



League of Women Voters of Palos Verdes Peninsula

# Voter

lwvpalosverdes.org

(310) 784-7787

June/July 2018

## CALENDAR 2018

**County Board will not meet until September**

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>July 11</b>	<b>PVP Board Meeting</b>	<b>Noon</b>	<b>Nell Mirels' House</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>July 21</b>	<b>County League Day (Popovers)</b>	<b>9:30-2:00</b>	<b>Pasadena Women's City Club</b> <b>160 N. Oakland Ave</b> <b>Pasadena, CA 91101</b>

## SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday, September 29 – Pros and Cons Training 9:30-noon**

**IF you would like to be a speaker, plan to attend and let Nancy Mahr Know.**

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Presidents' Message .....2**

**June Convention Speaker.....3**

**Meet Linda Herman.....4**

**Social Policy Snapshots.....5**

**Directory Updates.....5**

**AI and Privacy Issues.....6**

**Membership Form.....7**

**Board Member Contact Information.....8**

**Popovers Flyer.....9**

## Presidents' Message

We hope you are all enjoying your summer activities. Apparently we have been enjoying them a little too much, hence we need to apologize for the lateness of this issue of voter.

We had a successful local convention but were disappointed that we had so few members attend. Our speaker was a highlight. See Pat Colby's write up of her talk.

Karen will be representing us this year at the national convention which is about to take place in Chicago. We had relatively few other Leagues in favor of a national study on Artificial Intelligence, however, Karen will still introduce the subject at the convention. This is a technology that promises to have a big impact on the national economics and the issue is not going away. It is something we believe we should study.

Since this is an election year, we are sure to be busy before the election. Do not hesitate to refer people who want information on candidates to look at Voter's Edge. Also, Nancy is always looking for helpers for our Pros and Cons speakers. This is where we speak to a variety of groups about the initiatives on the ballot and explain the more difficult ones. If you wish to be a speaker, the training will be held on September 29. We will be sending out more information later this summer concerning this program.

The county is also putting together committees on various issues that are of current interest. If you have an interest in any of these areas, you can join the committee and get the latest news. Most interactions will be by emails. There are groups for the homeless housing issue, another for guns, and yet another for education. In addition there is a tri-league group that is active with mental health issues. You can email me or Karen about any subject you feel should be a center of interest. We are currently trying to plan a group program about the environment and may have a program on water.

We hope to hear from you about anything that may be of interest to you. We wish you a wonderful 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Celebrate our independence and our democracy!

*Karen Buresh and Vi Jungerich*

Co-Presidents



## June Convention Speaker: Maja Mataric

### “Socially Assistive Robots: Human Augmentation Versus Automation”

By Pat Colby

The LVW/PVP's June 9, 2018 convention at Hesse Park featured guest speaker Maja (pronounced Maya) Mataric, a professor at USC and the Chief Science Officer of her Pasadena start-up, Embodied, whose entire career has focused on socially assistive robotics (SAR) rather than robots that automate physical tasks.

Dr. Mataric explained that socially assistive robots (SAR) develop methods for non-physical human-robot interaction to help people in reaching their goals, typically in health, education and training contexts. Work in SAR requires a combination of computing and grounding the real world through perception and action under uncertainty. But it also requires perceiving and understanding people in order to naturally aid them in achieving difficult goals. Recent advances in machine learning in general, as well as perception, natural language dialog, and the integration of user experience in robot design have served to advance SAR quickly. However, the most important driver for SAR is the growing need for technologies tailored for the expanding populations requiring service, including the elderly and individuals with special needs across the age spectrum. For example, as in videos Dr. Mataric showed, a robot could help a child on the autism spectrum to connect to more neuro-typical children and could help to motivate a stroke victim to follow her exercise routine for rehabilitation.

