



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 24, Issue 4

Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org

Getting Ready for



The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County will be sponsoring several forums this election season. For those in West County, the Graton Community Club, 8996 Graton Road, Graton, will be the site of a sheriff's forum on April 9th. A second sheriff's forum will be held at the Sonoma Veterans Hall, 126 First Street West, Sonoma on April 23rd. Both events will be from 6:30 – 7:30. Those running for the office are Mark Essick, John Mutz, and Ernesto Olivaras.

For those interested in learning more about ballot initiatives, please attend our Pros and Cons session at the Rincon Valley Regional Library, 6959 Montecito Blvd, Santa Rosa on May 16th from 7:00 – 8:00 pm. This forum will include both state and local ballot measures. More information about ballot measures can also be found on Voters' Edge <http://votersedge.org/en/ca>.

The *Easy Voter Guide* can be found at <http://www.easyvoterguide.org/>.

Watch our online calendar for other possible events,
<http://www.lwvsonoma.org/calendar.html>

We need volunteers for these upcoming events – moderators, timers, question takers and greeters. We will train you! Please let us know at elections@lwvsonoma.org.

President's Message



From
Rebecca Jones
LWVSC President

California's public schools, once the envy of the nation, are severely underfunded. California has slid to 41st in the nation in per pupil spending, putting a severe strain on students, families, and teachers of our K-12 schools and community colleges. A loophole in California's property tax system based on Proposition 13 has been the primary driver of this disinvestment by failing to reassess commercial and industrial real property on a regular basis.

In 2018 the CA League of Women Voters (LWVC) is taking action to fix what is wrong with Proposition 13. When Prop 13 first passed in 1978, property taxes were paid about 50% from residential & Ag property and 50% from commercial property. Under Prop 13 real property is only reassessed when sold or ownership changes. Because commercial property changes ownership much less frequently than residential, the above ratio has shifted dramatically. Now commercial pays only about 28% of property taxes. Ag and residential pay about 72%. The LWVC is working with a number of other

organizations to qualify a ballot measure for the November 2018 general election to fix Prop 13 to get the ratio of who pays property taxes back in balance.

This initiative known as The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018 would restore over \$11 billion a year for services that all Californians rely on like schools and community colleges. \$4.5 billion will support K-12 education and community colleges. The remainder will be shared by counties, cities and special districts to support community services, including health clinics, trauma care and emergency rooms, parks, libraries and public safety.

It would require commercial property to be reassessed for property tax computation every three years. **There would be no scheduled reassessment of residential or agricultural property. It exempts owner operated small businesses from reassessment until they are sold**, it levels the playing field so small businesses can compete more fairly with big corporations, and it reduces their taxes by eliminating the property tax on fixtures and equipment.

This approach would put California on par with how the vast majority of the country assesses these properties. California's commercial property taxes will still be among the lowest in the country because of Proposition 13's limits on property tax rates, which this initiative does not

change. In addition, the federal tax law recently enacted by Congress provides huge tax cuts to the same large corporations that benefit from the property tax loophole. Unlike California individual taxpayers, all commercial state and local taxes will still be deductible from their federal taxes.

A good analysis of the initiative was done by the Legislative Analyst Office and can be found at:

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/BallotAnalysis/Initiative/2017-055>

The petition campaign, Schools and Communities First, website is here:

<https://schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org/>

How can we help?

Signature gathering to get the initiative on the ballot is currently underway. We have several of our members actively collecting signatures. Statewide, there will need to be nearly one million signatures gathered by the end of April, so time is short! You can help by signing a petition or gathering signatures from friends, neighbors, and family. Please contact Anita Lytle at vpadmin@lwysonoma.org or 707-546-5943 in order to get a petition or just sign one.

Thanks for your help! Getting back to a world class education system is critical to California's future.

LWVSC Calendar

Coming Events

Forums for County Sheriff Candidates

Monday, April 9, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Graton Community Center
8996 Graton Road, Graton

Monday, April 23, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Sonoma Veterans Hall
126 First Street West, Sonoma

Monday, April 30, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Santa Rosa Veterans Hall
1351 Maple Ave, Santa Rosa

Together at the Table- Women’s Rights

Wednesday, April 18, 6-7:30 pm,

Rincon Valley Regional Library
6959 Montecito Blvd, Santa Rosa

Ballot Measures Pros and Cons

Wednesday , May 16, 7-8:00 pm.

