



# Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

May 2019 Volume 53, Number 9

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## Calendar

Tuesday, May 21, 2019  
12:30-2 p.m.  
Recycling Tour  
CSC Resource Recovery Facility  
605 Dimeo Lane, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Free and open to the public  
RSVP: [league@lwvsc.org](mailto:league@lwvsc.org) or (831)325-4140

Saturday, June 8, 2019  
10:00 a.m.–Noon  
LWVSCC Annual Meeting  
Seascope Golf Club, Seascope room  
610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos, California 95003  
See article below for RSVP details

Tuesday, June 11, 2019  
10 a.m.-noon  
LWVSCC Board Meeting  
Santa Cruz County Bank  
75 River Street  
Santa Cruz, CA

## AWASH WITH PLASTIC

### Sorting Out Recycling Myths Versus Reality

*A tour of the Santa Cruz City  
Resource Recovery Facility*

*Tuesday, May 21, 2019  
12:30–2 p.m.*

For decades we have blithely tossed plastic containers into the recycling bin, thinking they would be carted off and melted down into new plastic products. The grim reality is that plastic is one of the least recyclable materials, and most of those plastic containers have simply been baled up and shipped overseas. Strict new restrictions from China (and other nations that have followed suit) on what plastics they will accept for recycling have brought home the impracticalities of plastic recycling.

Learn what this means to us locally at our May tour of the Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility and see what happens to our waste first-hand. Find out the fate of what goes into your recycling bin and learn how you can become a better recycler and consumer.

Reserve your spot for the tour on Tuesday, May 21 at 12:30 pm at the City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility, 605 Dimeo Lane. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early to allow for parking. The tour is free and open to League members and the public, but space is limited and reservations are required; to sign up, email [league@lwvsc.org](mailto:league@lwvsc.org) or call (831)325-4140. Note: later this week we will be sending out an email with detailed instructions for the tour to those who have signed up.

## 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County

**Saturday, June 8, 2019**

**10:00 a.m.–Noon**

*With Featured Speaker Cabrillo President Matthew Wetstein*

Seascope Golf Club, Seascope Room      610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos, California 95003

*Prepaid reservations required by Tuesday, May 28. [RSVP at lwvsc.org](http://www.lwvsc.org) or mail a check to LWVSCC, PO Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010. Cost: \$22 per member or \$40 for two household members or member and guest.*

The LWVSCC 2019 annual meeting will feature Cabrillo College's new president, Matthew Wetstein, giving an update on what is new and exciting at our local community college. Following the talk, members will vote for next year's board, the 2019-2020 budget, and proposed programs. *Continued on page 3*

## Membership Report

We are proud to say that our League currently has two Honorary Life Members: Marge Leavitt and Barbara Oldden. They have been members of the League of Women Voters for over 50 years. We are lucky to be blessed with such loyal members; what a legacy!

Coming up on the start of our new fiscal year in July, it is annual membership renewal time. The \$65.00 membership fee will renew your membership from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. A household membership is \$100.00 for two people living in same household. We offer student memberships as well for a discounted rate of \$10. You can now renew your membership online at [lwvscc.org/join](http://lwvscc.org/join) (or save a stamp and bring your renewal check to our annual meeting).

In 2020 the League of Women Voters will celebrate its first centennial. This should be an exciting and informative year for all members. Please join and volunteer whenever you can, we welcome your participation!

We happily announce four new members to the LWVSCC: Melanie Schumacher of Soquel, Krista Hein of Capitola, Darby Kremers of Boulder Creek, and Lori Zink of Santa Cruz. We extend a warm welcome and hope to see you all at our [annual meeting brunch](#) on June 8.

—Lydia Nogales Parker, Membership Chair

League of Women Voters  
of Santa Cruz County  
PO Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010  
(831) 325-4140  
Editor: Pam Newbury  
President: Barbara Lewis  
Membership: Lydia Nogales Parker  
[league@lwvscc.org](mailto:league@lwvscc.org) [lwvscc.org](http://lwvscc.org)

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## President's Message



My profound appreciation to our members for the high level of participation and support during the past year, especially all those who have volunteered to serve on the board of directors and in off-board positions! We also couldn't do what we do without the help of many of you who help with voter service and other events.

