



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF MONTEREY COUNTY "THE VOTER" NEWSLETTER

"Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy" / November 2024, Volume 97, Number 2

Wednesday, November 13th, 2024 *Our Polarized Politics*

Many Americans, including journalists and scholars, have bemoaned our descent into highly divisive, acrimonious politics. It seems that polarization has become the defining characteristic of our times.

But what exactly is polarization and is that an apt term for the current state of American politics? If so, what are the characteristics of our polarization, and might we find a way out?

Political scientist **Steven W. Hughes** will examine our current political climate to assess the extent and nature of contemporary political polarization. As of this writing we do not know the outcome of the 2024 Presidential election. Whatever that



Dr. Steven W. Hughes

outcome, Steve will factor it into this discussion.

Steven W. Hughes, Ph.D., is **Emeritus Professor of Politics and Public Administration** at **CSU Stanislaus**. At CSUS, he headed the **Program in International and Multicultural Education**, the **Center for Public Policy Studies**, and was also **Speaker of the Faculty**.

Hughes is a popular distinguished expert and local speaker at **OLLI** (the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at California State Monterey Bay**, a learning community of adults age 50+ (<https://olli.csumb.edu>).

George Riley

In-Person Lunch & Learn, Wednesday, November 13th

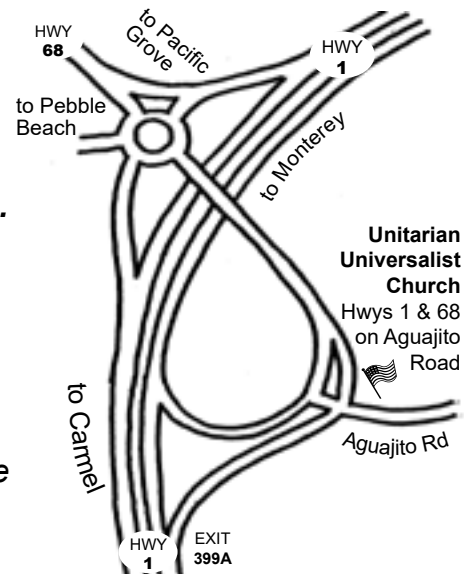
at the **Unitarian Universalist Church** <http://uucmp.org> 490 Aguajito Road / Carmel CA 93923

11:30 am **Doors Open & Registration Begins**
12 noon **Lunch** (optional) / 12:30 to 1:30 **Presentation**

Optional lunch is \$25 per person: grilled salmon, rice, Greek salad, hummus, pita bread, & baklava for dessert by **Chef Faris Nimry, International Cuisine of Pacific Grove**.

Reservations for lunch are required and can be made up to **Monday, November 11th** (Bev Bean: phone 236-1611 or e-mail beverlygb@gmail.com)
Pay at the door for lunch; meeting/presentation is **FREE**.

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 10th.





VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE UPDATE



One of my favorite League tag lines is: **“Democracy is not a spectator sport.”** Our League has certainly demonstrated that spirit this election in our voter service activities, with so many of you involved in one way or another.

Here’s a snapshot of our League’s voter service work by the numbers:



★ **7 Candidate Forums** covering 11 races

★ **8 Pros & Cons** presentations

★ **5 tabling events** at 4 different local colleges

★ **58 out of 140 candidates** registered in **Vote411**

★ **2,000 Easy Voter Guides** distributed



★ **31 poll workers and friends** staffing 2 polling places!

More than that, the **hours of work** spent would be even more impressive. So, we’re giving a shout out to all the volunteers, whether you organized a forum or researched the issues for the pros and cons, or worked a shift as a poll worker or any of the myriads of tasks involved in the activities this year.

Your work is invaluable. Thank you!

LWVMC Member Volunteers

Michele Allen / Bev Bean / Beth Benoit
 Janet Brennan / Carie Broecker / Kay Cline
 Catherine Crockett Kate Daniels / Frank Degnan / Fatima Dias MaryEllen Dick / Hetty Eddy / Bob Evans / Pat Fletcher / Harold Fosler / Marianne Gawain Elaine Gehrmann
 Alice Ann Glenn / Arlene Guest / Tamara Harris / Anne Herendeen / Sandy Hoag / Carol Kaplan / Margie Kay / Lynn Kennedy / Alison Kerr / Debby Majors-Degnan / Dennis Mar / Marilyn Maxner / An McDowell / Jane Meade-Roberts / Sharon Miller / Lucy Moore / Roberta Myers / Sabina Newman / Tama Olver / Anton Prange / Suzanne Schmidt / Sylvia Shih / Jacqueline Simon / Pam Stewart / Shelley Sweet / Jeanne Turner / Joanne Webster / Rosemary Wells / Jillian Wilson / Kathy Wojtkowski

Friends of the League Volunteers

Nadine Anderson / Ron Baxter / Alea Brown / Meg Donat / Diane Kabat / Christine Lund / Michael Roberts / Cathy Seyferth / Robin Winfield

If I left you out, let me know! I'll add you to the list in our online newsletter!