Rincon Valley Regional Library
6959 Montecito Blvd, Santa Rosa

Standing Meetings

Board Meeting: 1st Tuesday, 10-noon.

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

Outreach Committee Meeting: 2nd Thursday, 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.

Members Corner

Another Opportunity



Several “tabling” opportunities are coming up in April, May and June. Not sure what's that all about? When we “table” we set up a booth at an event and register people to vote. We also talk about the League and do voter education. It is a lot of fun and a great way to reach out to our community.

Want to learn more? Please attend one of our upcoming “tabling” orientations with Gayle McKinney-Peterson. Sign up for either Saturday, April 7th at 10 am or Tuesday, April 10th at 10 am in the LWV 3rd floor conference room at 555 Fifth St., Santa Rosa. Please RSVP to Gayle by April 5th. Each session will last about 1 hour.

Feel ready to go without an orientation? Then please sign up for a tabling shift on April 21st at the Earth Day Festival at Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa. Shifts are available 1 – 2:30 pm and 2:30 – 4:00 pm. Call or email Gayle to sign up for a shift.

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0945A4AE2AA3F49-april

Questions? Contact Debbie McKay: membership@lwwsonoma.org or 707-546-5943

What is Pre-Registration?

Did you know that 16 & 17 year olds can pre-register to vote online at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>

They must have the following info ready:

- Birth date & place of birth
- Last 4 digits of your Social Security Number
- CA Driver's License or CA ID Number
- Email address
- Phone number
- Mailing address

Please share this information with your friends, daughters, sons, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. If you know how to text, please text it to them and ask them to share with their friends.

The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County had a booth staffed with League volunteers at the Save Our Lives Rally on March 24th and we shared this information with hundreds of young people. Our next tabling event will be the Earth Day Festival on April 21st noon Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa.

We want to keep the information flowing, and you can help. We teach our children and grandchildren to develop many good habits. Voting is one of those good habits we need to promote.

Marching and assembling makes politicians notice you, voting makes them listen!



At March for our Lives

A new generation is stepping up to the responsibilities of citizenship, and the League is there to offer our support in Sonoma County and around the country.



Young people led the day and many used their phones to take a photo of our information about how to register to vote online. Our table at the student led protest against gun violence was very successful. Government Guides were popular and 25 membership brochures were passed out. A dozen voter registration forms were taken with 2 completed onsite. Many thanks to our engaging volunteers, Chris Kosloff, Carolyne Sybelle, Beth Green, Rick Luttmann and Debbie McKay.



An Eventful Month

Spring Lake Village/LWVSC Forum with Supervisor Susan Gorin



Supervisor Gorin discussed the county’s response to the October fires and other challenges facing our county in the aftermath of the October fires.

Lunch With The League and Barbie Robinson, Director of Sonoma County Health Services



We heard an enlightening presentation on the challenges facing Sonoma County, particularly in the area of mental health.

To watch a video the presentation, go to https://youtu.be/5rx8KqV_HMM.

Welcome New Members!

Carol Auxer
Roberta Clark
Barbara Fry
Jim Masters

We’re so glad you’re here!

"The vote is the emblem of your equality, women of America, the guarantee of your liberty."
— Carrie Chapman Catt

Board Briefs

From March 6, 2018

Board meeting commenced at 10:05 with all members present and 4 guests.