With your continuing support for the important work of the League of Women Voters, we have sponsored many excellent programs and provided information to voters.

Our April program at Capitola City Hall on Mid-County Water Plans took place thanks to the efforts of Stephanie Harlan, Karen Smith, and Dorothy Fry, and featured excellent presentations by Melanie Mow Schumacher, Darcy Pruitt, and Heidi Luckenbach, representing Soquel Creek Water District, the Regional Water Management Foundation, and the City of Santa Cruz respectively. The program was videotaped by Pam Newbury and can be viewed on our web site, [lwvscc.org/videos](http://lwvscc.org/videos).

I encourage you to join us at our June 8 annual meeting at Seascape Golf Club, which will feature Matthew Wetstein, president of Cabrillo College, speaking on recent accomplishments and plans for the future, as we focus on education in our community. The annual meeting and brunch is a highlight of the year, a time to socialize and also vote on the program, leadership, and budget. We encourage members to invite a guest to attend with them; this year we are offering a special price for members who bring a guest (see page 1 for details. [RSVP online at lwvscc.org](http://lwvscc.org) ).

After the June meeting, we move on to the 2019-20 year, which will be of historic importance as we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters in 2020. Look forward to special events to honor our first centennial. I hope you will continue to support the important work of the local, state, and national Leagues by [renewing your membership](#).

—Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC

# Voter Service Report

The California primary for 2020 will be earlier than usual next year. It will be on March 3 instead of in June. In the past California's primary was much later than many states and CA state legislators felt that California would have more of an influence with an earlier date. The deadline for voter registration will be February 17; vote by mail ballots will be sent on February 3. The League will be doing voter registration throughout the fall and continuing until the February 17 deadline. There will also be pros and cons presentations of the state ballot measures in January and February.

Sue Becker and I attended an excellent exhibit and curator talk called "Vote! Your Vote is Your Voice" on April 14 at the Pajaro Arts Gallery in Watsonville. It will be there until May 26 and we highly recommend it. The exhibit features photography from the 1960's Civil Rights Movement by Bob Fitch. There are also artifacts from Watsonville voting rights history and Santa Cruz County elections. Local artists contributed contemporary art that expresses the meaning of voting rights. The visual and history exhibit seeks to inspire, inform and develop greater interest in the nonpartisan democratic process. The Pajaro Valley Arts Gallery is located at 37 Sudden Street in Watsonville; they are open Wednesday through Sunday from 11 to 4pm; admission is free.

—Dottie Fry, Voter Service Co-chair

## Annual Meeting

*Continued from page 1*

Cabrillo President Matt Wetstein, who took over the presidency of Cabrillo College when the former president, Laurel Jones, retired in February 2018, will discuss highlights from his first year of service, recent accomplishments and innovations at the college, and plans for the future, including a strategic plan for the college and a future bond initiative. Wetstein, a native of the Midwest, grew up in East St. Louis, Illinois, and graduated from University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. He later earned his Ph.D. in political science from Northern Illinois University. Wetstein came from San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, where he

spent 21 years as an instructor and administrator. Wetstein currently lives in the La Selva Beach area.

The meeting, which is open to League members and the public, will be held on Saturday, June 8 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Seascope Golf Club in the Seascope Room, 610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos (see below for directions). The cost is \$22 per person, or \$40 for two household members or one member and a guest. Prepaid reservations required by Tuesday, May 28. It's easy to RSVP online at our website, [lwvscc.org/calendar](http://lwvscc.org/calendar), or send a check to LWVSCC, P.O. Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010. For more information email [league@lwvscc.org](mailto:league@lwvscc.org) or call 831-325-4140.

