

# LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup> OF MONTEREY COUNTY "THE VOTER" NEWSLETTER

"Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy" / March 2025, Volume 97, Number 5

## Wednesday, March 12th, 2025 **"Roadmap to Civilian Oversight of County Sheriff's Department"**

**T**he Monterey County Sheriff's Department touches us in many ways: protecting people and property in large parts of our county; running the county jail; and addressing issues related to such hot-button topics as the unhoused, immigration, and mental illness.



**Mike Gennaco**

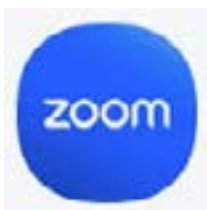
The **Monterey County Board of Supervisors** has joined other counties in the state in considering **civilian oversight** of this important law enforcement department.

**Michael (Mike) Gennaco**, former **Chief of the Civil Rights Section for the US Attorney's Office**

in the **Central District of California**, is among the nation's foremost experts in civil rights and law enforcement. He will be our featured speaker on Wednesday, March 12th, *via Zoom only*, from 12 to 1 pm.

Mr. Gennaco has contributed to numerous reforms in policing and accountability systems across the country, working to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Gennaco recently signed a contract with the **Los Angeles Board of Supervisors**, is an Independent  
*(continued on page 2)*



### ***How to Attend this Virtual Meeting***

The free **March 12th, 2025 LWVMC** presentation described above will use the **Zoom Web Conferencing** platform and **Zoom Chat** for Questions & Answers.



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

**All current LWVMryCo members** will be sent a link to the Zoom meeting from [lwwmryco@gmail.com](mailto:lwwmryco@gmail.com) on the **Monday before the meeting** (e.g., on **Monday, March 10th** for this month) with instructions on how to join the meeting.

**Not a member?** Non-members can send a message to [LWVMryCo@gmail.com](mailto: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.

**Can't get into the meeting using link/instructions?**  
Call **Tama Olver**



Auditor for the Santa Cruz City Police Department, Inspector General for the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department, Inspector Monitor for the Santa Clara Sheriff's Office, and Independent

Police Auditor for the Palo Alto

Police Department. It is easy to see why Gennanco is such a sought-after speaker and important resource for local law enforcement.

You can e-mail questions for Mr. Gennaco in advance to [LWVMryCo@gmail.com](mailto:LWVMryCo@gmail.com). Time

permitting, additional questions may be asked via Zoom Chat during the event.

You can also, as always, invite others interested in the subject, both LWV members and non-members, to join in what is sure to be a very interesting and informative meeting.

The Zoom link to join the meeting will automatically be e-mailed to all members. Non-members can request the link at [LWVMryCo@gmail.com](mailto:LWVMryCo@gmail.com).

Sharon Miller

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MARCH 2025

**T**he dismantling of our sacred democracy on full display for the world..." is part of a statement by **Celina Stewart, LWVUS CEO**, in a press release about the February 14 letter urging Congress to rein in the power grab by the Executive Branch (see full text page 5).

Action at any level by the League is based on study and consensus. Reaction to current conditions by the National LWV represent a collective statement on behalf of all local Leagues and individual members. **Our LWVMC is part of that voice.**

At the same time, we must pay attention to our local community. LWVMC can take direct action within Monterey County.

### Program Planning Meeting

On February 3rd, fifteen of our members met in a Zoom meeting to discuss the focus of our League for the **June 2025 to May 2026 program year**. Five areas identified as areas for emphasis were:

- ★ **Climate change**;
- ★ **Water resources**, especially



- ground water sustainability;
- ★ **Affordable housing**, especially results of the "California Builder's Remedy"\* exception and the State, City or County initiatives;
- ★ **Advocating for citizens' oversight** of the sheriff's department; and
- ★ **Diversity, equity and inclusion** issues, and **fair treatment of workers** regardless of immigration status.

These five areas for emphasis will require approval by LWVMC members at the **May 14, 2025 Annual Meeting**.

If approved, it is likely that each one will be the subject of a General "Lunch & Learn" Meeting. We will also look for advocacy opportunities in these areas.

