




League of Women Voters
of Sonoma County



Volume 26, issue 10
Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org



League Forum: Palm Drive Hospital

Proponents and opponents will respond to questions about the fate of the Palm Drive Hospital which is the subject of a special election on March 5.

February 8, 6:30-8:00 pm
Sebastopol Community Church



Save the Date!

Lunch with the League
Guest speaker: Deva Marie Proto
Sonoma County's Registrar of Voters
"Democracy Suite," a new voting system at last!

Wednesday, March 27th 12 - 2 p.m.
\$30 at Charlie's Restaurant, Windsor

LWVSC Calendar

Coming Events

See our [website](#) for other important election dates and information and links to videos of forums, or go to [Voters Edge](#).

Ranked-Choice Voting Lecture: Wednesday, February 6, 7-8:00 pm.
Aqus Café, 189 H Street, Petaluma, CA 94952.

Palm Drive Hospital Forum: Friday, February 8, 6:30-8:00 pm.
Sebastopol Community Church, 1000 Gravenstein Hwy North, Sebastopol, CA 95472.

Lunch with the League: Wednesday, March 27, 12-2 pm.
Charlie's Restaurant, Windsor, 1320 19th Hole Dr. 95492.

Standing Meetings

Board Meeting: 1st Tuesday, 10-noon.

Advocacy Committee Meeting: 2nd Wednesday, 10:30-noon

Outreach Committee Meeting: 2nd Monday, 10:00-noon.

Book Club: 3rd Thursday, 10:30-noon.

Voter Service Committee Meeting: 4th Thursday, 10-noon.

LWVSC meetings are held in the third floor Conference Room at the LWVSC office
555 5th Street, Santa Rosa.

LWVSC Board meetings are open to all LWVSC members, and to the public upon
request.

All other meetings are open to all.

Visit our [website](#) for updated calendar information.



President's Message

Thanks to all 40 of you who gave up a Saturday morning to attend our January Program Planning meeting. We accomplished what we came to do. We concurred with the LWVCA program recommendations of Expanding the Electorate; Election Reform; Money in Politics; and Redistricting under the umbrella of the LWVUS Making Democracy Work program. After sharing what we accomplished this past year, Donna Roper (Voter Service) led a brainstorming session on how to expand and/or improve on our local efforts. In general, members wanted to focus more on voter education and ways to get out the vote. The full list will be discussed at future Voter Service and Outreach committee meetings.

We also concurred with Census 2020 as a statewide Issue for Emphasis. We were fortunate to have Jim Masters, a League member with extensive knowledge and experience with the Census process, give us an overview of the counting method and the challenges and importance of getting a complete count. LWVCA will be supporting state and local government funding for census counts and educating the public on the importance of an accurate count. Locally, we will reach out to our region's Complete Count Committee to offer help with education efforts.

Following an update by Gene Zingarelli (Advocacy) on LWVCA legislative accomplishments over the previous two years, members selected Climate Change and Criminal Justice as Issues for Emphasis for 2019-2021. Gene's committee currently has members monitoring both of these issues and they see opportunities to carry out LWVCA education and advocacy at the local level.

After a comprehensive report from Debbie McKay (Advocacy) on our actions over the past year on affordable housing, homelessness and mental health, she recommended that those issues continue to be monitored going forward. Members will focus local resources on Climate Change and Criminal Justice for the next year.

To accomplish any of this, we need you, our members. Any one thing you can do will help us make a difference.

Susan Novak

Board Briefs from 1/8 Submitted by Nancy Burrington, Secretary

- ✓ Program: Deva Marie Proto, the new Registrar of Voters, will be invited to speak at the spring “Lunch with the League” in March
- ✓ Admin: Anita Lytle is completing the new Government Guide
- ✓ Advocacy: Gene is following up on a request for support of H.R. 7173
- ✓ Membership: Present count is 187.
- ✓ Outreach: Our internship proposal has been accepted by SSU and we are awaiting student responses
- ✓ Voter Service: Pros and cons on the Palm Drive Hospital situation will be held on February 8
- ✓ President’s report: The nominating committee is working to supply a slate of officers for next year. Bay Area League Day is February 9 in San Francisco. Judy Levy, Leona Judson, Susan Novak and Debbie McKay expressed interest in attending.

