



# Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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## Calendar

Tuesday, August 13, 2019  
 10 a.m.-noon  
 LWVSCC Board Meeting  
 Santa Cruz County Bank  
 75 River Street, Santa Cruz, CA

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

Saturday, September 21, 2019  
 10 a.m.-noon  
 Meet Judge Rebecca Connolly  
 Location TBA

### Membership Renewal Made Easy

Memberships in the LWVSCC are for our fiscal year, which begins July 1 and ends the following June 30. To keep your membership current without a break, renew by September 30. There are two easy ways to renew: send in your membership renewal form with a check, or [renew online and pay via PayPal](http://lwwvsc.org) at [lwwvsc.org](http://lwwvsc.org).

[Renewal forms](#) can be downloaded and printed from our website or contact the League to request a form be mailed to you (email [membership@lwwvsc.org](mailto:membership@lwwvsc.org); phone 831-325-4140; or mail to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County, P.O. Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-17450).

Dues are \$65 for a single member; \$100 for two members in the same household; \$135.00 for three members same household; and \$10.00 for a student membership. For those in financial hardship, scholarships are available.

## President's Message

Welcome back to all those League members who have already renewed memberships for this historic year, 2019-2020, when we will be celebrating the 100-year anniversary of the League of Women Voters. In February, 1920, the National American Women Suffrage Association founded the League at their final convention in Chicago, Illinois, six months prior to ratification of the 19th amendment to the US constitution. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to renew your membership in the League as soon as possible (see sidebar for details on how to renew).



As we launch into the next 100 years of the League, we now have the inspiration provided from our California state convention in Pasadena, where LWVSCC delegates, Dorothy Fry, Pam Newbury, and myself, heard from diverse speakers and learned how the leadership of state and local Leagues is responding to calls for change. (Read more about what happened at the convention in the report on page 2.) The convention was exciting and unlike any I had been to before, with almost a quarter of the delegates being members of color, and the speakers and new board of directors reflecting this diversity. The issues discussed and adopted for emphasis are those crucial to the futures of our children and grandchildren: housing and homelessness, redistricting, climate change, education, and criminal justice reform. As we move forward to the next century of our history, I was convinced the League of Women Voters will help shape our own future and that of generations to come.

Again, thank you for your continued support with membership renewals, donations, and, when possible, attendance at our programs.

—Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC

## Save the Date to Meet the Judge

On Saturday, September 21, 10 a.m. to noon, the League will hear from Santa Cruz County Superior Court Judge Rebecca Connolly. We'll sit down to have coffee with Judge Connolly and become more informed about this elected official and the work she does on a daily basis. Refreshments will be served; location to be announced.

## Voter Service Report

The California primary election will be on March 3, 2020. This election marks the initiation of new voting options throughout the county, including traditional polling precinct sites on Election Day, mail-in ballots, and eight new satellite offices (locations to be determined) that will be open for voting from Saturday, February 29, through Tuesday, March 3. In addition, the Santa Cruz County Elections Dept. and the Watsonville City Clerk's office will be open for voters to cast or deliver their ballots during regular office hours for 29 days before the election and the weekend prior to Election Day. There will also be same day registration on Election Day with a provisional ballot. Voting Centers that will replace polling precinct sites will not go into effect until 2022.

Starting with the March 2020 primary, the Santa Cruz County Elections Department will use an updated system from Dominion Voting Systems (who has been providing voting equipment to the county since 2006), which now operates using Windows 10 and is state certified. The new system offers three ways to vote: in person by paper ballot, in person with a tablet/touch screen with a paper verification, or by mail-in ballot. The new ballots will be completed by filling in bubbles rather than the previous marking of a line for selecting choices.

The League will be doing voter registration in the fall and continuing until the February 17th deadline. We will be participating in National Voter Registration Day on September 24th and will have voter tables set up throughout the county. If you are interested in helping with voter registration, email [elections@lwvsc.org](mailto:elections@lwvsc.org) or call (831) 325-4140.

—Dottie Fry, Voter Service Co-chair

## LWVC Convention Report

*The LWV of California held its 2019 convention in Pasadena at the end of May. LWVSCC President Barbara Lewis; Voter Service Co-Chair Dottie Fry, and VOTER Editor Pam Newbury represented our League at the three-day convention. Barbara Lewis reported her convention experiences to the board; below are excerpts from her report with additions by Pam Newbury.*

Of the 63 Leagues in the state of California, 53 were present; there were 191 voting delegates, 25 non-voting members, 6 guests, and 14 staff, with a total of 216 present.