- ✓ Review of finances found LWVSC in sound financial condition. A committee meeting was set for April 18 to project the budget for next year
- ✓ Victoria Fleming announced that she intended to run for Santa Rosa City Council. Since an active candidacy requires leaving the Board, Nancy Burrington will fill in as interim Secretary during the period of the campaign.
- ✓ Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs were asked to review their job descriptions. A meeting was set for March 27th for those interested in reviewing job descriptions and duties.
- ✓ Debbie McKay updated the activities of the Community Outreach Committee. They are increasing their tabling activities at public events. Next month the committee will present a plan for placing ads about League events and a request for approval of expected expenses.
- ✓ The *Make it Fair* campaign has transitioned into the *Schools and Community First Initiative*. The State office is requesting that we all work to collect signatures to get this initiative on the ballot. Willard Richards arrived with petitions for those who would like to collect signatures.
- ✓ Donna Roper reported that the Voter Service Committee will be arranging candidate forums as soon as all candidates have filed. A pros and cons for issues on the June ballot will be organized for presentation in May.
- ✓ Mary Virdeh reported that arrangements for *Lunch with the League* have been finalized for March 24 at the Santa Rosa Country Club. Barbie Robinson will be the speaker.
- ✓ On behalf of the Member Action group Susan Rounder suggested that we tap the talent from the advocacy committee for future programs. Other suggestions for programs were made. She reminded about the Susan Gorin talk at Spring Lake Village on March 19.
- ✓ From Advocacy, Gene Zingarelli and Judy Levy will be presenting information about registering and voting at 4 citizenship classes.
- ✓ Gayle Peterson reported that the new member meetings went very well. She will evaluate the need for materials to add a line to the budget for the coming year.
- ✓ Chlele Gummer has investigated costs for placing ads in newspapers for publicizing League events. Decisions have yet to be made on the placement of the ads.
- ✓ Nancy Burrington reminded about the library presentations on Women's Rights on March 12 and April 18.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15.

Submitted by Nancy Burrington

Voting Information for Those Displaced by the Fires

The following site provides extensive information on how to register and vote for those displaced by the October 2017 wild fire. Please share with anyone you know who may need this. .

<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/CRA/News/Voters-Displaced-By-The-October-2017-Wildfires/> 7

Advocacy Notes

1) The committee approved a statement with ideas on housing and homelessness to be taken to the league board for approval. Additionally, it advises that the the league board OK that the statement be presented to the Santa Rosa City Council and the So. Co. Board of Supervisors by the league jointly with the groups, Santa Rosa Tomorrow and Homelessness Action. The statement was prepared by representatives from these groups and our league members.

2) The committee also discussed the proposed state proposition Schools and Communities First, which has been approved and sponsored by the LWVC . It modifies the property tax law from Proposition 13. Our league will be participating in signature gathering. Several committee members took petitions with them to gather signatures which must be in byin by April 18 to the LWVSC office.

3) Santa Rosa is in the difficult process of selecting a map for the Council's division into seven districts. You may view the currently selected possible maps at <https://srcity.org/2819/Draft-Maps>.

4) Topics for the next Advocacy Committee meeting will include, among others, housing/homelessness and SB10 on the California bail system.

Next meeting on April 12 at 10:30.

Gene Zingarelli, Advocacy Committee Chair
action@lwvsonoma.org



DEMOCRACY is NOT a Spectator Sport
Get Involved with YOUR Government

From the Office Scrapbook

Time Capsule for League of Women Voters of Sonoma County?

In a recent article in the Press Democrat, Gaye LeBaron wrote about the opening of the 50-year-old time capsule containing Santa Rosa's secrets. It is such a good read:

[Gaye LeBaron: To be timeless, a time capsule needs certain essentials.](#)

What would you put in a time capsule for our League? There are many choices: a program from a favorite meeting, the VOTER, a brochure such as a Government Guide, a Membership Guide, pictures from the Holiday party, newspaper clippings about current politics or... ?

Although we don't have an actual 50-year-old time capsule to open, in our office on 5th Street, we do have records from the time we were first organized as League of Women Voters of Santa Rosa (LWVSR) in 1951 and became the LWV of Sonoma County (LWVSC) in 1978 up to our current League. There are copies of 50-year-old documents such as the 1968 LWVCalifornia State Program (which cost 6 Cents for a single copy plus 4 Cents to mail) and also copies of The Santa Rosa VOTER (which also cost 4 cents to mail.) There are also filed many pictures, newspaper clippings and other items.

So again I ask, what would you choose to put our time capsule to be opened in 2068 - 50 years from now?

