

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

"Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy" / November 2023, Volume 96, Number 3

## Wednesday, November 8th 2023 "Restorative Justice: Repairing Harm, Offering Mutual Healing"

**R**estorative Justice is an alternative approach to justice focused on repairing harm to victims. It also gives offenders opportunities for healing and reduces their chances of causing further harm. Proponents contend that the process produces a **high rate of victim satisfaction, true accountability by offenders, and reduced recidivism**. Impressively, it is favored by parties from throughout the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, prosecutors, and the probation department, as well as elected officials.



In Monterey County the **Community Restorative Justice Commission** oversees local resources and concerns. Its mandate includes managing the partnership between probation, law enforcement, the judiciary, and **Restorative Justice Partners, Inc. (RJP)**, the community-based non-profit that implements restorative justice in our area.

At this LWVMC in-person general meeting, CRJ Commission member **Kathleen Bauer** will set forth the principles of restorative justice and explain how Monterey's Community Restorative Justice Commission works. **NOTE: To respect participant privacy, this meeting will not be recorded, so please attend in person.** (continued on page 2)

### In-Person Lunch & Learn, Wednesday, November 8th

at the **Unitarian Universalist Church** <http://uucmp.org> / 490 Aguajito Road / Carmel CA 93923

11:30 **Doors Open** / 12 noon **Lunch** / 12:30 to 1:30 **Presentation**

Lunch \$25 per person: grilled salmon, rice, Greek salad, hummus, pita bread, fruit salad & baklava for dessert

by **Chef Faris Nimry, International Cuisine of Pacific Grove.**

#### Reservations for Lunch are required!

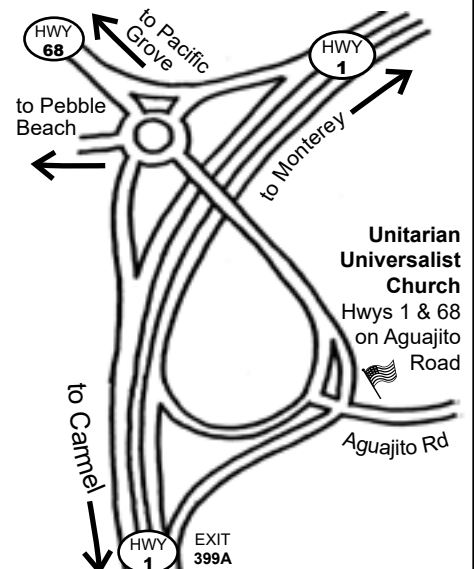
The presentation is **FREE** if you do not wish to have lunch.

**Contact: Bev Bean by Sunday, 5th November**

(831) 236-1611 or [beverlygb@gmail.com](mailto:beverlygb@gmail.com)

Pay at door for lunch by cash or check.

**Reminder to Members: Reservations are a commitment to the caterer with a minimum number of attendees, and cannot be cancelled by the League after November 8th.**



(continued from page 1)

The Restorative Justice Commission presentation will be followed by a panel discussion organized by RJ Partners.

Panelists will explain how Monterey County's restorative justice program is serving victims, perpetrators and the community at large.

The discussion will be moderated by **Charles DaSilva, Program Manager, Corrections Bureau, Monterey County Jail.**

The panel will include speakers: **Mary Ann Carbone, Mayor, San Jose City; Jeremy Dzuby, Chief Assistant Public Defender; Todd Keating, Chief Probation Officer, Monterey County; and Marisol Mendez, Assistant District Attorney, Monterey County.**

**Marianne Gawain,  
Beverly Kreps and Sharon Miller**



## ★ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE NOVEMBER 2023 ★

**L** league participation gives me the great privilege of collaborating with all of you and countless other dedicated women and men working to solve problems here on California's Central Coast. **Consider the climate crisis**—as indeed we must every day!

California's enormous economy puts it in a leadership position, and with leadership comes responsibility. In Monterey County, we can aspire to be literally as well as geographically central to California's climate solutions, just as California is central to national and world progress on climate change.



