



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

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LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Wednesday, March 1

1-3 pm.

*This meeting will be held at the home of Sandy Warren
150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz*

This meeting is open to all LWVSCC members. If you wish to attend, please use this link to RSVP by Friday, February 24:
sandra333warren@gmail.com.

Directions to meeting:

From Northbound Highway 1/Mission Street, turn right onto Bay Street (towards UCSC). Continue on Bay 0.7 mile, then turn left onto Escalona Drive (past Kenneth Street), then make an immediate right onto Bayona Drive, heading uphill. Take the first left onto Scenic Street. 150 is the last house on the left at the end of the cul-de-sac.

Your input is important to us! We hope to see you there.

This is your chance to shape our League's local programs for 2023-2024 and share your ideas about local issues that you want to learn more about or that you want others to know about. Whether it's a single program or a year-long study that will result in a new or revised League position, we want to hear about it.

Our local League's positions on county government, education, health care, land use, library service, transportation, voters' rights, and water resources can be viewed on our website: lwwscc.org/positions. Look them over and let us know if you see something that needs updating or if there's a local topic that's not covered.

The League is a grass-roots organization; your ideas are what keeps the grass growing. If in good health and available, please come to socialize, enjoy refreshments, and help plan for the future on March 1 at the home of Sandy Warren. If you have suggestions and ideas but can't make the meeting, please share your thoughts by email in advance with a message to league080@gmail.com, or by contacting a member of our board of directors who plans on coming.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR!

Our League's Nominating Committee is developing the slate of Board members for consideration at our next Annual Meeting in June. If you'd like to serve on the 2023/2024 Board of Directors, or if you'd like to recommend other League members, please contact Nominating Committee Co-chair, Eloise Graham at 831-295-1942 or by email at krze4kats@sbcglobal.net. You may also contact Karen Smith at 831-462-0499, or by email at KCS4224@sbcglobal.net. Whether you're a long time League member, or new this year, we'd like to talk with you. If you're new, this is a great way to get more involved!

--Eloise Graham, Nominating Committee Co-chair

MORE EVENTS OF IMPORTANCE

LWVC Interest Group Training

Thursday, February 16, 2023
7:00 PM – Online

Join this webinar to learn more about the purpose and operation of LWVC Interest Groups across all areas. As Advocacy Interest groups grow, they continue to provide an important forum for members to support each other in exploring advocacy and educational work. All Interest Group members are encouraged to attend this educational training!

Use this link to register for the training:

[Interest Group All-Hands Training on Thursday, February 16 at 7 PM](#)

Here are some LWVUS online meetings that might be of interest

Feb 09, 12:00PM PT [LWVUS Legislative Office Hours](#) – LWVUS advocacy team holds office hours for members to ask their questions on federal legislation.

Feb 22, 12:00PM PT [Impact on Issues 2022-24](#) - LWVUS will share a new, updated Impact on Issues document which includes the updates made at the 2022 Convention.

Feb 23, 12:00PM PT [LWVUS Legislative Office Hours](#) – LWVUS advocacy team holds office hours for members to ask their questions on federal legislation.

Click on the meeting title to register.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Several years after our Centennial celebration in 2020, the League of Women Voters continues to provide voter information, engage in legislative interviews, and advocate based on our local, state, and national program positions. When I first joined the League in 1970, I was intrigued by the combination of study and advocacy on various environmental issues, such as air quality, land use planning, as well as the contacts with local government representatives to make our goals happen. Over the years, I have helped register voters, provide education on ballot measures, and have enjoyed meeting so many members who care about the future of our planet and making democracy work. After starting in the San Jose/Santa Clara League of Women Voters and then rejoining here in Santa Cruz County, I found many local members had a high interest in the public libraries, education, managing resources of land and water, our justice system, health care, and voter service.

Current topics League members will be asking our California State Assembly and Senate representatives about are: 1. Shrinking California's Voter Participation Gap 2. Equitable Funding for California's School Facilities Program 3. Sustainable and Equitable Water Resource Management 4. Personal Priorities of Legislator and major issues the legislature must deal with in 2023. Write ups of these interviews with our state representatives from these interviews should appear in future issues of the VOTER, with permission and approval of the legislator. All Leagues in each district are likely to participate in these interviews, taking place in January and the first part of February.

We are also doing State and Local Program Planning this winter, and you are welcome to participate or communicate your ideas. Details appear in this issue of the VOTER. Thank you to Sandy Warren, our 50-year member, for hosting our planning meetings, as she has done many times before.