Dennis Mar



*\*(California Builder's Remedy is a legal tool that allows developers to override local zoning and planning requirements when a city or county hasn't adopted a housing element that meets state law)*

## ★ VOTER SERVICE ★ COMMITTEE MEETING ★ WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12TH

An in-person Voter Service meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 12th at 2pm**, in follow-up to February's Zoom presentation on **"Civic Engagement"** (see page 7 for how to watch the video if you missed it).

This meeting will be held at the home of **Dennis & Susan Mar**. Contact *Dennis* for address and directions.

Our focus will be on **Voter Service** and **Youth Outreach** in 2025. We welcome your ideas about these activities, but you can also come as an observer.

*Student Discussion:  
"How Can We Increase Voter  
Registration on Our Campus?"*



Bring a friend or just come by yourself. Members as well as non-members are welcome!

**Arlene Guest**

## LWVMC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Mark **May 14** on your calendars. Review the five proposed "areas for emphasis" recommended at the **Program Planning Meeting** (see **President's Message** on the opposite page).



Prepare to discuss and vote on the identified areas for emphasis. Members as well as non-members are welcome.

The meeting will be held at the **Unitarian Universalist Church** (where we hold our in-person Lunch & Learn meetings). Time and agenda to be announced.

**Dennis Mar**

## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE ZOOM MEETING MARCH 13TH

The next **Natural Resources Committee Meeting** will meet via **Zoom, Thursday, March 13th at 12 noon**.



New and current members as well as non-members are all welcome to join us, no prior experience required! We will review and discuss **upcoming general updates on local land use events**, as well as other topics as time allows.

**George Riley**

## ★ FEBRUARY SYNOPSIS: ★ "CIVIC ENGAGEMENT" ★ WITH DR. DAISY MARTIN

Professor Martin, Director, History and Civics Project, UC Santa Cruz spoke on the importance of **civics education**, empowering citizens, ensuring informed voting, and strong civic education programs to help students understand their rights, responsibilities, and the functioning of government. She believes instruction should begin early and into K-12. She described a project where students study, then present explanations of ballot propositions to their communities to provide high-quality learning by incorporating inquiry, deliberation of current issues, and engagement with others. She also spoke about the **California Civic Seal of Engagement** awards for students who demonstrate civic knowledge, participation, and leadership.

Dr. Martin said that **media literacy** is essential for informed civic engagement: students need critical skills to evaluate news sources and distinguish facts from misinformation. This was backed by **Susan Meister, Monterey County Media Literacy Coalition**, which is actively working to improve public media literacy locally.

Dr. Martin's full presentation is available at [tinyurl.com/LWVMCVideos](http://tinyurl.com/LWVMCVideos).

**Dennis Mar**

# ★ 2025 LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEWS: ★ ★ ASSEMBLYMEMBER ADDIS & SENATOR LAIRD ★

Once each year, the League of Women Voters of California calls on local chapters to interview State Senate and Assembly members to learn their priorities and positions, which the State League then uses to set its own priorities and strategies. We partnered with the **San Luis Obispo County** and **Santa Cruz County** chapters to conduct interviews with **Assemblymember Dawn Addis** and **Senator John Laird**.

LWVMC members **Sharon Miller**, **Tama Oliver**, **Shelley Sweet**, and **Lorraine Yglesias** participated in one or both of the interviews. A third interview, in partnership with **San Jose/ Santa Clara** and **Santa Cruz County Leagues**, is scheduled with **Speaker Robert Rivas**.

This year the LWVCA suggested two general questions and encouraged chapters to include local questions if time allowed.

The first questions was: ***"What major issues do you think the legislature must deal with in 2025?"***



**Assemblymember Addis** focused on emergency preparedness, especially the effectiveness of delivering relief where it is needed, and healthcare, including geriatric and gender-affirming benefits. She noted that \$100 billion in healthcare spending will be reviewed with concern for potential reductions in subsidies for the Affordable Care Act and Medicare.