### Climate Action Plans

At a recent **Natural Resources Committee** meeting I learned (*thank you, LWVMC member Kathy Dervin!*) that fully one third of our state's greenhouse gas emissions must be spurred by the

policies of **local governments.**

That's why LWVMC is starting to look closely at the **Climate Action Plans (CAPs)** of our local government entities and continuing its efforts to assess the climate implications of numerous local policy choices.

### Celebrating Local Heroes

On **November 6th** the League will celebrate **Election Hero Day** (see page 7) with a round of

applause for our **Monterey County Elections Office, volunteer poll workers** (many of you), and **voters** (all of you)!



### Criminal Justice Reform

Focusing on local action gives us hope when the violence, cruelty and suffering of a war-torn world threaten to paralyze us with grief. Looking

within our community, we see non-profit organizations, elected officials, and law enforcement professionals who are nurturing the seeds of justice and compassion. Please join us this month as the League continues its series of presentations related to **criminal justice reform at the local level** with a meeting devoted to restorative justice.



### Thank You, Coach Tyson!

It is also time for us to thank **Kathee Tyson**, our League's outgoing **Coach**, who has been unfailingly encouraging and kind.



As Kathee moves on, we welcome the return of **Jackie Jacobberger**, who already has a deep knowledge of our organization, having previously served as our coach and shepherd in the merger of the Monterey and Salinas Leagues.

## Expressing Gratitude

World events are a constant reminder that democracy is a muscle we must all strengthen through its exercise. The League regularly participates in or observes public hearings on a wide range of topics. I am impressed by the respectful civic discourse that characterizes public meetings here in Monterey County; civility is expressed by both elected officials and participants.



As November is the month when we ground ourselves in gratitude, let's extend **kudos to the Monterey County Supervisors and their staff members** for showing patient encouragement to those who step up to share their views, including those who are a bit shy behind the public microphone.

Wishing you and your families well for Thanksgiving and through the winter holiday season!

**Marianne Gawain**

## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Our October 12 committee meeting centered on possible promotion by LWVMC of specific priorities in **Climate Action Planning** for which both **US National** and **California State Leagues** have adopted guidelines.

Most jurisdictions in Monterey County are already planning, and many have finalized their specific plans. Our meeting discussion focused on how **General Plans** and **Climate Action Plans** are joined. Attention was focused on the



**Monterey Bay Air Resources District** and the **Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC)**. These two are critical since the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions is transportation, both urban traffic and rural farming.

The discussion on Climate Action Planning will continue at the next **Natural Resources Zoom Meeting on Thursday, November 9, at noon.**

**George Riley**

## ★★★ COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT OF SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT & COUNTY JAIL ★★★



The LWVMC is part of a coalition of groups advocating community oversight of the **Monterey County Sheriff's Office and County Jail.**

The **Board of Supervisors' Ad Hoc Committee**, implemented as a result of **AB 1185** (<https://tinyurl.com/AB1185Ltr>). It seeks to ensure that the Sheriff's Office, with all of its law enforcement and custodial responsibilities, is transparent and accountable to all County residents, receives community input about its activities, and is responsive to that input. Its exercise of authority must be overseen by members of the community it is sworn to serve.

The **Supervisors** will be holding their second and likely final hybrid **Ad Hoc Committee public meeting on November 13, at 5:30pm.**



We urge all League members to attend in person or virtually, and **voice support for oversight.** If you can't attend, please consider writing a letter to the editor of one or more local media outlets.

For background you may wish to consult the coalition's letter to the Ad Hoc Committee, available at <https://tinyurl.com/AdHocLetter>.

**Sharon Miller**





## WHERE THE ACTION IS



*This letter was presented in person and read to the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Board of Directors by Tama Olver, Vice President of our League.*

Date: October 10, 2023

Subject: **Buyout of California American Water pursuant to Measure J**



Dear Chairperson Adams and the Board of Directors of MPWMD:

The **League of Women Voters of Monterey County supports MPWMD** in moving forward with the **CalAm buyout pursuant to Measure J**.

