose Water Company, which computes its water cost at one cent per gallon. How does that stack up against other utilities?

For a family of two using 50 gallons per person per day (GPCD), differing areas would see the following charges per gallon (service charges included, 1" meter size assumed):

1.0 cent/gal—San Jose Water Company (SJWC);

1.59 cents/gal—East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD);

1.9 cents/gal—Alameda County Water District (ACWD);

2.0 cents/gal—Berkeley (according to Sedlak, reporting in Water 4.0).

Of course, individual bills vary by how much water is used. Households that use more water find that use beyond a

certain base amount is generally billed at a somewhat higher rate. Different areas have different rate tier structures. The lower rate tiers for low usage often reflect an effort to reward conservation efforts. (The statewide average residential water use for January 2017 was 58.1 GPCD; Santa Cruz used 33.8 GPCD in August 2017.) The following list notes percentage increases in rates of highest use amounts over the lowest tier rates:

highest use tier 1.16 times the rate for lowest—SJWC

highest use tier 1.82 times the rate for lowest—EBMUD

highest use tier 11 times the rate for lowest—CalAm Water (Monterey area).

Service charges are generally added to each bill, regardless of the amount of water used. Service charges below reflect monthly residential service charges, typically for a 1" meter:

\$26.07 SJWC (as of 2/2018)

\$34.13 EBMUD

\$40.35 ACWD

\$58.55 CalAm (Calif. American Water, Monterey area)

SJWC's charges reflect increases passed on to them by wholesaler Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), as well as the costs of SJWC system components (maintenance, repair, etc.). SCVWD's proposed increase of 9.6% in the ground water production charge for our area may, therefore, be reflected in future SJWC charge increases. (The proposed SCVWD 9.6% increase was a revenue assumption suggested in a 2/13/2018 water district Board meeting.)

This is the second in a series of articles requested by the SWSCV League. Future articles will consider League positions, such as encouraging water pricing policies that reflect development and delivery costs, and protecting low or fixed income water users by lifeline rates.

Meg Giberson, Natural Resources

LWVUS Statements – Empowering the Vote

It has been a busy first month of 2018, and we've certainly seen some great victories in the voting rights sphere! We're excited to share with you a few highlights of our January:

Election Integrity Commission Dissolved

Our voting rights experienced a great victory at the beginning of January, when President Trump (at long, long last) shut down his discredited 'Election Integrity Commission. The League was involved in legal challenges in Texas, Utah and Indiana that sought to prevent the private data of voters in those states from being shared with the Commission. It is now time for our leaders to focus on the very real work of securing our elections against foreign interference, while making sure all eligible voters are free to exercise their right to vote.

SCOTUS Hears Voter Purge Case

The Supreme Court heard arguments in *Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI)*, Ohio's voter purge case. The

League filed an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs last year, stating it's unreasonable, and therefore unlawful, to infer that a voter moved or is otherwise ineligible to vote from one missed federal election. We joined other voting rights advocates on the steps of the Supreme Court to say the right to vote is not use-it-or-lose-it. Learn more about the details of this case.

Anti-Gerrymandering Wins Across the Nation

The League of North Carolina celebrated an exciting victory when courts struck down the state's congressional districts as partisan gerrymanders and, just two weeks later, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court overturned the state's gerrymandered congressional districts and ordered new maps to be drawn by February 9. We are thrilled at the decision of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court!

The League of Michigan has joined in the fight against gerrymandering, where they have filed a lawsuit challenging partisan legislative and congressional district maps, and Leagues in Ohio may soon be seeing two anti-gerrymandering measures on the ballot.

Florida Takes Rights Restoration to the Ballot

After months of dedicated work, Floridians have submitted more than 1.1 million petitions in support of the Voting Restoration Amendment. Election officials in the state certified that this initiative has now collected enough signatures to get a constitutional amendment on the November ballot.

It's been a great start to 2018 and we're excited to see what all we can accomplish together through the rest of this year. Thanks to your support, we continue to be vigilant in our mission to empower voters!