How Can I Learn More About the League?

This is a question we get frequently. Many League members learn through participation. In fact, we need your participation. Our local League is an entirely volunteer organization. Everything we do depends on someone stepping forward to help.

You are not expected to be an expert. We all learn as we accumulate information and experience. There are both short term projects, such as helping to run a Pros & Cons forum or tabling at a local event, and more long-term commitments such as serving on a committee or on the League Board. And, experienced members are always ready to provide training, answer questions and lend support as you take on new roles. Don't hesitate to step up to volunteer—we want and need your ideas.

In the next few months our Nominating Committee will be talking to members about the various roles in our organization. If you want to know more, or would like to volunteer, please contact any of the following members:

Nominating Committee Chair: Carrie Anabo
VP of Advocacy: Gene Zingarelli

Voter Service Co-Chairs: Donna Roper and Leona Judson
Outreach Chair: Judith Levy

Housing & Mental Health Update

- From Debbie McKay

Housing and Mental Health Were Topics at January's Planning Session

At the January Program Planning meeting League members voted to continue to monitor housing, which includes homelessness, and health, which includes mental health at our local level. Monitoring is one of the roles of our Advocacy Committee, which will continue to follow these issues. Please contact Advocacy Committee Chair, Gene Zingarelli, and let him know if you would like to join the Advocacy Committee or help monitor these issues.

Periodically we will provide updates on these issues in The Voter. This month we take a look at mental health.

Homelessness and mental health are related issues. In the 2017 Sonoma County point-in-time homeless count, of those who were counted, **57% of the adults self-reported that they have a serious mental illness, including 21% who experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and 30% who experience chronic depression. Thirty-one percent self-reported having substance abuse disorders.** Until these issues are adequately addressed it is highly unlikely that we will solve the homelessness crisis in our communities.

Because the League has been following these issues, you may recall that at the Mar. 2018 Lunch with the League event our featured speaker was Barbie Robinson, the Director of So. Co. Public Health Services. In her presentation Ms. Robinson stated that with the Public Health budget deficit, her department cannot serve all those who need mental health services. She further stated that, when those without a home have untreated mental health issues, they are more likely to wind up incarcerated. In fact, the jail has been so impacted by mental health issues, that they are building an in-house mental health unit. The result of this trend is that the jail has

become the largest in-patient mental health provider for those with low or no income in Sonoma County.

Ms. Robinson went on to say that there is a great need for affordable housing with wrap-around supportive services including mental health services. If mental health issues are not addressed, often a person placed in housing will once again lose the housing due to untreated issues. The State of CA is implementing a new program called "No Place Like Home" to provide counties with funds to develop affordable housing with mental health service. The County of Sonoma is set to receive \$5 million in funding for this program. Ms. Robinson's entire presentation is available as a YouTube video on the League's website.

There are several hopeful new developments--

At the 1/24/19 Los Cien luncheon on Health Care Access for Latinos several local agencies had good news to report. Todd Salinas, CEO of St. Josephs Health, said his organization gives 10% of their income (after expenses) to improve the community and they are donating \$1 million towards developing a psych health facility in Sonoma County to serve those without health coverage and who are low income. They hope to convert an existing long-term care facility into an inpatient MH facility. In addition, St. Joseph's is donating \$300,000 per year for a crisis stabilization unit with 13 beds. They also have a team of health professional who visit all the shelters to provide health assessments and referrals. However, only about 800 of those without a home are in shelters. St. Josephs is looking at how they may reach the rest of the homeless population.

Gabrilla Bernal, CEO of Santa Rosa Community Health, stated that their organization provides mental health services to those with low income with same day appointments. They just received funding to do care coordination for those leaving incarceration, including MH services. The program has not yet started, but should have a positive impact. Lupe Navarro of Latino Service

providers reported that their organization just received a 5 year grant to work with the Latino community on MH services. Kaiser has also

funded a program to work with the Latino community to reduce the stigma of seeking help.