**Senator Laird** spoke about the need for action related to water (such as removal of dams in South County), creation of lithium-ion battery standards, wildfire resilience, and homelessness in Santa Cruz. He noted that his many committee and working-

group assignments include responsibility for the budget overall and allow him to be involved in issues across all of State government.

Next we asked: ***"What are your personal legislative priorities?"***

**Assemblymember Addis** reiterated her focus on disaster preparedness and said she is developing related legislation. She also noted **AB 3233** gives the County a say over oil and gas development, fulfilling the promise of **County Measure Z**, which many people of Monterey County worked to support.

**Senator Laird** mentioned the need to address uncertainty in Federal support for education, environmental, and social programs. At the State level, he highlighted insurance and also noted proposed cuts to the higher education budget, as legislative priorities.

When asking questions about local issues, we expressed appreciation for Addis's bill **AB 2173** replacing the term *"emotional disturbance"* with *"emotional disability."* We asked her: ***"Would she support additional local funds for mental health?"*** She and Senator Laird both said there is already substantial funding for health, but it needs to be prioritized.

We asked **Senator Laird** ***"What are your thoughts about battery storage and green energy?"*** He noted the critical need to **transition California from fossil fuels**, with a focus on making battery storage safer as the technology develops.

Laird further said he would **not support any Federal efforts to arrest migrants in schools**. He went on to say that counties struggling with loss of healthcare workers (due to a rural designation under Medicare), need assistance. Because of term limits, this is Senator Laird's last term, and he plans to make the most of it. We thanked the legislators for their contributions and candid responses.

**Tama Oliver**

*The League of Women Voters of the United States and League Chapters from all 50 states and the District of Columbia sent a letter to Congress, urging leaders to address the unprecedented executive branch overreach threatening American democracy. The letter continues with more specific actions that members of Congress must take to preserve our democracy. The complete letter can be read at [www.lwv.org/lwv-urges-congress-exercise-its-authority](http://www.lwv.org/lwv-urges-congress-exercise-its-authority).*

The Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader  
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader  
The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker  
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader  
US Senate and US House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515



February 14th, 2025



Subject: **Calling on Congress to Act**

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries:

The League of Women Voters of the United States, along with our state affiliates in 50 states and the District of Columbia, write to express our **strong concern about Congress's abdication of its duty and authority under Article I of the US Constitution**. We urge you to exercise your authority to protect the rule of law, defend the Constitution, and end the overreach by the executive branch of government, which is surely leading to harm for millions of Americans. We demand that you honor your oaths and protect your constituents.

Less than a month into his second term, President Trump has issued a series of executive orders (EOs) and directed **actions that violate the law and encroach upon the authority of Congress as representatives of the American people**. Of note, the Trump administration has, through wide-ranging executive actions, attempted to:

1. End birthright citizenship for all persons born in the United States;
2. Pause the distribution of federal funds already allocated to programs by Congress;
3. Dismantle federal agencies such as the US Agency for International Development ("USAID") and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ("CFPB"), which require notice to and the input of Congress before such actions can be taken;
4. Allow private citizens, who have neither been elected or complied with the advice and consent requirement of the Senate, to access sensitive government systems; and
5. Reduce the federal workforce through unorthodox means that deny them due process.

**These actions negatively affect American families and communities across the country.**

Respectfully,

**Leadership from LWVUS and all State and DC League affiliates**



## Join the League of Women Voters of Monterey County



### FREE STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Students may join LWVMryCo via the website without paying membership fees.

### New Members Welcome!

Any person age 16 or older may be a member.

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

- ☐ Please do NOT publish my address, phone number or email in The Voter newsletter

### ~Florence Curlee Scholarships~

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

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 Local Impact Fund (LWVCLIF)**

(formerly LWVC Education Fund)

**are tax deductible,**

**but please continue to make the donations payable to LWVCEF.**

## LWVMRYCO.ORG WEBSITE UPDATE



New Members can now join, and Current Members can update their profiles, or renew their LWVMC membership online at:  
**portal.lwv.org**

If for any reason you can't get the above link to work, use:

**<https://portal.lwv.org>**

It's never been easier to join the League of Women Voters of Monterey County, maintain your membership subscription, and share the news about our League and it's activities!

