

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MONTEREY COUNTY "THE VOTER" NEWSLETTER

"Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy" / April 2022, Volume 94, Number 7



Wednesday, April 13, 2022 "Del Rey Oaks' FORTAG Trail: Wrong Turn or Path to the Future?"

The Fort Ord Regional Trail and Greenway (FORTAG) is a proposed accessible recreational trail network for walkers, joggers and bicyclists that would wind throughout Monterey County. The project has been developed under the auspices of the **Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)**. Early vision for this trail and greenway came from **CSUMB Professors Scott Waltz and Fred Watson**; the idea gained momentum in 2016 when \$20M in funding for FORTAG was **approved by Monterey County voters** through the **Measure X** transportation infrastructure initiative. In 2019 the State of California agreed to provide an additional \$10M for construction of the initial FORTAG segment, which would pass through Del Rey Oaks.

In late 2021 a group of Del Rey Oaks residents, concerned about the trail's impact on their neighborhoods, successfully petitioned to place **Measure B on the local Del Rey Oaks June 7 ballot**. The measure would block trail construction within Del Rey Oaks, and effectively scuttle the FORTAG project.

At this month's meeting we will hear the **"Pros & Cons" of the ballot initiative**. Unfortunately, as of press time no proponent of the measure was available to speak, so a League member will present the **FORTAG Trail Del Rey Oaks Interest Group's** views as expressed on their website (fortagtrail.wordpress.com). **Del Rey Oaks Councilmember Kim Shirley** will speak in opposition, with time for questions & answers from attendees after the presentations. *(continued on page 2)*

How to Attend Our Virtual Meetings

The free **April LWVMryCo General Meeting** and presentation described above will use the **Zoom Web Conferencing** platform and **Zoom Chat** for Q&A.

11:45 am Zoom Check-In / 12 noon Meeting Begins.

All current LWVMryCo members will be sent a link to the Zoom meeting from BobEvans13@me.com on the **Monday before the meeting** (e.g., on **Monday, April 11th** for this month) with instructions on how to join the meeting.

Not a member? Non-members can send a message to LWVMryCo@gmail.com requesting an invitation to receive the link and instructions. **You can also join by phone:** numbers for audio-only will be provided along with meeting numbers and codes.

If you can't get into the meeting using link/instructions?

Call Tama Olver (831) 869-2748.

Join us on Zoom for what is sure to be a lively discussion of what FORTAG could mean for Del Rey Oaks. **The outcome of this debate**

has important implications for residents of communities throughout Monterey County.

Marianne Gawain

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MARCH 2022

Think globally, act locally. That is what members of our League are doing now. Our eyes and hearts are focused on **Ukraine**, where a nation is fighting for self-determination and the right to orient itself towards liberal democracy. As we watch the war in Ukraine it is easy to succumb to a sense of powerlessness. We must remind ourselves that our civic engagement is absolutely foundational for the functioning of our own country's democracy.

The **US Constitution** and **Bill of Rights** outline the structure of our government and the freedoms of our people. Yet a formal reading of those documents cannot fully convey the rich and vital role that citizen participation, civic organizations, and a free press play in the American political system. The civic engagement of citizens such as ourselves—people power—starting with exercise of the vote, truly is the lifeblood of democracy.



Voter Service

In March I had the privilege of observing as our senior **LWVMC Voter Service leaders** met with **Gina Martinez, Monterey County's Registrar of Voters**, and her committed and dynamic team. Working from a basis of mutual respect and shared values, the staff of the **County Elections Department** and our League are seeking opportunities to support each other in the common

goals of registering and informing voters. Read the Voter Service Committee report on page 5—kudos to all participants!

Supporting Democracy

Even those not directly participating in the work of our Voter Service Committee work this election season, can support the democratic process in important ways:

First, we can share with friends and acquaintances what we learn at the League's **monthly meetings**, in **candidate forums**, and through **Voter's Edge**.

Furthermore, we can challenge ourselves to support not just **voter registration** but **voter turnout**. Studies have shown that voters who make a specific plan for when they will fill out their mail-in ballot or go to the polls have a dramatically higher rate of success than those who say they intend to vote but don't have a clear plan for how they will do so.

Additionally, "**voting is contagious**." Simply by talking about the fact that you have voted and asking others about their own plans, you can help increase turnout!

Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy—we can all play a role in this mission here at home, and in doing so, express our solidarity with people around the world who aspire to democratic self-governance.