The Women's March



**Members who attended Program
Planning Meeting on January 26th
We thank all who took time to come!**

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Sukey Robb-Wilder | Debbie McKay |
| Sue Willson | Nancy Richards |
| Rosalie Gillmore | Rick Luttmann |
| Paula Hawkes | Susan Roudier |
| Marlene Kaulum | Carrie Anabo |
| Louise Leavitt | Mary Virdeh |
| Lee Lipinski | Nancy Burrington |
| Katie Sanchez | Jennifer Iscol |
| Julee Fullenwider | Julia Pollack |
| Judith Levy | Gayle Peterson |
| Juanita Roland | Susan Novak |
| Jim Masters | Susan Drake |
| Iris Levitis | Donna Roper |
| Debbie McKay | Marilyn Nelson |
| Cynthia Denenholz | Willard Richards |
| Chlele Gummer | Beth Green |
| Anita Lytle | Phyllis Brewer |

LWV Sonoma OFFICERS FOR 2019-2020

From President Susan Novak

As President it is my obligation to inform the membership that time has come to recommend officers and directors for the 2019-2020 year.

Please send your suggestions and recommendations to the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Carrie Anabo as listed in your membership roster. Other members of the Nominating Committee are Katie Sanchez, Sally Patterson, Gayle Peterson and Mary Virdeh.

Feel free to contact any or all of them about Board positions.

LWV NATIONAL Supports HR1

HR1 is the first democracy reform agenda bill introduced in the House of Representatives in the 116th Congress. The League of Women Voters has long advocated for expanding voter registration. Our organization was founded nearly 100 years ago to help the millions of newly eligible female voters participate in our democracy. We were a leader in crafting the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 and have been at the table working with lawmakers to craft this new bill.

The National League of Women Voters CEO, Virginia Kase, released the following statement in support of this important legislation:

“The League of Women Voters is proud to see HR1 includes:

- restoring the Voting Rights Act
- improvements to Automatic Voter Registration
- public financing of elections through small donor matching funds
- overturning Citizens United
- ending partisan gerrymandering
- Same Day Registration and more.

Call your elected official to ask them to support HR 1

U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2nd District: Congressman Jared Huffman Local Office: (707) 981-8967
Washington, DC: (202) 225-5161

5th District: Congressman Mike Thompson Local Office: (707) 542-7182
Washington, DC (202) 225-3311

Membership News

We welcomed 6 members to the New Member Orientation on January 22. Thank you Irene Clark, Shannon Gonzales, Charles Haseltine, Marlene Kaulum, Jennifer Iscol and Karen Whilhemson for coming to learn about the history and structure of the League of Women Voters and our current national, state and local advocacies and activities.

Welcome New Members!

Nelson and Jane Weller
Charles and Jan Haseltine

We're so glad you're here!

League Forum: March Special Election on The Future of Palm Drive's Hospital

We are at a crossroads for the small Sebastopol hospital the community has treasured for nearly 20 years. On March 5, voters in the Palm Drive Health Care District will vote yes or no on a proposal to sell the hospital to a private, for-profit company, ending its years as a public, non-profit hospital that serves all who come through its doors.

To help voters prepare, the League is holding a forum on February 8, 6:30-8 pm at the Sebastopol Community Church, 1000 Gravenstein Hwy North. Proponents and opponents will respond to questions. Since its purchase in 1999 from Columbia/HCA, the hospital has provided excellent, compassionate and friendly care to patients, in a way that only a small hospital can. Those whom it has served praise the hospital to the skies.

But the healthcare landscape is savage and the financial picture is grim. The District, which owns the hospital, is now \$28 million in debt and in its second bankruptcy. In spite of good intentions, hard work, and multiple managers, the hospital has consistently lost money. A majority on the District Board of Directors is urging the sale, arguing it is the best chance for the community to keep its hospital open – albeit a different kind of hospital. A minority of District Board members say the majority is so focused on keeping any kind of hospital open that it is willing to take far less than the property is worth.

This forum is of particular interest to voters in the communities of: Sebastopol, Graton, Bodega Bay, Carmet, Salmon Creek, Occidental, and Freestone. These voters will be deciding the question in the special election of March 5, 2019.