Information on board nominations, the proposed budget, and programs can be found in the [annual meeting kit](#) available to download from our website, [lwvscc.org](http://lwvscc.org). We recommend printing the kit to bring to the meeting. To request a copy by mail, contact us at 831-325-4140.

**Directions to the annual meeting** at Seascope Golf Club, 610 Clubhouse Drive (enter the parking lot from Locke Drive):

- From Highway 1 in Aptos, take the **Rio Del Mar Boulevard** exit. From Southbound 1, turn right, or from Northbound 1, turn left, onto Rio Del Mar Boulevard.
- Immediately get in the left-hand lane, and just past the freeway, veer left where the road splits.
- From the right-hand lane at the stop sign, **go straight onto Clubhouse Drive**.
- Continue on Clubhouse Drive for half a mile, then, just before the sign on the right that says Seascope Golf Club, **turn right onto Locke Drive**.
- The parking lot will be immediately on your left.

Note: Locke Drive is a short, U-shaped street with two intersections on Clubhouse Drive. The first entrance is one block before Seascope, so if you turn too soon and don't see the parking lot immediately on your left, follow Locke around and Seascope will soon be on your right, just before Locke Drive ends back at Clubhouse Drive. Once you are parked, enter the clubhouse through the main door and look for our check-in table in front of the Seascope Room to the right.



# Managing a Finite Water Supply For a Sustainable Future

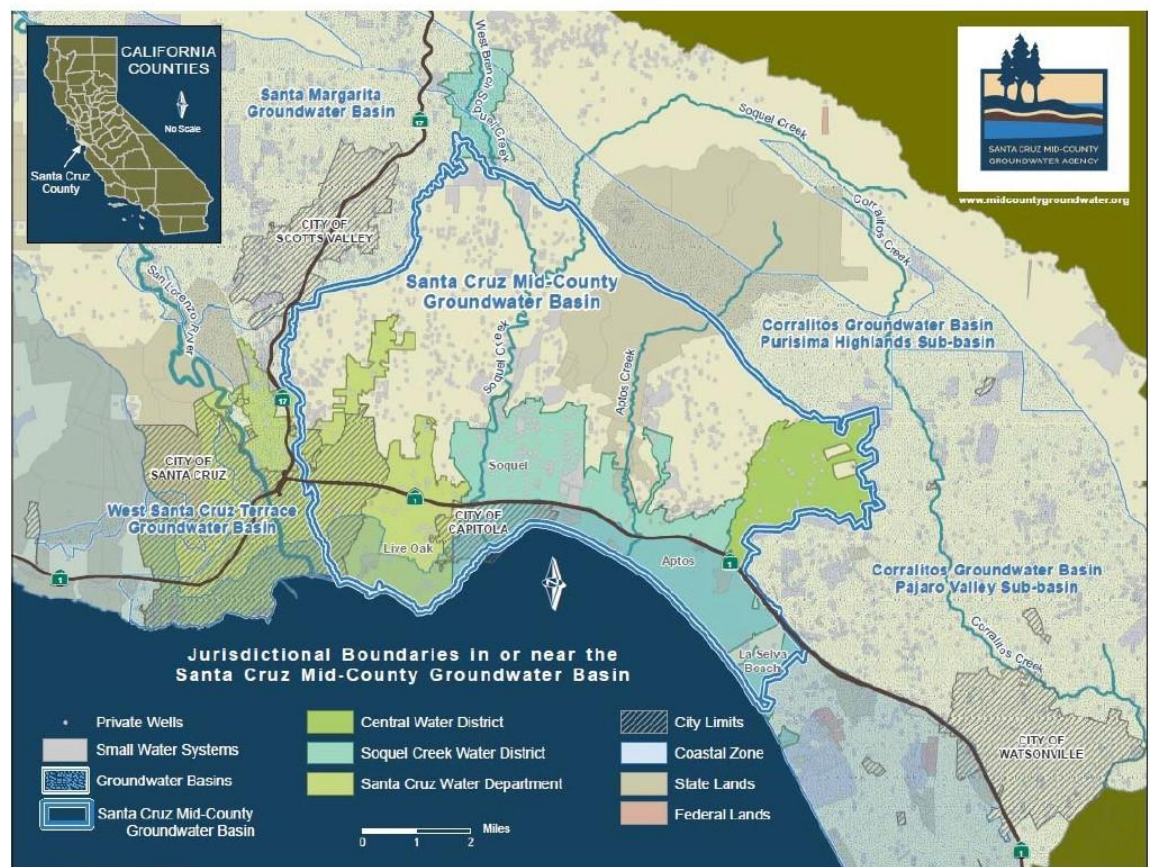
Water management was the topic at LWVSCC's April meeting. Darcy Pruitt, senior planner for the Regional Water Management Foundation, began the meeting with some basics