The League of Women Voters of Monterey County (LWVMC) studied ownership of water distribution systems in 2007. The study resulted in several criteria that an entity responsible for managing and distributing water should meet. Based on our evaluation of Cal Am's performance, we concluded that Cal Am has not satisfactorily met these criteria.

The **LWVMC supported Measure O** and then **Measure J**, the Ballot Initiatives requiring the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) to analyze the feasibility of purchasing California American Water Company (Cal Am) and to purchase it if it is found to be feasible. LWVMC support is based on our position that **water is a necessary resource for human life** and that **it is a public resource, not a commodity**.



**Cal Am has failed to maintain the viability of the resource and infrastructure.** As a result, the State issued a Cease-and-Desist Order in 1995 because of historical over-pumping of the Carmel River by Cal Am. During the last 28 years, Cal Am has failed to develop an alternative water supply.



**LWVMC supports fair and responsible rates and transparent decision making.** Currently, rates are set by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), a State appointed body. The rate setting process is complex, frequently requiring legal counsel. Ratepayers have limited access to CPUC hearings, which are held in San Francisco. Recommendations of the Office of Ratepayer Advocates intended to protect ratepayers are frequently ignored. The result is that we are paying rates that are among the highest in the country.

**Costs passed onto ratepayers over the years include:** \$3 million for failed plans for a "new" San Clemente Dam; \$12 million for the abandoned Moss Landing desalination pilot plant; \$20 million for the failed regional desalination plant; \$30 million for under-collection of water charges reassigned to all customers; \$77 million for removal of San Clemente Dam with Cal Am allowed to collect "investment" income. Additionally, Cal Am wants ratepayers to pay the \$3 million settlement of a lawsuit with Monterey County.



*(continued on page 5)*

**The LWVMC supports an efficient and well-run local office.** Cal Am's complaint/call centers are in Illinois and Florida. Staff at these centers are not familiar with local details.

The League's 2007 study concluded that if a significant number of these criteria were not met, then public purchase should be considered. To assure transparency, open government and local control, we think that any agency overseeing the water system should have a publicly-elected governing board.

**The LWVMC supports the findings of the MPWMD that a buyout is feasible and we support MPWMD in its efforts to move forward with the eminent domain process, as required by Measure J.**

Sincerely yours,  
**Marianne Gawain**, President LWVMC

## MPWMD BOARD VOTES TO PURSUE ACQUISITION OF CAL-AM WATER SYSTEM VIA EMINENT DOMAIN

**A**fter public comment, including our League's presentation (see above), the unanimous vote to acquire California American's Monterey water system came after a three and a half hour public hearing of the **Monterey Peninsula Water Management District** (MPWMD) on Tuesday, October 10th, attended by around 175 people, with another 120 attending remotely via Zoom.

The agenda included **Doug Dennington, MPWMD Special Counsel**, who described the eminent domain process as it applies to the circumstances on the Monterey Peninsula.



**David Stoldt, MPWMD General Manager**, followed with an expanded explanation of

feasibility, which took into consideration several issues in addition to cost. **California American Water** (CalAm) representatives defended their record and capabilities.



Approximately 60 members of the public spoke. **Vocal supporters of the acquisition of Cal-Am outnumbered those against by two to one.** Before the final vote, Board members emphasized their unbiased attitude and described specific findings from MPWMD's proposal that they found convincing were particularly relevant to the deliberation.

The Water District now has six months to file its eminent domain lawsuit in **Monterey County Superior Court**.

The MPWMD thanked all members of the public who had taken the time to understand what at times were very complex water issues and to voice their perspectives. It helped the Water Management Board and staff develop solutions that conserve and sustain the resources for which they feel a deep responsibility.

A video of the meeting can be seen at: <https://tinyurl.com/CalAmMtg>.

<https://www.mpwmd.net>



## LWVMC MEMBER PROFILE: MAYOR ALISON KERR



**A**lison Kerr first joined LWVMC in 2018, the same year she was elected **Mayor of Del Rey Oaks**. *"My mother was a lifetime League of Women Voters member, first in Santa Clara and then in Corvallis, Oregon,"* she recalls, and that was among her incentives to join our chapter.