ON THE WEB: Celebrating Black History Month, The State Budget & The Census

The League has begun to put the biographies of interesting women on our Facebook page. One such is Raye Montague, a trailblazing African American engineer and ship designer:

<https://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=21070>

Our new governor has made some proposals for the Californian budget and there are some things for the middle class. <https://www.kqed.org/news/11721611/middle-class-californians-heres-whats-in-gov-newsoms-budget-for-you?fbclid=IwAR26ANgkFiZuKL1AJkmjsSVRacg9GU7v9VvKLCDdTqrrZHHNJ2OckbHeRPOY>

There will not only be a Presidential Election in 2020 but the census. An accurate count helps states maintain evenly populated districts. But the proposed citizenship question may scare some away from being counted. https://www.npr.org/2018/11/01/663061835/citizenship-question-may-be-major-barrier-to-2020-censusparticipation?utm_campaign=storyshare&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR2rdiQw653hC56cSNHR2e7cyIf-DexzZFsZbTTRCaHwl-zJXeX3CyyYe3k



Volunteer Corner

Many thanks to Linda Allen, who volunteered to enter membership data into Mailchimp to keep us better connected.

Membership Committee - we're looking for members interested in finding ways to promote the League and keep our members engaged. We would like to plan and organize interesting activities such as, get togethers, outings, and speakers for our membership.

If interested, please contact Gayle Peterson at 707-539-3794 or gpeterson3794@sbcglobal.net

Book Club Reads

February 21--Moderated by Jan Randall

The Food Explorer, The True Adventures of the Globe-trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats

Daniel Stone, 416 pages, 2018.

The true adventures of David Fairchild, a late-nineteenth-century food explorer who traveled the globe and introduced diverse crops like avocados, mangoes, seedless grapes—and thousands more—to the American plate. Fairchild's finds weren't just limited to food: From Egypt he sent back a variety of cotton that revolutionized an industry, and via Japan he introduced the cherry blossom tree, forever brightening America's capital. Along the way, he was arrested, caught diseases, and bargained with island tribes. But his culinary ambition came during a formative era, and through him, America transformed into the most diverse food system ever created.

March 21--Moderated by Mary Fricker

An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back

Elisabeth Rosenthal, 337 pages, 2017.

An American Sickness is a shocking investigation into our dysfunctional healthcare system - and offers practical solutions to its myriad problems.

The 2019 Reading list is online at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/files/bookgroup2019.pdf>

Please join us.

LWVSC

Board of Directors

Susan Novak, **President**

Anita Lytle, **VP Administration**

Gene Zingarelli, **VP Advocacy**

Nancy Burrington, **Secretary**

Juanita Roland, **Treasurer**

Gayle McKinney Peterson,

Membership Chair

Judy Levy, **Outreach**

Donna Roper & Leona Judson, **Voter**

Service

Mary Virdeh, **Program**

Iris Levitis, **Editor**

Susan Rouder, **Member at Large**

Because of privacy concerns, we do not include email addresses for the Board in the Voter. Readers can find email addresses in the directory or they can send email to Board Members from the contact us page of the LWVSC website. www.lwvsonoma.org

Connect with the League



LWVSC www.lwvsonoma.org
www.facebook.com/lwvsonomacounty

LWV of Bay Area <http://www.lwvbayarea.org>

LWV of California www.ca.lwv.org

LWV of the United States www.lwv.org
<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters>

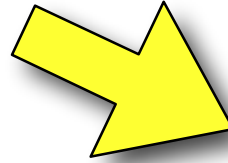
Voter's Edge <http://votersedge.org/en/ca>

Addresses of Members Only websites are in the front of the LWVSC directory.

Remember to sign up for email alerts and newsletters when you visit these websites.



*Become a Member of the
LWV of Sonoma County*



or

**Make a
DONATION**

Fill out the form below and mail it to us at:

League of Women Voters Sonoma County
555 5th Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Memberships Levels

<i>Susan B. Anthony</i> Individual Membership	\$65
<i>Student/ Limited Income</i> Individual Membership	\$40
<i>Amelia Bloomer</i> Household Membership	\$100
<i>Elizabeth Cady Stanton</i> Membership	\$100
<i>Carrie Chapman Catt</i> Membership	\$200 or more

**Membership dues and donations
are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law**

Please circle any topics you are interested in knowing more about.

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Voter Registration | Candidate Forums | Transportation |
| Housing/Homelessness | Climate Change | Immigration |
| Newsletter | Website Management | Local Governance |

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We do not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.

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