Marianne Gawain



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Voters's Edge is the League of Women Voters CA "go-to" site for ballot and candidate information (such as contact details, campaign summaries, priorities, qualifications, etc.) from as many candidates as possible. ***Can you help by making a few phone calls to encourage candidate participation?***

Arlene Guest LWVMryCo@gmail.com



LWVMC MEMBER PROFILE: CATHERINE CROCKETT



Catherine Crockett joined our League of Women Voters chapter in 2007, but since she was still working full time, she says she *“wasn’t really as active as I wanted to be.”* Currently, in retirement, however, her active volunteer work pairs with LWVMC and its goals in numerous ways.



worked for that university for three years as a software engineer.

Catherine first moved to our area in 1998, when she accepted a job as a **systems analyst** for **Household Credit Services** in Salinas. In 2003, that company was acquired by **HSBC Finance**, which was acquired by **Capital One Financial Services** in 2012. *“Capital One closed the doors to its Salinas facility in 2013,”*

Catherine says she’s always supported the League’s mission to educate voters and encourage active participation in the election process. *“I was one of the first 18-year-olds allowed to vote in a Presidential election,”* she recalls. *“My parents, who had agonized over the tours of duty in Vietnam my three oldest brothers served consecutively, encouraged me to understand what was at stake in the 1972 Presidential race. That was an enduring lesson for me.”*

she says, *“and transferred its remaining IT staff to Chicago.”* Rather than move again, she decided it was time to retire from her 32-year career in information technology.



After growing up in Wichita Falls, Texas, Catherine moved to Garden Grove, California in 1978 to help the **Women’s National Volleyball Association** prepare for the **1980 Moscow Olympics**, which the US ultimately boycotted to protest Russia’s invasion of Afghanistan. However, while living in Southern California, Catherine earned an

associate degree in Computer Science at Long Beach Community College and worked as a **software engineer for Santa Fe International**, then **Ralph’s Grocery**, and finally **United Airlines**.

“After my mother died in 1993,” she says, *“I returned to Texas to care for my father for five years.”* During that time, she earned her **BA in Business Computer Information Systems from Midwestern State University, Texas**. She also

In retirement, Catherine has volunteered thousands of hours to four nonprofits: **Communities for Sustainable Monterey**, where she’s been a **Board Director** since 2011; **Sustainable Seaside**, where she’s served as **Chair** since 2016; the **Monterey Peace and Justice Center**, where she’s been **Board President** since 2015; and **Veterans for Peace local Chapter 46**, which she joined in 2017 as an **Associate Member** and currently serves as **Board Secretary**. In those organizations, she’s interacted with many of our League members.



Catherine first joined Sustainable Seaside, a chapter of **Communities for Sustainable Monterey County**, in 2009. *“In 2016, when League member Kay Cline ran for Mayor of Seaside and stepped down from her leadership post,”* Catherine reports, *“she passed the baton to me.”* As chair of that organization, Catherine has partnered numerous times with LWVMC to present candidate forums for Seaside’s mayoral and city council races.



Sustainable Seaside's home base is the Peace and Justice Center in Seaside. "It was there, around 2010, that I met League members **Sylvia Shih, Beverly Bean, Darby Worth, Jeanne Turner, Betty Matterson, Barbara Baldock, Phil Butler** and many other activists," Catherine recalls. She started as a "techie volunteer" and shortly afterward began serving as a **Board Director**, ultimately becoming **Board President** in 2015.

Catherine Crockett replied, "LWVMC is a vital community resource and its future depends on engaging more young people. It would be great to see the League partner with the local colleges and universities to recruit service-learning students."

Certainly, we all agree that encouraging young people to become engaged in the governing process is a primary goal for the League of Women Voters.

Nancy Baker Jacobs

When asked what goals she has for LWVMC,

UPDATE ON REDISTRICTING

Our Redistricting Committee met **California State League** officials to share redistricting experiences to improve the next redistricting cycle.



and a required number of public meetings based on population.

★ **Key findings:** Most county- and city-level agencies followed redistricting rules, though some online information was difficult to find, public comment was limited or discounted, and incumbency was given priority over communities of interest.

★ **Key recommendations:** Provide more independent commissions for counties, training for redistricting commissioners, ranked criteria for schools and special districts, staggered deadlines,

★ **Key Outcomes:** State level redistricting was a success despite complaints, because the maps were accepted as a whole—a successful compromise means all are a little unhappy (but not enough to sue)!