The opening speaker, Veronica Carrizales, policy and campaign director for California Calls, was indicative of the shift in emphasis for the League of Women Voters, with diversity a theme of this convention. Carrizales, a first-generation Chicana from a farm-worker family, noted that one in four billionaires in the world live in California, and that our state is characterized by incredible wealth and extreme inequality. Spending per pupil is in the bottom ten in the nation, a driver of inequality in the state. Proposition 13 paralyzed government, with the requirement for a two-thirds vote to raise taxes and 150 billion dollars in revenue lost over 40 years; benefits to large corporations' amount to 11 billion dollars per year.

The Friday afternoon plenary session featured a fascinating talk by PaKou Her on Race, Power, and Identity. PaKou, who has 22 years of anti-racism organizing experience, notes that productive conversations about racism will explore, engage, reflect, and apply, but will not blame, shame, avoid, or derail. She pointed out the difference between equality (giving everyone the same thing regardless of need) and equity (giving individuals what they need). She spoke about how the negative view of power comes from

consolidation of power among a homogenous few and centralizing it in what systems and institutions code as “normal”. We should instead embrace difference and shift power to the creative and chaotic “borderlands”.



*Dottie, Pam, and Barbara on the Westin Hotel balcony with the Pasadena City Hall in the background.*

Later Friday afternoon, Pam and I attended a workshop called “Listening Across our Differences and Building Bridges of Respect in a Polarized America” led by Cheryl Graeve of the National Institute for Civil Discourse, which for me was a highlight of the convention. Having a relationship established with someone on a personal basis, Cheryl noted, helps before getting into political differences.

Following dinner in the ballroom and a talk by Chris Hoene, executive director of the California Budget & Policy Center since 2012, an impressive speaker with 20 years of leadership in state and local policy research and analysis on fiscal policy issues, Pam and I attended a caucus on the Schools & Communities First Campaign. There was a full house for the question and answer session hosted by Helen Hutchison on behalf of LWVC Board on ways local Leagues can be involved.

Early on Saturday, Pam attended the caucus on homelessness, a standing-room-only event Hosted by LWV North County San Diego and LWV San Diego, who are advocating for a stand-alone position on homelessness for the California League. They spoke about the criminalization of homelessness and how California laws have led us to the point where homelessness is no longer a

symbol of decline, but is instead a product of prosperity. For more information, see their “Seven important facts about homelessness” handout <https://lwvc.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/homelessness-caucus-7-important-facts.pdf> and the “Yes in my LA” booklet <https://yesinmyla.org/> from the LWV of Los Angeles that educates and informs the public about permanent supportive housing. From the handout: “In California, 68% of homeless people are unsheltered, compared to just 5% in New York.”

Saturday morning’s speaker, Manuel Pastor, Professor of Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California, spoke of the 1990s as the decade of racial propositions, when we needed to focus on the economy but focused instead on racism and the blaming of immigrants for economic problems instead; he compared it to what’s happening now in the US. First change the nature of the electorate and get more voters to vote, he said, then engage those people in other civic opportunities. “Voting is a gateway drug,” he said. The League is more than voter registration; it is civic engagement.

Our Saturday afternoon speaker, Virginia Kase, CEO of the League of Women Voters of the United States and a passionate activist and advocate for social justice, spoke about the power of women and their battle for voting rights and as candidates. I appreciated having a chance to hear her speak.

At the Saturday workshop “Growing the League of the Future” Dottie and I heard League leaders from around the state discuss how they got involved in the League. A good recommendation was to ask, “What’s important to you?” and see how the League fits in.

Pam attended the climate change workshop, which focused on many practical ways to cope with climate change from moving away from methane use and towards electricity, to how to sequester carbon in your garden for optimum soil health. For more ideas and information go to [lwvc.org/climate-change-task-force](http://lwvc.org/climate-change-task-force)

Saturday’s banquet featured Zahra Noorbakhsh, comedian and cohost of the award-winning podcast, #GoodMuslimBadMuslim. Zahra gave us a hilarious insight into the challenges of being a modern Muslim woman.



Dottie and Barbara at the Saturday morning session.

The Sunday morning plenary began with remarks by Melissa Breach, outgoing LWVC Executive Director, followed by the business of this convention, including debate and adoption of the program, budget, and bylaws, and election of officers and directors. The recommended program for 2019-2021 (see page 35 of the [Convention Workbook](#)) includes the following Issues for Emphasis: 1. Making Democracy Work in California 2. Schools & Communities First Campaign (Prop 13 Reform) 3. Climate Change 4. Housing and Homelessness 5. Criminal Justice Reform.