2018 Legislative Interview: California Assemblyman Evan Low

Q1: Money Bail Reform: Currently, release pending trial is based on an arrestee's capacity to post money bail. Do you support legislative changes to a risk-assessment based system, so that release is contingent on preventing violence in the community, rather than arrestee's finances?

Yes, Assemblyman Low resoundingly supports the use of a risk-assessment based system rather than bail so that release is contingent on preventing violence in the community rather than the arrestee's finances. His belief: "Justice should not be determined by one's socio-economic status." Although he voted in support of AB 42, a sister bill to SB 10, and it was supported by a Supreme Court Justice, there were some problems with the language in the bill. In particular, the language would have prevented a judge from considering an arrestee's prior record. The governor, who is not usually so directly involved in the legislature, is actively engaged in this legislation and extended it to 2018 for reconsideration. Assemblyman Low requested that the League stay aware of and be involved in this legislation and when it comes to the floor again, please send emails and letters of support. They do make a difference.

This question led to a discussion of the very recent, horrific gun violence in a Florida high school. Assemblyman Low pointed out that during the first 45 days of 2018, there were 18 school shootings. It is very difficult for elected officials to take on the NRA and successfully enact gun legislation. He is very proud of two bills that he has sponsored:

- a. AB1968: stipulates that any person who has been placed on a 5150 psychiatric hold twice in a calendar year would be prohibited from purchasing or owning a gun for life. The individual could still petition the court for a hearing to have his or her firearms returned.
- b. AB 2781: mandatory ballistics testing of casings and firearms used in a crime. The Santa Clara District Attorney Jeff Rosen supports this bill. While this bill would not have prevented the Florida incident, it still would provide law

enforcement with better information in order to solve violent crimes. Again when this bill gets submitted, the League should be involved and actively sending emails and letters of support.

Assemblyman Low supports legislation that will help to "create a movement" to address gun violence. He talked about the idea of a "compact" between/among neighboring states supporting gun legislation that could spread across the country. This could be a better approach rather than expecting or waiting for Federal legislation to address it.

Q2: CEQA Reform: What is your view regarding the use of CEQA to delay



Questions & discussions with Evan Low for the 2018 Legislative Interview.

affordable housing projects? While recent legislative changes have streamlined the CEQA process for in-fill projects, do you think other legislative changes to CEQA are needed?

YES – CEQA, as currently written, does need to be reformed. While recent legislation has streamlined the process for in-fill housing development, more reforms are needed while still protecting environmental issues. As currently written, CEQA has been frequently used to delay or prevent affordable housing projects.. Lack of affordable housing is at a crisis stage in CA right now and must be addressed. Modifying CEQA could definitely help with the development of affordable and low income housing.

Q3: Sea Level Rise: We need a regional, coordinated effort by several state agencies. And since the threat is swift in terms of typical infrastructure projects, we need to coordinate now. What is the

path forward to assure continuity of infrastructure as we approach 2050 and beyond? What can be done legislatively?

Assemblyman Low agrees that we need a regional, coordinated effort by several state agencies to address sea level rise, with a focus on coordinated efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change. In addition to mitigation efforts, we need to make adaptations and address sea level rise in a coordinated effort. Can this be done legislatively – yes, if there is the will. The path forward should focus on renewable energy, solar, and infrastructure like high speed rail and charging stations. For those who still do not believe in climate change, use science and data to convince them it's real. Attempt interstate compacts to reduce carbon emissions. When the US withdrew from the Paris Agreement, California stepped in.

Q4: Local League Question(s) This question is for your own internal League use. You don't need to report to the LWVC on it unless there is something of statewide interest that you would like us to know about.