--Barbara Lewis, President

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black women have been fighting for voting rights for more than a hundred years, and they continue to fight. Here is an excerpt from the LWVUS that captures some of that history.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month, and as we reflect on the triumphs and history of African Americans, we want to acknowledge the role of Black women in the voting rights movement. From Ida B. Wells to Stacey Abrams, Black women have played a pivotal role in the advancement of voting rights. Although there have been obstacles along the way, Black women as a collective power are a force to be reckoned with. While Black women are not a monolith in any shape or form, they have and continue to use their voices to make progress on many issues, especially voting rights.

Historical Icons

The voting rights advocates of today stand on the shoulders of those who came before them. Born into slavery, Ida B. Wells was one of the early leaders of the civil rights movement. As a journalist, she led an antilynching crusade and fought for women's rights. She also fought tirelessly for the right to vote, all while facing discrimination within the suffragist movement. In 1913, Wells co-founded the [Alpha Suffrage Club](#), the first Black women's suffrage group in the state of Illinois. To this day, Wells is [honored](#) as an advocate for women's equality and racial equality.

We can't talk about voting rights without mentioning Fannie Lou Hamer. Born in 1917, Hamer became a prominent voice in the civil rights and voting rights movements. As a Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) organizer, Hamer led voter registration movements [across the country](#) and co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1964. In that year, Hamer helped organize [Freedom Summer](#), a mobilizing effort that brought college students together to help with Black voter registration in the South.

These are just two of the countless Black women who've influenced voting rights throughout our history.



Early Fighter, Ida B. Wells

Present-Day Leaders

Fast forward to the present-day, Black women have been a leading force in the voting rights movement. [LaTosha Brown](#), a co-founder of [Black Voters Matter](#), has been successful in mobilizing the people's power on voting rights issues and other social justice issues that impact the Black community. Brown led movements that have increased Black voter turnout in Alabama and ultimately played a significant role in the [2017 Alabama Senate race](#).

[Founder of National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#), [Melanie Campbell](#), remains active in the civil rights and voting rights movements. Awarded the National Urban League's "Women of Power Award," Campbell has been successful in civic engagement and issue-based organizing teams for underserved communities.

At the League, our work is guided by the experience and creativity of women like our Chief Strategy Officer [Ayo Atterberry](#), Chief Counsel [Celina Stewart](#), and Board President [Dr. Deborah Ann Turner](#). Their impact on the League cannot be understated; we are who we are today because of them.

And – since we're on the subject of voting, here's a fun quiz to test your knowledge of the history of voting in the US.

Just follow this link: [Quiz: How Much Do You Know About American Voting Rights?](#)

VOTING IN CALIFORNIA

The California League has also been busy with issues related to voting, especially as it concerns redistricting. The League joined with the ACLU of both Northern and Southern California, as well as California Common Cause and Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus, to produce a report on our 2020 local redistricting cycle and what can be learned from it.

Report findings include:

Overall, the Fair Maps Act (FMA) was broadly successful in promoting a more transparent and more participatory local redistricting process. To a lesser extent, it was successful in producing maps that better reflect the diverse communities residing in cities and counties across the state. However, the 2020 local redistricting cycle also revealed that improvements to the FMA are necessary to address ambiguities, loopholes, and deficiencies in the legislation that undermined the law's important goals and were often exploited to protect incumbents. Local IRCs, (Independent Redistricting Commissions) were structured to be politically independent of the legislative body, conducted by far the most transparent and participatory redistricting processes and were more likely than legislative bodies to draw maps that fairly reflected different communities within a jurisdiction.

Five key findings are:

TIMING: Late census data created a time crunch for counties and some cities.

TRANSPARENCY: FMA reforms made for a far more transparent local redistricting process, although some jurisdictions failed to follow notice and publication requirements.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: New redistricting rules and remote access policies significantly increased public and community engagement in the 2020 cycle.

CRITERIA: Better redistricting criteria sometimes led to better maps, but incumbency-protection remains the primary obstacle to fairer community representation.

COMMISSIONS: Independent Redistricting Commissions adopted maps that better reflected the interests of communities over incumbents.

And five key recommendations are:

Prohibit jurisdictions from drawing lines to favor or discriminate against incumbents.

Require independent redistricting commissions for larger jurisdictions and prohibit the direct appointment of commissioners by elected officials.

Increase the minimum number of FMA hearings and workshops from four to a minimum of six to ten, depending on the size of the jurisdiction.

Require that jurisdictions provide in-person and remote options for providing live testimony at public hearings.

Extend the FMA to apply to all local governments.

The report is long and detailed, but those of us trying to grapple with the newly shaped districts we are in and the new people representing us may well find this interesting. Here is the link to the report: [the promise of fair maps](#).