Delegates also adopted a new position on Criminal Justice via concurrence and replaced the current Election Systems position with a new position on Electoral Process, also via concurrence. Following a spirited debate, convention delegates voted to approve action by the LWVC to update of the PreK-12 Education position to include charter schools' accountability.

Delegates also approved two "Will of the Convention" resolutions for 2019. One was a resolution to ask California senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris to take all measures within their power to move the "For the People Act" forward in the Senate. The other called upon the LWVC Board, the LWVC Action Committee, and local Leagues to advocate for "Climate Emergency Declarations" and urgent relevant action by state, county, and local governments.

Incoming LWVC President Carol Moon Goldberg concluded the convention with a quote

from Kate Sheppard, a prominent member of the New Zealand Suffrage movement: "Do not think your single vote does not matter much. The rain that refreshes the parched ground is made up of single drops."

—Barbara Lewis, *President*, with contributions from Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*

## LWVSCC Annual Meeting Report

At the 2019 LWVSCC annual meeting in June, we elected officers as nominated and approved the 2019/20 budget and programs as proposed (for details, see the [meeting kit](#)).

Our featured speaker, Cabrillo College President Matthew Wetstein, gave us an update about what's new and exciting at our local community college. Look for a full report on the talk in the September VOTER newsletter.

## Barbara Oldden: In memoriam

Barbara Oldden, a 50-year honorary member of the League of Women Voters, died of natural causes in her home at the end of May. Born in New Jersey in 1923, she loved music, baseball, sailing, and bridge. As a single mother, she earned her master's degree in educational psychology. In 1974, she moved her family to Santa Cruz in a VW camper van. A proud Democrat, she was politically active most of her life. She's remembered by LWVSCC members as an energetic worker and will be missed by all.

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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.

## Recycling Reality: *There is no magic land of “Away”*

On a cloudy, blustery day in May, a group of intrepid Leaguers gathered at the City of Santa Cruz Resource Recover Center on Dimeo Lane to take a tour and learn about recycling first-hand from Leslie O’Malley, waste reduction assistant.



*Aluminum is the recycling star.*

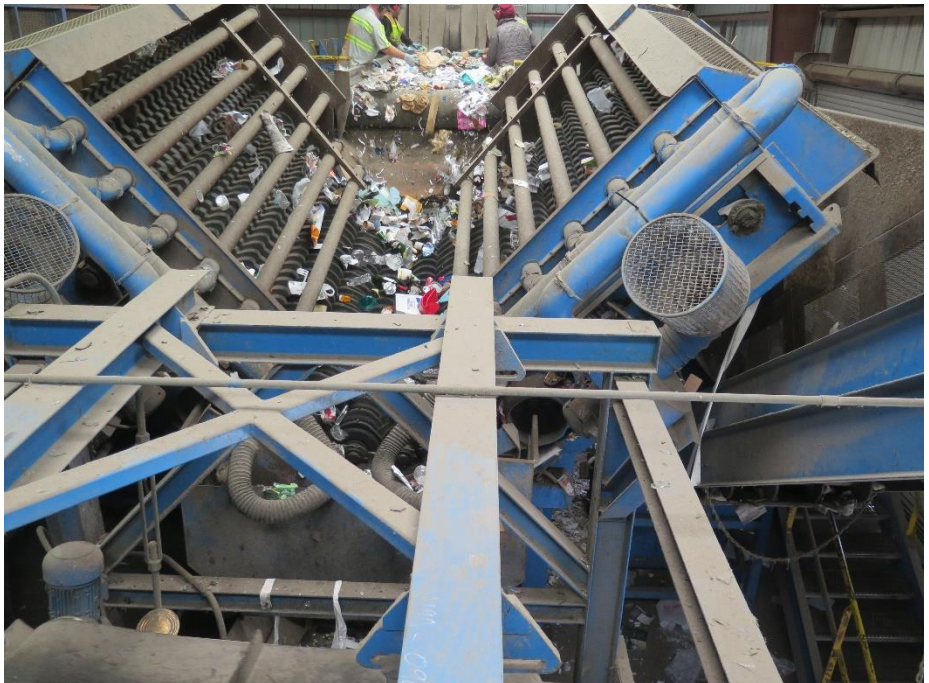
The average person throws away 4.5 pounds of material per day, says O’Malley, but really, there is no magic land of “away” where this material disappears. O’Malley introduced us to some new ways of thinking about waste reduction, especially the fourth “R”. We are all familiar with the concepts of “reduce, reuse, and recycle”, but she also encouraged us to refuse to buy items that can’t be recycled and to choose instead those that can.