*The problem is that once you get salt water into your freshwater supply, you can't use the water supply without significant investment in treatment options, so it's important that we control sea water intrusion and protect our water supply.*

about groundwater. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) took effect in 2015, making California one of the last of the western arid states to regulate groundwater. SGMA requires formation of a local agency to manage groundwater and to create a groundwater sustainability plan with the goal of reaching sustainability within 20 years. The Mid-County Groundwater Basin (MCGB) includes private wells and water systems in the mid-county basin area, part of the city of Santa Cruz water system, all of the Soquel Creek Water District, and the Central Water District (serving unincorporated areas of Aptos). Representatives from each agency and three

representatives of private wells comprise the agency's board.

California's central coast gets 85% of its water supply from groundwater obtained from wells drilled into the aquifer; a high percentage compared to other areas of the state. This dependence gives great importance to management of our groundwater resources. SGMA requires consideration of six factors in managing groundwater for sustainability: seawater intrusion, groundwater level declines, land subsidence, interconnected surface water depletion, long-term groundwater storage, and water quality degradation. Of these, seawater intrusion and surface-water depletion comprise the two most important challenges for the MCGB. We already have seawater intrusion at both ends of the basin. "The problem," said Pruitt, "is that once you get salt water into your freshwater supply you can't use the water supply without significant investment in treatment options, so it's important that we control sea water



Map of Mid-County Groundwater Basin Boundaries

intrusion and protect our water supply.” The unknown effects related to climate change are a complication to be factored into planning.

A helicopter-supported survey supplied information about where saltwater and freshwater interface. With that essential information, we can get an idea of where we have the highest risk of future seawater intrusion. The survey showed that the seawater is right at our freshwater interface all along the coast. Collecting and evaluating this and other scientific data is vital to informed planning for the future. The last year-and-a-half of scientific surveys, planning, and community outreach will culminate in the development of a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP).

Pruitt emphasized that, while conservation has allowed us to use less in spite of increasing population, “one of the things to think about is, we've done such a good job with conservation we probably can't conserve our way out of protecting our groundwater... water supply reliability and climate change are real things and they're very complicated; we can't afford to get it wrong.”

Heidi Luckenbach has had an opportunity to work on a lot of interesting projects during her 20 years as a water engineer for City of Santa Cruz, including water supply planning projects for local

water agencies. The City of Santa Cruz water system supplies a population of about 90,000 people in a twenty-square-mile area, including areas outside the city limits. Contrary to Soquel Creek Water District, the city's water supply is 90 to 100% surface water, depending on the time of year. The majority (47%) comes from the San