Redistricting Committee Meeting Tuesday, April 5, 1:30pm

Review redistricting process post-2020 Census at state, county, city, local levels; make recommendations for next redistricting in 10 years time. **Contact: Sharon Miller for agenda, Tama Olver for Zoom link**

★ VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE IN ACTION ★



Monterey County Sheriff Candidates' Forum

Our entire **Voter Service Committee** has been working with the **ACLU**, the **Monterey County School of Law**, and a community coalition to hold a Zoom forum on **April 23 or 30** (date to be confirmed) ahead of the mailing of **June 7 Vote-By-Mail ballots**. **Contact: Arlene Guest, Dennis Mar, or Sharon Miller**

Volunteers Needed
to sort questions or time speakers for
Sheriff & Assembly Forums!
See above for contacts

Assembly District 30 Candidates' Forum

We joined a coalition of community groups to promote the **March 23rd forum in Paso Robles**. After redistricting, Coastal Monterey moved into the newly formed District 30, which runs from southern Santa Cruz County to Morro Bay (these voters will no longer be part of Mark Stone's old District 29 after the next 2022 election). **Contact: Dennis Mar or Sharon Miller**

Voter Service Committee Meeting Monday, April 4, 5:45pm

Discuss plans for working at polls, voter registration education, candidate forums. **Contact: Sharon Miller or Pamela Stewart**

Meeting with our Monterey County Registrar of Voters

Voter Service Committee members met on Zoom with **Registrar Gina Martinez** (see below) and were impressed with how much she and a small permanent staff of twelve accomplish with such a dispersed population over a large area.

We are now looking for ways to support or take part in initiatives such as: **“Promote the Vote”** (student-led social media contests for high and middle-school), **mock elections**, encouraging students to earn **Office of Education State Seal of Civic Engagement** on diplomas, running **“HS Voter Registration Weeks,”** promoting the voting process during **“Read Across America”** campaigns, and participating in the **“Youth Empowerment Summit”** (May 8-9, sponsored

by the **California Coalition for Youth**), and the **“California University and College Ballot Bowl.”**

Registrar Martinez also encouraged our League’s **support for AB 2576 Voter Registration and Outreach Programs** (<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>) which would allow student participation in voter and voter outreach activities without losing funding for Average Daily Attendance.

The Elections Department is active in the **“Team Up for Democracy”** program, in which our League also participates, to recruit and train volunteers to work the polls and other tasks on election day.

Marianne Gawain, Arlene Guest, Carol Kaplan, Dennis Mar, and Sharon Miller

★ ANOTHER “FIRST” FOR MONTEREY COUNTY: GINA MARTINEZ, REGISTRAR OF VOTERS ★

*23 years after the late **Barbara Shipnuk** became the **First Woman Supervisor of Monterey County** (page 7), we belatedly acknowledge its **First Latina Registrar of Voters**.*



In July 2021 Monterey County announced the appointment of **Gina Martinez** as the new **Registrar of Voters**. Taking over for her predecessor, **Claudio Valenzuela**, Martinez is the first Latina to hold this position in Monterey County.

“I am truly humbled and honored to have the opportunity to serve this community as the registrar of voters,” said Martinez. “This is a wonderful opportunity to work across the county to engage with our diverse community to further ‘firsts’ among our ranks.”

Extract from an article by **Tess Kenny**
tkenny@montereyherald.com, **Monterey Herald**, July 12, 2021

Call for Voter Service Assistance & Volunteers

Teacher & Parent Voter Education: Can you help identify school personnel (librarians, head/classroom teachers, administrators, student government representative, etc.) to bring civics education into our schools?

Contact: **Carol Kaplan** or **Linda Deutsch**



Work at Polls / “Team Up For Democracy”: We need volunteers (training provided), to work a four-hour shift at a polling place in Seaside. Contact: **Dennis Mar** or **Pamela Stewart**

Pick Up/Deliver Drop Boxes to Elections Department, 5 pm Election Day: Training provided, two-person teams, one hour of work. Contact: **Greta Arevalo, Monterey County Elections** (831) 796-1499

Anually, the **League of Women Voters California** asks local chapters to interview state legislators on specific League topics. **The reports are consolidated and used to garner legislative support and plan initiatives for the next year.**

In January and February, League members **Margaret Goodman, Anne Herendeen, Dennis Mar, Sharon Miller, Gail Morton, and Tama Olver** participated in interviewing **Senators Anna Caballero and John Laird**, as well as **Assemblymembers Robert Rivas and Mark Stone**. **LWVMC** took the lead for meetings with Caballero, Laird, and Rivas. Depending on the communities represented by each legislator, we partnered with the Leagues of **Fresno, San Jose/Santa Clara, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Cruz Counties**.