A. Do you support more transparency in government and the Disclose Act.

Yes, he supported the legislation that requires more disclosure on ads. He has also submitted a bill that bans signature gatherers on ballot issues from being paid per signature. Currently, many are paid per signature, which creates an incentive to mislead voters for their signatures. He feels that is an abuse of the system but difficult to not only legislate but also enforce. There might be a legal issues re: free speech so the proposed legislation still allows the signature gatherers to be paid hourly or by the job. But, bottomline, signers need to be aware of who is being paid to gather signatures, how they are being paid, and who is paying them.

Assemblyman Low also authored successful legislation (AB765) that prohibits local initiative proponents, like the ones in Campbell that forced a special election, from timing their initiatives to force

Continued on Page 10.

2018 Legislative Interview (Cont.)

B. Do you support a Single Health Payer System and why don't you support SB562.

Philosophically, Assemblyman Low supports Single Payer Health Care but is concerned about how it would or could be implemented. Even if California passed this legislation, there is great uncertainty about how the federal government would react. Without the needed federal financial support, California would have difficulty financially supporting the program. He also feels choice of healthcare is important to many and would need to be addressed. We also need to be aware of how it will impact large HMO's like Kaiser. He posed the question—how do we move in that direction? He feels California is being targeted at the Federal level re: healthcare, immigration and cannabis. California could be and should be a role model but it's a very complex issue. The legislation is currently on hold.

Q5: General question: What other major issues do you think the legislature must deal with in 2018? What are your personal priorities?

One of Assemblymember Low's priorities for the year is voting rights and civic participation. In addition to banning paying per-signature, Assemblymember Low has introduced AB 2165, which would create an Election Day holiday in California each year in which a statewide or national election is held.

Assemblymember Low has also introduced a package of three bills to fight the growing opioid epidemic in our country. While California as a whole has not been the hardest hit, many rural counties in the state have some of the highest overdose rates in the country. The three bills address the overprescription, diversion, and abuse of prescription drugs like opioids. A related bill, AJR 27, condemns Attorney General Jeff Sessions for his crusade against legalized cannabis, which diverts

scarce public safety resources away from addressing the opioid epidemic.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, Assemblymember Low has two bills focused on firearm safety. AB 1968 would restrict firearm possession for people at risk of harming themselves or others, while AB 2781 would harness the power of existing technology and systems to quickly solve gun crimes and identify crime gun shooters.



Attendees L-R: Assemblyman Evan Low, Roberta Holliman (LWVC/S), Rosaleen Zisch (LWVSJ/SC), Wendy Hendry (LWVSWSCV), Karen Nelson (LWVSJ/SC), Barbara Lea and Eleanor Yick (LWVSWSCV)



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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 at barbara.lea@comcast.net or call 408-354-2287.

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❧ Event Calendar ❧

- Mar 1 Thu **Great Decisions, Media & Foreign Policy**
3-5:00 P.M. Joan Pisani Community Center, Saratoga
3-5:00 P.M. Wesley Manor, Campbell
- Mar 7 Wed **Board Meeting, 10:00 A.M. Home of President Hana Itani**
- Mar 8 Thu **Clip 'n Come, Noon, Bring Salad/Food & Clipping to Share**
Home of Nathera Mawla, 16167 Greenwood Rd., Monte Sereno
Call (408) 354-1763 • **Please let hostess know you will be coming.**
- Mar 10 Sat **Spotting Fake News, John McManus P.h.D 3:00 P.M.**
Saratoga Library, 13750 Saratoga Ave.
- Mar 15 Thu **Great Decisions, Media & Foreign Policy**
3-5:00 P.M. Joan Pisani Community Center, Saratoga
3-5:00 P.M. Wesley Manor, Campbell
- Mar 19 Mon **Book Club, On Tryany** by Timothy Snyder 7:00 P.M.
Wesley Manor, 1655 Winchester Blvd., Campbell

❧ Save the Date ❧

- May 3 Thu **The Annual Meeting, The Terraces, Los Gatos**

Contact Information for LWVSWSCV

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Mission Statement: The League of Women Voters is a diversified, nonpartisan political group of women and men, influencing public policy through education and advocacy and encouraging informed and active participation in government.