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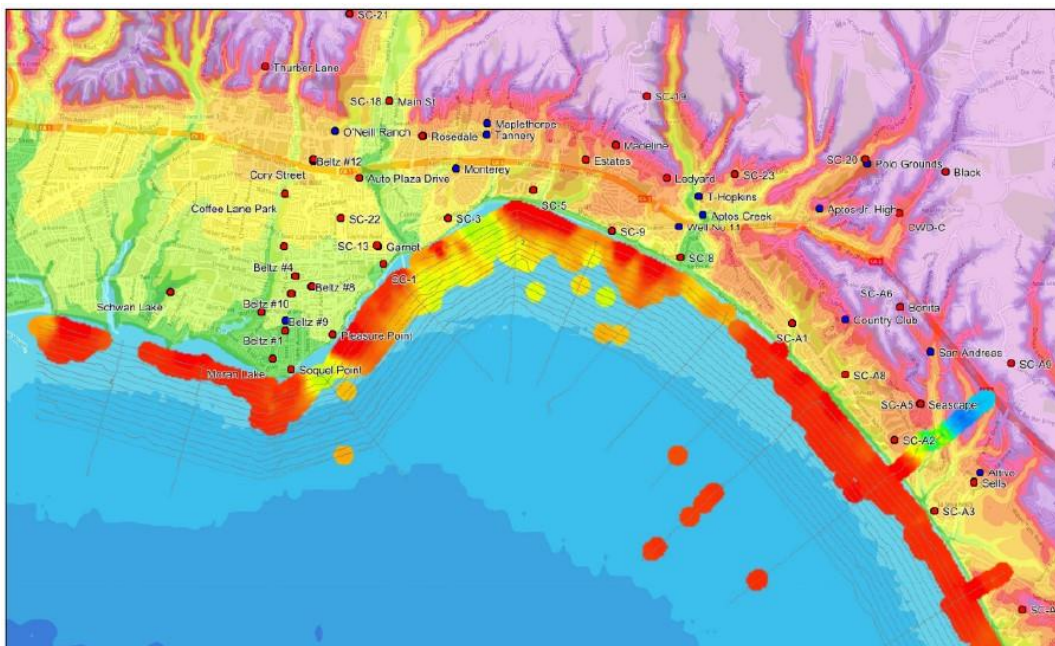
*We've done such a good job with conservation we probably can't conserve our way out of protecting our groundwater. Water supply reliability and climate change are real things and they're very complicated; we can't afford to get it wrong.*

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Lorenzo River; the rest comes from wells (4%), north coast streams (32%), and Loch Lomond reservoir (17%).

From a water supply perspective, the city's problem is aging infrastructure dating back to the 1800s that requires a lot of maintenance and care. Water conservation has reduced demand on a per capita basis. While conservations efforts are vital, lower water demand has resulted in less revenue to feed back into infrastructure projects. Other factors that complicate water supply operations are

requirements to leave enough water in streams to allow fish to thrive and the difficult-to-predict effects of climate change. The strategy is to put buffers into the data and build flexibility into the system in order to be able to adapt to a range of possibilities. A future drought similar to ones in the 70s and 80s could result in a 1.2 billion gallon per year deficit of water, about half the current demand; a deficit that could not be made up by additional water conservation alone.





To get through another drought, the city would need other strategies, such as water transfers with neighboring agencies, including Soquel Creek Water District and the San Lorenzo Valley, as well as aquifer storage and recovery and water recycling as a long-term strategy. Currently the city has a pilot project to deliver a certain amount of water to Soquel Creek Water District through an intertie on 41st Avenue. If things go well, the project would be expanded.

As Soquel Creek Water District (SqCWD) project manager Melanie Mow Schumacher explained, the MCGB is one of 21 California groundwater basins that are critically overdrafted because of seawater intrusion, but SqCWD is high-priority because groundwater is the sole source of supply. SqCWD has been working on a multi-faceted approach; the community water plan is the roadmap to a long-term sustainable water supply.



*Heidi Luckenbach, Darcy Pruitt, and Melanie Mow Schumacher representing the City of Santa Cruz, the Regional Water Management Foundation, and Soquel Creek Water District respectively.*

SqCWD's 13-month process to develop the plan included surveys and community meetings. The water plan isn't just focused on securing a new supply to address the groundwater basin overdraft, it emphasizes conservation as a cornerstone along with proactive groundwater management to protect from seawater intrusion, with the goal of embracing and protecting our environment and planning for the future of our children and our children's children. The district is proud that

customers average 50 gallons per person per day, which is less than half the statewide average of 120 gallons.