Format: To foster consistency within limited interview times (from 15 minutes to a full hour), the LWVC provided detailed training, clear expectations, tips, tools, and background information for each question.

Thus prepared and with a bit of planning, we were able to collect all the information requested even in the shortest meeting.

REDISTRICTING

All interviewed were impacted by changes and concerned about the outcome, e.g., loss of a constituency they represented for a long time, shifts in demographics that may weaken voices of underrepresented groups, and effects of a late census on the quality of the process.

CLIMATE CHANGE, WATER & EQUITY

On the subject of water, we heard a strong consensus that there is much work to do with



*Senator
Anna Caballero*



*Senator
John Laird*



*Assemblymember
Robert Rivas*



*Assemblymember
Mark Stone*

respect to sustainability and especially equity. Suggested solutions were varied, for example, taxing carbon to generate funds to address our water and other infrastructure problems, improving representation of disadvantaged communities on water boards, an end to illegal marijuana cultivation, and an end to the use of septic tanks in rural California.

CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

On the subject of children's mental health, a lot of frustration was expressed about our currently fragmented systems and the lack of synergy between mental health agencies and the schools. There was also consensus that with the money (billions) allocated for children's mental health, we urgently need concrete plans about how best to spend it.

One limited solution that targets at-risk children with focused services is being piloted. It was suggested that addressing homelessness and hunger are important because insecure, hungry children would have difficulty taking advantage of new services.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

As a final question, each legislator was asked to identify their legislative priorities for 2022, information which can help LWVC know where there might be allies for their work. Answers were consistent with what can be found on the legislators' websites.

Join Us in 2023!

We encourage members to get involved in Legislative interviews. Though short-term, they are valuable to the League's mission and, perhaps as important, allow members to get to know each other!

Tama Olver



WE REMEMBER BARBARA SHIPNUCK: FIRST WOMAN SUPERVISOR, MONTEREY COUNTY

Former local League member **Barbara Shipnuck** died January 6th, aged 79, in Long Beach, CA. She holds a place in Monterey County history as the **first woman to serve on the Board of Supervisors**, winning election in 1978, being reelected three more times, and serving 16 years in total. She was also a League leader serving as **President of LWV Salinas Valley** from 1974-76. The League was integral to her political career.

Our newest **50-year Lifetime member Kalah Bumba** remembers when the Shipnuck campaign began: *"In the late 70's the Salinas League was following **Natividad Medical Center** which was experiencing difficulties. We started a small committee which included Barbara and me. We attended the Board of Supervisors meetings. We were very disappointed in the Board's lack of vision for NMC.*

We knew the hospital lacked good leadership. Change had to be initiated at the Board level. We wondered who on the Board could be replaced to help the situation. We brainstormed while the Board went into closed session and tossed out the names of several men in the community. Then Barbara said, "How about you Kalah?" Shocked, I put on my biggest frown and said, "No Way!!!" After a long silence, I quietly smiled, held her hand, and said, "How about you Barbara?" She smiled and said "Sure." The supervisors re-entered the room, and we smiled at each other for the rest of the morning. Driving home we started talking about a grass roots campaign, and the rest is history."



Barbara bragged about going through five pairs of shoes knocking on doors during her 10-month campaign. A local paper called her win the *"political upset of the year."* 1978 was more than a decade before **Time** magazine's *"Year of the Woman."* California had more than 290 county supervisors, but when Shipnuck took her seat, there were only two other

women supervisors in the state: **Diane Feinstein** (San Francisco) and **Barbara Boxer** (Marin). The change we see today is part of Barbara Shipnuck's legacy.

Dennis Mar

ATTEND LWVUS 55TH NATIONAL CONVENTION JUNE 23 - 26, 2022



Denver, Colorado & Online Join delegates across the nation for the biennial national gathering. A fully hybrid experience for in-person & virtual attendees. Act as a voting delegate, network with members from around the country, participate in training & educational sessions, hear League leaders and outside speakers. Contact: **Marianne Gawain, Pam Stewart,**

Howard Fosler, Sharon Miller, and others who have experienced and recommend Convention!
www.lwv.org/league-management/council-convention/first-call-lwvus-55th-national-convention.



**Join the League of
Women Voters of
Monterey County**



FREE STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Students may join LWVMRYCO
via website without paying membership fees.

New Members Wanted!