Alison spent part of her childhood

in the San Francisco Bay Area and then, when she was in high school, her family moved to Corvallis. After high school, she says, *"I went to Oregon State University for several years, studying elementary education. I left prior to my junior year to move to Monterey. I then returned to school in my late 30's to study human communications at CSUMB."*



Alison spent 20 years serving as **Program Manager** for an interdisciplinary research institute at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

*"Basically, we were looking at projects that the Navy needed to look into but didn't know they needed to,"* she says with a chuckle. *"For example, energy as a national security issue was one of our first projects."*



One of the most important things she accomplished at NPS was creating a network of internship programs that gave underrepresented students access to graduate-level, hands-on internship experiences. This work started with **Hartnell College** students and soon expanded to local high school and university students. Alison explains,



*"Students would come for 8 to 10 weeks and work closely with world-class Naval researchers. For example, interns would work on space satellites with former astronauts, and high school students would be tracking climate effects. One young woman intern worked on Russian interference in our elections."*



More than 90 percent of the almost 200 Hartnell students who became interns in Alison's program went on to complete a four-year STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) undergraduate degree.



Alison decided to run for Mayor of Del Rey Oaks *"when the city council wasn't going to join **Monterey Bay Community Power**,"* (now called **Central Coast Community Energy**) adding that the former mayor was a climate change denier. She won the seat in 2018 and again in 2020, but lost the 2022 election by 38 votes.

Currently, Alison is using her passion for saving the planet as **co-Chair of Sustainable Del Rey Oaks**, a group that she started as a mayor's advisory committee during her first year in office. *"Citizen engagement was very important to me, and ties to energy, sustainability and environmentalism have been an important thread in my work and community service,"* she explains.



Last February, Alison retired from her job at NPS and now says she's looking for her next adventure. She's not



yet sure exactly what that will be, but suspects it will be “something around empowering young women.”

As for the League’s work, Alison is very complimentary. “I think it does an amazing job. I’m so appreciative of the League’s focus on getting out the vote, as well as providing information, including highlighting local areas of concern. I was very appreciative of the League offering a Zoom session on the FORTAG trail—the regional



bike path that was challenged in Del Rey Oaks by a referendum. Thankfully, voters supported the bike path.”

If we get lucky, perhaps Alison Kerr’s retirement years might include her becoming more involved with the League of Women Voters. Certainly, our chapter could put her educational and political skills to very good use.

Nancy Baker Jacobs

## ★ Election Hero Day Monday, November 6, 2023 ★

In honor of **Election Hero Day**, the **US League of Women Voters** reprinted an article online from **People magazine** in which it asked four nonpartisan election officials in various roles about the joys and challenges of keeping democracy intact.

LWVUS’s full article can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/LWVHeroes>

**P**oll workers and election administrators are at once the most visible and unseen figures in United States elections. Never the stars of the show yet vital to the democratic process, their hard work is put on display for the world to see any time vote counts pour in during election week.

Amid poll worker shortages and unwarranted distrust in the integrity of American elections, **the job of election workers has become increasingly difficult**. They undergo trainings and work long hours, understanding that in today’s polarized political climate, they may face harassment and threats from people who are dissatisfied with how the electorate votes.



As the US prepares to wrap its first major election cycle since the riots that followed 2020’s presidential vote count, **scrutiny toward election officials has reached a crescendo**. Still, hundreds of thousands of Americans will wake up



early on Tuesday, head to work and ensure that fellow citizens’ votes are seamlessly cast and accounted for.

This year we celebrate **Liana**, a young woman born in Fiji amid a political coup; her vow to never take democracy for granted inspired her efforts to recruit college students as poll workers.

We celebrate **Armando**, an immigrant-turned-US citizen who aims to break down barriers that prevent eligible voters from casting a ballot.

We celebrate **Beth**, a 31-year election veteran who tests voting machines and mentors chief election officers in the lead-up to Election Day.