Dr. Mataric discussed the many challenges for truly sophisticated human-machine interaction, but there is also considerable information and research that is already resulting in real-world commercialization. The most interesting research challenges that are still unexplored involve working with multimodal human data to understand, model and respond to people in a way that involves deeper understanding (including motivation/social interface). This means, she says, work with speech, gesture, facial expressions, body language and the robot's social role: a buddy/a friend, subordinate/student or superior/coach/ tutor, as well as designing the robot body: What should its size, shape and gender be? How should it move and express itself? At what proximity should it be to a human? How does it respond to an extrovert or an introvert? Such challenges include bridging SAR with what is known in human psychology and even behavioral economics, in order to better inform robot behavior to service human needs. SAR is a wonderfully complex interdisciplinary challenge.

Dr. Mataric challenges her colleagues and her students to look beyond the obvious areas of robotics that are getting all the hype—autonomous driving, cars that fly and automated machines that flip hamburgers. Rather, she says to look at areas that are going to have major impact on human well-being, specifically health and education. Currently the majority of work in robotics is focused on automation, removal of human work, but much more work is needed in augmentation—enhancing the human ability to work, stay healthy and productive, and thrive.

\*Dr. Maja Mataric is the Chan Soon-Shiong Professor of Computer Science, with appointments in the Neuroscience Program and the Department of Pediatrics at USC. She is also founding director of USC's Robotics and Autonomous Systems Center, Co-director of the USC Robotics Research Lab and Vice Dean for Research at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. Her honors include receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring and the Anita Borg Institute's ABIE Award for Innovation.

## Meet Linda Herman- A Biography

By Janet MacLeod

Linda Herman is one of our outstanding chapter members who has worked diligently for the League of Women Voters. Starting in 1975, when Linda joined the local chapter of LWV/PVP, she served as local league president from 1979-81 and upon retirement from full time employment, as co-president from 2007-2010. The intervening years were filled with commitments to serving on the League's State Board, as secretary, management training vice -president, and as state president followed by employment outside of League.

After raising her family, Linda returned to the work force, and her immediate thought was to seek a position within the non-profit world. Thanks to the training received in the League, she obtained a position with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital newly established west coast office, eventually reaching the position of Associate Director of Gift Planning. She credits her training with the LWV in launching her in her career.

Today Linda remains involved in [votersedge.org/ca](http://votersedge.org/ca), the website of LWV, where she seeks to insure the neutrality of all entries of candidates within her jurisdiction. Presently, she is active in the petition campaign seeking a change to Proposition 13, which requires corporations to pay their fair share and bring additional funds to our schools and public services. LWV, along with other consumer groups, hope to place this initiative on the ballot in 2020. Legislative issues are also a continuing interest of hers.

One of the initiatives Linda was proud to be part of was working on behalf of Proposition 11 in 2008, which placed the power to draw electoral boundaries for State Assembly and State Senate districts in a Citizens Redistricting Commission, an effort which ultimately proved successful on the ballot.

As far as the future of the LWV goes, Linda says that the State League is suggesting that local chapters seek alternative ways to engage the younger generation by being open to new ideas such as socials and events that will attract younger members.

In the LWV, Linda is exemplary in her intellect, passion and steadiness in pursuing the standards and goals for good government and the public.



## Social Policy Snapshots

By Vi lungerich

The LA Times printed a short summary of an interview with UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston about US policies that reward the wealthy and punish the poor. Although most of us are already knowledgeable about this, it's a good short summary of some of our current policies and their effect on our people.

Mr. Alston had just finished a tour of the US and was struck by the dramatic increase in the policies that are currently pushing our inequality. Although we continue to present as a nation with equality of opportunity, this is in fact becoming a myth. The two most important changes for the current administration has been the tax cuts which make the wealthy wealthier and the cuts in government budgets which impact the needy.