*Any person age 16 or older
may be a member of the League.*

Use the form below or contact:

LWVMC Membership Director

Mail to LWVMryCo PO Box 1995

Monterey, CA 93942

*Checks payable to LWVMC or
online with credit card or PayPal*

Membership Levels

- ☐ \$250+ **Carrie Chapman Catt**
- ☐ \$200 **Sojourner Truth**
- ☐ \$150 **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**
- ☐ \$100 **Susan B. Anthony**
- ☐ \$ 95 **Household (2 persons, 1 address)**
- ☐ \$ 65 **Single membership**
- ☐ (free) **Student (16-24 years, enrolled in
a diploma or degree program)**

Name(s)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

e-mail

~Florence Curlee Scholarships~

are available to pay **household or single
membership fees**. Contact:

Janet Brennan, LWVMryCo@gmail.com

*Membership dues & contributions to LWVMryCo
are not tax deductible, nor are donations to the
Florence Curlee Scholarship Fund.*

**However, donations to the League
of Women Voters of California
Education Fund (LWVCEF)
are tax deductible.**

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

~Welcome New Members!~

Debby Majors-Degnan / Frank Degnan

751 Dry Creek Road, Monterey CA 93940

(831) 277-8157 / debby@degnandivers.com

degnan@degnandivers.com

Joanne Sarrica

74 Hacienda Carmel, Carmel, CA 93923

(831) 594-9095 / joasarrica@comcast.net

~Change of Address / eMail~

Susan Hillier

551 Gibson Avenue

Pacific Grove, CA 93950-4330

Betsy Wilson

enahaswilson@gmail.com

~Thank You to Our Donors~

LWVC Monterey County

in Memory of Janice O'Brien

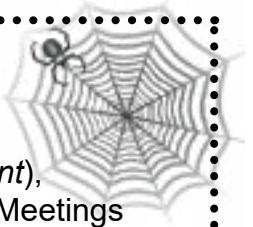
Fran Gaver \$100

Send Updates to Janet Brennan

LWVMryCo@gmail.com

LWVMC WEBSITE COORDINATOR WANTED

Update **website calendar**, post
official letters (from the President),
post **videos** of monthly General Meetings
(from our Videographer), and **monthly
newsletter** (from our Newsletter Editor). **Two
hours work a month. On-the-job guidance
provided. Bob Evans, LWVMryCo@gmail.com**



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Send your news items, thoughts,
ideas, news, and reviews to:

LWVMryCo@gmail.com

Jump from **LWVMryCo.org** to our page
with one click on the Facebook logo.

★What's WORTH SEEING at LWVMRYCO.ORG★

General Meeting videos: <https://my.lwv.org/california/monterey-county/luncheon-videos>



"Managing Our Waste- From Trash to Treasure" (March 2022)

Monterey County update on recycling single use plastics, household composting, reusing materials, reducing landfill, generating energy.

"What's Ahead for Salinas Valley

Groundwater Supplies?" (February 2022)

"Affordable Housing: Present & Future"

(January 2022)



League of Women Voters of Monterey County

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Vice President

Sharon Miller

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Published monthly
except June/July/Aug/Dec

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Carol Kaplan

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
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LWVMryCo Calendar 2022



★ **APRIL** ★

★ **MAY** ★

NOTE: All meetings are held online via Zoom unless otherwise specified

LWVMC Board Meeting
Monday, 4th April, 11:30am
Board Members to be sent link/instructions
contact: Marianne Gawain

Voter Services Committee Meeting
Monday, 4th April, 5:45pm
contact: Sharon Miller or Pam Stewart

Redistricting Committee Meeting
Tuesday, 5th April, 1:30pm
contact: Sharon Miller

LWVMC General Meeting
Wednesday, 9th April, 12 noon
"Del Rey Oaks' FORTAG Trail:
Wrong Turn or Path to the Future?"
June Ballot Initiative Pros & Cons
(see front page) contact: Marianne Gawain

Natural Resources Committee
Thursday, 21st April, 12 noon
contact: George Riley

LWVMC Board Meeting
Monday, 2nd May, 11:30am
Board Members will be
sent link/instructions
contact: Marianne Gawain

LWVMC 95th Annual Meeting
Wednesday, 11th May, 12 noon

Natural Resources Committee Meeting
Thursday, 19th May 12 noon
contact: George Riley



JUNE / JULY / AUGUST
Summer Break: No General
Board, Committee Meetings, or Voter



JUNE
55th LWVUS Convention of the US
June 23-26 Denver Colorado/Online 2022
(see page 7 for details and how to attend)