**Debby Majors-Degnan**

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

### ~New Members Welcome!~



If you have friends or family who might benefit from joining our League, bring them along to an

### In-Person Lunch & Learn presentation

(non-members are always welcome),

or invite them to attend a

**virtual Zoom meeting** with you.

Show people where to view our **online videos**,  
(see opposite page for suggestions)

or share your copies of **"The Voter"**

to let them see what our League has been doing to promote non-partisan voting and engage in important local issues.

★★★★★★★★★★

Contact: Janet Brennan

# HAVE YOU MISSED A GENERAL MEETING?

Find them all online at [tinyurl.com/LWVMCVideos](http://tinyurl.com/LWVMCVideos)



## "Civic Engagement"

Dr. Daisy Martin, Founding Director,  
History & Civics Project,  
UC Santa Cruz (2/12/25)



## "Our Polarized Politics"

Steven W. Hughes, PhD  
(11/13/24)



## "Big Sur Land Trust: Projects and Progress"

Jeanette Tuitele-Lewis,  
President/CEO BSLT  
(1/8/25)



## "The State of Our Local Media" Sara Rubin (9/11/24)



## "Ranked Choice Voting"

Arash Sayadi & Steve Chessin  
(4/10/24)



## "Monterey Civil Grand Jury"

Marilyn Maxner (5/8/24)

Debby Degnan Divers

# Board of Directors League of Women Voters of Monterey County

## ★ Officers

### President

Dennis Mar

### Vice President

Shelley Sweet

### Secretary

Sandy Hoag

### Treasurer

Marilyn Maxner

## ★ Policy Portfolios

### Government

Sharon Miller

### LWV Action

Janet Brennan

### Natural Resources

Janet Brennan

### Social Policy

Beverly Kreps

## ★ League Activities

### Membership

Janet Brennan

### Publicity

Beverly Bean

### Luncheons

Beverly Bean

### "The Voter" Editor

Regina Doyle

### Voter Service

Pamela Stewart

Arlene Guest

## ★ Members-At-Large

Marianne Gawain

Tama Olver

## ★ Off-Board

### LWV California

Jackie Jacobberger

### Natural Resources

George Riley

### Nominating Committee

(Elected)

Robert Evans (2024-26)

Linda Gin (2023-25)

Marjory Kay (2024-26)

(Appointed)

Marianne Gawain

Beverly Kreps

### VOTE411

Arlene Guest

### Videographers

Joe Asling

### "The Voter" Biographer

Nancy Baker Jacobs

### Website Coordinator

Debby Majors-Degnan

## ★ LWVMryCo The VOTER ★

Published monthly except June/July/Aug/Dec

Send articles & updates to Regina Doyle



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'  
OF MONTEREY COUNTY  
"THE VOTER" NEWSLETTER

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★ **LWVMryCo Calendar 2025** ★



**MARCH**

Board Zoom Meeting  
*Monday, March 3rd, 11:30am*  
contact: Dennis Mar

LWVMC Zoom General Meeting  
*Wednesday, March 12th, 12 noon*  
Michael Gennaco, Law Enforcement  
Reform Expert, Civilian Oversight of  
Sheriff's Department and Jail

Voter Service Committee  
In-Person Meeting  
*Wednesday, March 12, 2pm*  
(for details see page 3)

Natural Resources Committee Meeting  
*Thursday, March 13th, 12 noon*  
contact: George Riley

**APRIL**

Board Zoom Meeting  
*Monday, April 7th, 10:30 - 11:30am*  
contact: Dennis Mar

LWVMC In-Person General Meeting  
*Wednesday, April 9th, 12 noon*  
"First 100 Days"  
Kate Daniels, District 5 Supervisor  
contact: Marilyn Maxner

Natural Resources Zoom Committee Meeting  
*Thursday, April 10th, 12 noon*  
contact: George Riley

★★★★★★★★★★

*We are a nonpartisan, grassroots organization working to protect and expand voting rights,  
and ensure everyone is represented in our democracy.*