And we celebrate **Tanya**, who returns for her second time as a poll worker, ready to empower fellow members of her community.

<https://tinyurl.com/ElectionHeros>

**CA LEAGUES SWITCHING  
FROM VOTERS EDGE  
TO VOTE411**

**VOTE411** is a  
nationwide platform  
sponsored and  
supported by LWVUS!

**VOTE 411**

**VOTE411**, like the previous VotersEdge,  
displays all measures and candidates on your  
ballot, links to public forums, how to register to  
vote, find your polling place, and more.



**We need volunteers  
for the upcoming  
California  
March 2024 Primary!**

Training on the new system  
starts soon! Volunteers are also needed to  
contact candidates to urge them to participate.

If you have a bit of time to help out,  
contact: **Arlene Guest**,  
**VOTE411 Coordinator**  
[arleneguest@gmail.com](mailto:arleneguest@gmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

**NOTE: addresses and phone numbers  
redacted in this online version.  
For complete contact information,  
see your by-mail paper copy  
or your LWVMC Handbook**

~Welcome New Members!~

**Dino Cocalis  
Jane Meade-Roberts  
Becky Suarez**

~Thanks to Our Generous Donor~  
**LWVMC General Fund  
\$35 Becky Suarez**



Send Membership Updates to  
**Janet Brennan, [brennan\\_janet@comcast.net](mailto:brennan_janet@comcast.net)**



**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 of the League.*

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

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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, [Brennan\\_Janet@comcast.net](mailto:Brennan_Janet@comcast.net)**

*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  
Education Fund (LWVCEF)  
are tax deductible.**





**"Progress in Addressing Seawater Intrusion and Managing Overdraft"**

(October 11, 2023) **Salinas Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency GM Piret Harmon** and **DGM Sara Hardgrave** spoke on managing our critically overdrafted deep aquifer basin. This was a compelling update of a precarious situation, with relevant information affecting all Monterey County residents.

**"Planning for Affordable Housing in Monterey County and Cities: Timing, Priorities and Possibilities"** (September 13, 2023)

presented by **Michael DeLapa, Executive Director of LandWatch** is now up on our website. The next time you have a conversation with someone about affordable housing, RHNA, etc., you might want to share this presentation, complete with helpful slides, and as always clear quality audio and video by **Videographer, Joe Asling**.



**Debby Majors-Degnan**



**League of Women Voters of Monterey County**



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**Nominating Committee**  
**Elected**

Nancy Baker Jacobs (2022-24)

Arlene Guest (2022-24)

Linda Gin (2023-25)

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Dennis Mar

Pamela Stewart

**Facebook**

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'  
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**LWVMryCo Calendar 2023 - 2024**



**NOVEMBER 2023**

LWVMC Board Zoom Meeting  
*Monday, November 6th, 11:30am*  
contact: Marianne Gawain

LWVMC Lunch & Learn General  
In-Person Meeting  
*"Restorative Justice: Repairing Harm,  
Offering Mutual Healing"*  
*Wednesday, November 8th, 11:30-1:30pm*  
(see page 1 for more details)  
contact: Sharon Miller

Natural Resources Committee  
Zoom Meeting  
*Thursday, November 9th, 12 noon*  
contact: George Riley

**DECEMBER**

**2023 WINTER BREAK**

No Committee or Board Meetings,  
No LWVMC Voter

*Voter Newsletter deadline for  
January 2024 issue: Friday, December 15, 2023*

**JANUARY 2024**

LWVMC Zoom General Meeting,  
Wednesday, January 10th, 2024  
*"The Equal Rights Amendment:  
The Heart of Alice Paul"*  
Guest Presenter: Zoe Nicholson  
contact: Beverly Bean

**FEBRUARY 2024**

LWVMC Lunch & Learn General In-Person Meeting  
Wednesday, February 14th, 2024

*"Update: Short Term Rental Regulations in Monterey County"*  
Guest Speakers **Supervisor Mary Adams** and other County officials (to be determined)  
to discuss status of regulation which has been under discussion for several years  
contacts: Janet Brennan, George Riley