SqCWD's bread-and-butter is groundwater management, with fifteen wells, numerous tanks, and miles and miles of pipe. They adaptively manage water to meet the needs of customers and also replenish the groundwater basin.

The plan, said Schumacher, includes a diversified water supply options portfolio, including purified recycled water, river-water transfers, stormwater capture, and "one toe in the desalination world" through a potential private project in Moss Landing.

Currently SqCWD has a 1500 acre-feet-per-year shortfall. Recycled water could supply up to 1500 acre-feet per year, which would fulfill the district's needs. River-water transfers could account for 300 acre-feet per year. Stormwater capture, if pursued, could only supply 10 to 100 acre-feet per year. A combination of options will continue to be the district's vision.

The river-water transfer pilot project mentioned by Luckenbach supplies part of the district with water at a reduced introductory rate; they are currently evaluating the quality of water, but will ultimately need to look at the cost and quantity of water. The city will also evaluate how much water will be available to other local water agencies, but current modeling indicates that there is not enough water to reliably meet the needs of both water districts.

With other potential sources looking unlikely to fill the shortfall in water needs, Schumacher focused on the Pure Water Soquel Project. She pointed to an Orange County Water District groundwater replenishment system that purifies over two-hundred-eighty billion gallons of water that is put back into the ground. She also mentioned Disneyland as a model water reuse system. Disney recycles 100% of the water; it is pumped from wells, used at the park, then treated, purified and pumped into their seawater intrusion barrier groundwater wells.

The City of Santa Cruz collects 8 million gallons of wastewater water a day and treats it to secondary (non-potable) water standards at their Neary Lagoon facility, then discharges it a mile out into the Monterey Bay National Marine

Sanctuary. The Pure Water Soquel Project would capture about 2 million gallons of that water for further treatment at the Santa Cruz wastewater treatment plant. Some (about 18% of the two million gallons) of the water would be used by the

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*There is only a finite amount of water, and we need to manage it and reuse it and take care of our water system.*

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plant to reduce their need for potable water; some would be used for irrigation at nearby parks and to fill construction water trucks for dust control.

SqCWD is planning a mid-county water purification facility that would purify the remaining 4 million gallons of water with microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and UV light. From there, the purified water would be piped to injection wells or recharge areas that hydrologists have identified as critical areas to create a seawater intrusion barrier. The barrier would prevent seawater from moving further inland and allow optimization and maximization of existing groundwater to help meet and maintain sustainability goals.

The National Water Research Institute had a panel of national experts evaluate the project. They concluded that the project is plausible, feasible, and protective of public health and the environment. An economic study by Dr. Brent Haddad of the University of California, Santa Cruz, projected over \$900 million in residential, business, and environmental benefits to the community. Without the project, he calculated that we would have less water to sell, a threefold increase in water rates, and a reduction in water allowances to 30 gallons per person per day.

Costs for the project are estimated to be about \$90 million (factoring in inflation). SqCWD has applied for grants to help finance the project and is looking at low-interest loans, hoping to reduce the cost of the project by half. In December, 2018, the environmental review of project was certified and approved. Schumacher said they are currently going through design and permitting; if all goes

well, they hope to construct the plant by 2022, and achieve replenishment of groundwater by 2040. Time is of the essence, as inflation will only make the cost rise, and hydrologists predict seawater intrusion may occur sooner than the 2040 deadline. "There is only a finite amount of water," said Schumacher, "and we need to manage it and reuse it and take care of our water system."

--Pam Newbury, VOTER Editor

A [video of this event](#) can be viewed online on our website at [lwvsc.org/videos](http://lwvsc.org/videos) along with links to the accompanying slide presentations by [Pruitt \(RWMF\)](#); [Luckenbach \(Santa Cruz\)](#); and [Schumacher \(SqCWD\)](#).

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

\_\_\_\_ \$65.00 Individual annual membership

\_\_\_\_ \$100.00 Two members in a household

\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Student membership

\_\_\_\_ Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWVC Education Fund.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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