Make a conscious choice at the store about the material you choose: aluminum, glass, and cardboard instead of plastic and Styrofoam. Go bigger instead of smaller (less packaging). Look for eggs, berries, and produce in cardboard cartons instead of plastic. Where those options don’t exist, demand them from your retailer. O’Malley emphasized being an educated

recycler, not a wish-cycler who says, “I don’t know if this is recyclable or not, so I’ll just toss it in and let them figure it out.” Keep in mind that much of the sorting is done by manual labor working on a conveyor belt, and it’s time consuming to remove trash from the recycling.

Check to see what can be recycled in your area (the city of Santa Cruz accepts different items than the county; see sidebar for information on how to find out what’s recyclable where you live). Know what the most recyclable materials are. Aluminum is a star recyclable; it can be recycled endlessly without any loss of quality and is also the most profitable, bringing in \$2000/ton, compared to plastic bags at \$5/ton. Steel comes in a close second. Rinsed cans can go straight into the recycle bin; it’s no longer necessary to crush cans for recycling.

Glass, paper and cardboard recycle well, but contamination can be a problem. Ceramics, window glass, drinking glasses, perfume bottles, light bulbs (fluorescent lights are hazardous waste; see sidebar for information), and Pyrex glass are not recyclable and should be thrown in the trash. Paper can only be recycled a limited number of times. Cardboard should be clean, and all non-cardboard parts (such as Styrofoam, packing materials, or plastic inserts) should be removed.



*Initial sort of material at the V-screen. Workers pick out the non-recyclables. The screen sorts out different materials.*

Only clean pizza boxes (tear them in half or leave them open so it's easy for workers to see they are clean) can be recycled. Soiled cardboard pizza boxes can be torn up and put in your compost. Products that are made of mixed materials (think potato chip cans) are not recyclable.

Plastics, while nominally recyclable, are problematic in many ways. The city of Santa Cruz is moving away from recycling plastic by numbers (the resin codes in the "recycle" triangle marked on plastic items); they now accept only certain specific plastic items for recycling: bottles, jugs, jars, and tubs (such yogurt or sour cream tubs). Be sure to clean plastic containers; put caps back on bottles and lids on tubs, as they are too small for the processing equipment. Plastic clamshells used for produce and packaging, plastic strawberry baskets, aseptic juice boxes, plastic dinnerware, and paper cartons are all trash. Remember, don't be a wish-cycler: when in doubt, throw it out. (See sidebar for more information.)

Santa Cruz County has taken a different route and accepts other types of plastic (check their list; see sidebar). They don't currently have markets for all the recyclables they accept, but hope to find them in the future. County recyclables are trucked to San Jose where they are processed in a much larger facility that is able to accommodate a wider variety of material. Because of the larger volume, they are able to find markets for types of plastic that aren't available to smaller facilities.



*Leslie O'Malley displays plastic insulation with faulty recycling information.*

Unfortunately, it seems we are still in the wild west with regard to plastic resin codes, and manufacturers aren't held to a standard. O'Malley gave one striking example of an insulating wrapper used to pack prepared meals. The insulation is printed with feel-good messages: "Packaging made from recycled water bottles!" "Place me in your curbside recycling bin!" and a big "recycle" triangle with the number "1". Unfortunately, in reality, no one is recycling materials made from recycled plastics, and the instructions to "Place me in your curbside recycling bin!" are wrong if you live in Santa Cruz.



*Recycling sorted, bundled and ready to go. Large colored plastic, plastic bags, steel cans, aluminum.*

O'Malley tracked down the manufacturer of the insulation and questioned them about their faulty recycling instructions. They told her they hope that if they put enough of this in the recycling stream, "someone" will figure out what to do with it. Unfortunately, that's not happening, but in the meantime, this misleading information lets consumers feel good about their product while causing trouble for recycling facilities.

Plastic bags come with their own set of issues. In order to tell if a plastic bag is recyclable, it must be stretchy and not make a noisy, crinkly sound. Potato chip bags? Not recyclable. Pet food bags? Nope (but you can reuse them as garbage bags). Collect your clean, dry recyclable bags inside one of the larger bags and tie it closed. Plastic sheeting should also be bagged (long items will jam the sorting equipment). The other issue with plastic bags, says O'Malley, is that, while they can be recycled, and we want to support that, we now know that microfibers from polar fleece, socks, and other items made from recycled bags migrate to the ocean and add to plastic pollution there. We have solved one problem and created another.