-Anita Lytle, VP. Administration

THE 2020 CENSUS AT RISK



Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy

League of Women Voters

1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036

[March 26] it was announced that the Commerce Department has made the decision to include a question pertaining to citizenship in the 2020 Census.

Make no mistake: this decision isn't about improving demographic data on citizenship.

It's designed to frighten immigrants—citizens and noncitizens alike—so they won't participate in the Census. It's a blatant political maneuver meant to disenfranchise these groups and deny them equal representation.

Including this question on the Census undermines the rights of eligible voters and threatens a process vital to our democracy.

For more than 200 years, the Census has collected information about the geographic distribution of our population so we can provide representation and invest in our communities equitably.

Without a complete count of our nation's people, businesses will not have the tools to make sound investment decisions that keep our communities thriving.

The United States Constitution mandates an accurate count of all people living in the United States – not all citizens. Non-citizens are an integral part of our economy and need to be included in the 2020 Census to paint a complete picture of our great country.

The clock is ticking toward 2020.

Stand with us as we call on Congress to take action to correct this issue before it's too late.

Chris Carson

Chris Carson
President, League of Women Voters

[LEARN MORE AT LWV.ORG](http://LWV.ORG)



On the World Wide Web

People who live in the unincorporated parts of Sonoma County are only represented by their County Supervisor in local government. Guerneville is working on a way to bring representation closer to the people. http://www.sonomawest.com/sonoma_west_times_and_news/news/guerneville-area-pondering-self-governance/article_1952cb18-2c86-11e8-aa88-176e6b3f408b.html

The California League of Women Voters has put out its positions on the state measures that will be on your June ballot. <https://lwvc.org/news/our-positions-june-5-2018-election-ballot-measures>

Do you live in Santa Rosa? You can have a voice in the establishment of districts for your city council elections. <https://srcity.org/2593/District-Based-Elections>

To receive Facebook updates as they happen, be sure to “Like” our LWVSC Facebook page!
We'd be glad to be one of your friends.

Book Club Reads

April 19: Moderated by Karen Rust

Shrill. Notes from a Loud Woman, Lindy West, 264 pages, 2016.

Shrill is an uproarious memoir, a feminist rallying cry in a world that thinks gender politics are tedious and that women, especially feminists, can't be funny. From a painfully shy childhood in which West tried, unsuccessfully, to hide her big body and even bigger opinions; to her public war with stand-up comedians over rape jokes; to her struggle to convince herself, and then the world, that fat people have value; to her accidental activism and never-ending battle royale with Internet trolls, Lindy narrates her life with a blend of humor and pathos that manages to make a trip to the abortion clinic funny and wring tears out of a story about diarrhea.

May 17: Moderated by Lee Lipinski

Ina Coolbrith, The Bittersweet Song of California's First Poet Laureate, Aleta George, 334 pages, 2015.

This book is a biography about a pioneer poet, Oakland's first public librarian and the most popular literary ambassador in the early American West. The book follows the struggles and triumphs of Coolbrith from her birth in 1841 as a niece of Joseph Smith to her death on the eve of the Great Depression as California's most beloved poet. Among her close friends were Bret Harte, Edwin Markham and Mark Twain.

The 2018 Reading list is online at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/files/bookgroup2018.pdf>

Please join us.

LWVSC

Board of Directors

Rebecca Jones, **President**

Anita Lytle, **VP Administration**

Gene Zingarelli, **VP Advocacy**

Nancy Burrington, **Secretary**

Terry Wall, **Treasurer**

Gayle McKinney Peterson,

Membership Chair

Chlele Gummer, **Media Outreach**

Donna Roper, **Voter Service**

Mary Virdeh, **Program**

Juanita Roland, **Editor**

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>

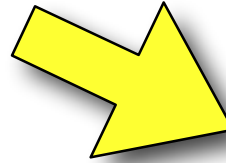
Addresses of Members Only websites are in the front of the LWVSC directory.

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

Tell us what you think!
 Send in your comments,
 questions, and
 suggestions.
 Email, snail-mail, or call!

We want to hear from you!

*Become a Member of the
LWV of Sonoma County*



**Make a
DONATION**

or

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.

555 5th Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 546-5943

The Voter is published nine times a year by the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County.