There has been a systematic effort by conservatives to stigmatize and delegitimize welfare. The poor are portrayed as lazy and unworthy, while the wealthy are deserving of any government support such as the mortgage tax benefits etc. There has been a continued increase in imposing more demands for those needing welfare for work, volunteer or educational requirements for government help. These demands will drive some millions of people off the relevant benefit roles. The government says with such low unemployment, everyone should be able to get a job. They discount, however, the fact the many working poor still need Medicaid and food stamps to survive.

Although the US is among the richest nations, it is the country with the highest inequality levels among this group. It also has the highest child mortality rate, the highest youth poverty rate and the lowest level of voter registration. "In essence, it scores extremely poorly on almost all of the comparative measures when compared with other developed states".

Alston believes that the US is storing immense problems for itself that cannot be sustained politically, although these policies may continue these trends for some time before we see a way to correct this path.

## Directory Updates

Anne Beck's telephone number: (480) 826-7479.

Vi lungerich's new cell number: (310) 259-0093

Cristina Vera's corrected email: imcv2@yahoo.com

## AI and Privacy Issues

By Cristina Vera

The Right to Privacy has been considered an integral part of the American culture since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The major issue with artificial intelligence (AI), the collection and usage of big data, and privacy concerns in the US today stems from the fact that the privacy laws are primarily based in the Notice and Consent framework from the 1970's and the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986, laws are completely outdated and ineffectual. In 2012 the Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights addressed commercial, not public, use of personal data, but consumer empowerments are impossible to exercise. In 2013 the Open Data Initiative allowed data that is considered open to the public to be put online for easy access, which made an individual's access to data more readily available, but also increased the potential for misuse and abuse of private data.

The Federal Government and corporate America believe that the benefits derived from collection and usage of big data outweigh the costs of losing privacy, however, as privacy concerns become more readily apparent to the public, the public is becoming more involved in protecting individual freedoms. Big Data technologies can create bias, are unevenly regulated, result in profiling that circumvents civil rights laws and override civil liberties, and encode discrimination in automated decisions. Big data companies perform algorithms with data and megadata that circumvent civil rights laws and cause data to be re-identified, so that anonymity is completely lost. Data usage can produce predatory business practices that can shift priorities to advantaged communities and further marginalize disadvantaged communities. When data is combined with algorithms, "user events" can cause harm and must be the focus of regulation. Because Big Data is creating a centralization of resources, protection of individuals must demand the protection of individual rights.

To date, there is no Federal Data Breach legislation, only state data breach notification standards that are unevenly enforceable. Therefore, if data is breached, there is no action victims of data breaches can take to prosecute those who breached the individual's data, and companies are merely required to notify users that their data has been breached. Laws must focus on civil and criminal penalties that impose stricter liability standards for companies and individuals whose data cause harm. Most importantly, the shift in responsibility is moving from the individual user consent at the time of data collection to the data collectors/providers and commercial user accountability. Because most individual users are not even aware of how the data they consent to being used is being used, accountability in data usage is a higher priority.

The ultimate goal in the Age of Information Technology is to find the balance between the benefits of collecting and using Big Data to provide market benefits and services with the harms to privacy and individual freedoms. Privacy expertise, expanded implementation of Trusted Data Format (TDF) that protects data privacy, and privacy education and careers are ways to insure benefits to both society and to individuals.

Based on May 2014 Reports to The President, "Big Data and Privacy: A Technological Perspective" and "Big Data: Seizing Opportunities, Preserving Values"





## Join The League!

### WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS?

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to all men and women who are registered voters.

Our members make a visible difference by serving as community leaders using their experience to create positive, lasting change in our communities.

### HOW DO I JOIN?

Just fill out the membership form below and mail it to:

LWV PVP, PO Box 2933, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA  
90274. Please make checks payable to *LWV PVP* (

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### Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (work/day/cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\$80.00 one member

\$40.00 additional member in the same household.

Dues are tax deductible. LWV PVP is a 501(c)(3) organization.

**LWV PVP Officers and Board Member Contact Information:**

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