The other problem with plastic is contamination with the wrong type of plastic or other contaminates. Until recently, China, who bought



*Leslie O'Malley finds bag of garbage in the recycling on the tipping floor.*

most of our plastic, accepted 10% contamination. Now they have enacted a new policy called China National Sword, and will only accept plastic if contamination is under .05% (yes, that's five hundredths of a percent), which eliminates most post-consumer plastics. Some of the clear plastics the facility collects are being sent to a plant in Lodi, California, to be made into Trex lumber. O'Malley believes we are now in a "hiccup" with regard to plastic recycling, and that eventually better recycling options will be available.

Large, colorful plastic items such as plastic toys, broken lawn furniture, old recycling bins, and plastic nursery pots can be brought to the recycling center (do not put in your cart). Plastic appliances are not recyclable.

Propane gas containers may be metal, but they are dangerous in the recycling bin or trash bin and have caused fires in trucks when they get compacted. CO2 cartridges are too small to recycle. The two materials that workers on the sorting lines most hate to see are diapers (really, who does this?) and syringes. O'Malley asked us to think about the human workers (we aren't yet to the point of having robots sort our trash) who will be sorting through what you put in your recycle bin: a metal saw blade is hazardous waste and does not belong there.



*Mountain of metal waits to be recycled.*

## RECYCLING RESOURCES

### >City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery:

[cityofsantacruz.com](http://cityofsantacruz.com)

>[Easy curbside recycling guide](#) (Santa Cruz). A printable flyer you can post near your recycle bin for quick reference.

>["What goes where?" Recycling Guide](#) A highly useful interactive recycling guide. Type in the material and find out how to dispose of it. While the recycling information is specific to the city, the guide includes great suggestions and tips on reusing, refusing, and rethinking.

>This [video](#) shows the Santa Cruz City recycling facility operations, including how the V-screen operates (note that some of the recycling information is out of date).

>Want to see the facility for yourself? Sign up for a tour at [cityofsantacruz.com](http://cityofsantacruz.com). You may even want to become a master recycler and help educate others.

>**Santa Cruz County Recycling** information and guides [dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us](http://dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us)

>An [A to Z guide](#) to county recycling and waste reduction.

>**Mattresses and box springs** are accepted at the Resource Recovery Facility free of charge. For [information](#) about the curbside bulky item pickup program call (831) 420-5220 (City of Santa Cruz only). The same applies to county facilities (see the above guide for more info). Learn more at [byebyemattress.com](http://byebyemattress.com)

>**Tennis ball recycling:** [tennisballcourts.com](http://tennisballcourts.com)

>**Take back the light:** [fluorescent light take-back program](#).

>**Grey Bears** accepts electronics and some appliances as well as Styrofoam. For complete information see their website. They have centers in Santa Cruz (Chanticleer), Ben Lomond (Newell Creek), and Watsonville (Buena Vista). They refurbish computers and other electronics and appliances. Check their website for more information about what items they accept. [Greybears.org](http://Greybears.org)

>**Goodwill** has donations centers throughout the county in Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz Capitola, Aptos, and Watsonville. See the Goodwill Central Coast website for more information. [ccgoodwill.org](http://ccgoodwill.org)

>**Best Buy** has bins in their stores for many kinds of e-waste, including cables and wires. [bestbuy.com](http://bestbuy.com)

The other item that is never recyclable is garbage. Sadly, some folks who run out of room in their trash bins use the recycle cart as overflow. As we were looking at the “tipping floor” where the recycling process starts, O’Malley didn’t have to look long to discover a bag of trash that was put in with someone’s recycling.

Once you understand what belongs in the bin, it’s time to look at what you can do to avoid filling up your trash can and the landfill. Working appliances, electronics, and other useful items can be donated to Grey Bears, Goodwill, or other organizations (see sidebar). Clothing, blankets, linens, stuffed toys, and other usable items should be donated and don’t belong in the recycle bin or the landfill. O’Malley stopped by the gigantic “mountain of metal” composed of countless discarded metal objects and pointed out many items that could have been donated instead of being thrown away.

Find ways to reduce and refuse: have your own supply of reusable bags, water bottles, and mugs. Create a zero-waste kit for eating out with reusable utensils, metal straw, cloth napkin, and reusable containers for leftovers. Be creative and think about what can be upcycled through arts and crafting.

Diverting materials where possible to extend the life of the landfill is a key charge for the facility. They lose money on many items; only aluminum cans are big money makers. Some materials they have to pay to get rid of. Others cost more to process than they make selling it.

As an example of looking beyond the cart, O’Malley pointed to a company that accepts old tennis balls and reuses them to make tennis courts (see sidebar). The city even has a program to use trash as art. She encouraged everyone to be informed and to use the power of their voice to refuse and rethink. “We have to get out of the thinking that recycling is only the convenience of the blue curbside cart,” says O’Malley, “We need to look for other ways to recycle.”

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*