Arlene Guest

★★★ THANK YOU, ELECTION OFFICIALS ★★★

If you haven't yet read it, an article in **Time Magazine** from **Pulitzer Prize** winning investigative reporter **Barton Gellman**, reports that he is confident that election officials are better prepared than ever before to withstand assaults on election integrity.

Gellman explains that since 2020, electoral apparatus has “...upgraded equipment, tightened its procedures, improved its audits, and hardened its defenses against subversion by bad actors, foreign or domestic.” (<https://time.com/7096453/>



election-2024-security).

Gellman says other measures enacted in 2022 include “fire-walling” ballot tabulators from the Internet, and the widespread use of voter-verified paper records, make it much harder to interfere with the appointment of electors who represent a state’s popular vote. This makes it harder to block certification in Congress of the genuine electoral vote.

The full article is long, but worth reading!

Sharon Miller

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OCTOBER 2024

The LWVMC has been busy this election season. 46 League members took some role in voter services activities: **candidate forums, Pros & Cons, outreach tables, Vote411, and polling places.** Through the League, members found ways to contribute to the democratic process (see list of volunteers in Arlene Guest's article on page 4).

Also beneficial for the future were contacts the League made with individuals and organizations that we had not worked with before.



We engaged the services of two new videography services, **Wes White** and **Access Media Productions** (a non-profit organization, formerly **Access Monterey Peninsula**). It's good to have options when our stalwarts **Joe Asling** and **Bob Evans** need backup.

For the rest of this article, I am focusing on **candidate forums** because those events are the most trying. I feel stress because as the organizers, we are directly affecting people's public lives.

The League partnered with two new groups for candidate forums: the **Greenfield Chapter of LULAC** (League of United Latin American Citizens) and the **Robert Down PTA** (Pacific Grove). In both cases, our League acted in an advisory role for their events. Now that these forums are over, we have a better idea of their expectations and how our organizations can work together more effectively.



Partnering with LULAC gives the League more opportunities for candidate forums and outreach in South County. Developing contacts within the PTA is intriguing because our work with school

districts has sometimes been frustrating.

Our League sponsored forums in two new jurisdictions: **Soledad** and **Sand City.**



Our first foray into Sand City was memorable for several reasons:

- ★ The forum took place **outdoors.**
- ★ The audience had the option to visit a **taco truck** or a **pub** before the event.
- ★ It was potentially the first forum to **conclude because of darkness.**



The voters of Soledad didn't need the candidate forum to choose their City Council representative because



all three candidates were running unopposed in their districts. But it was worthwhile for the audience to see how a League forum is run. Maybe next time there will be some contested seats!

An encouraging development is the **Monterey neighborhood associations** sponsoring their own **City Council candidate forums** (thanks, longtime **League Member Bob Evans** for your push).

Sometimes the League is involved in local forums, and sometimes not. If the events are **civil, non-partisan, fair, and open to all** the League is glad step back and move onto another jurisdiction that would benefit from a candidate forum.

While 2025 will be an off-year regarding elections, we need to take advantage of the time to strengthen the contacts we have made this election cycle.

Dennis Mar



LWVMC MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS



The recent **Member Survey** conducted by **Tama Olver**, was a great achievement. We thank her for her talent in coaxing feedback! Though it wasn't completed in time to help recruit for this election season's **Candidate Forums** or **Pros & Cons**, we're printing the results as valuable information to tap into possible resources in future.



Suzanne Schmidt, Linda Deutsch, Carol Kaplan, Hetty Eddy, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson

Member Survey Highlights

Making Phone Calls: Hetty Eddy, Bev Kreps, Dennis Mar, Sharon Miller

Distributing Information: Helen Shamble, Joanne Webster, Lynn Kennedy, Suzanne Schmidt, Linda Deutsch, Anton Prange, Hetty Eddy, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller, Dennis Mar, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson

Staffing Events (such as tabling): Jane Haines, Helen Shamble, Suzanne Schmidt, Anton Prange, Hetty Eddy, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller, Dennis Mar, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson

Serving on Committees: *Natural Resources & Government* Helen Shamble; *Youth Outreach* Linda Deutsch, Jillian Wilson; *Lunch & Learn* Hetty Eddy, Linda Deutsch, Bev Kreps; *Publicity* Bev Kreps; *Government* Sharon Miller; *Working the Polls* Suzanne Schmidt, Linda Deutsch, Carol Kaplan, Anton Prange, Hetty Eddy, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller, Dennis Mar, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson, Sharon Miller, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson



Researching and Presenting "Pros and Cons": Jane Haines, Helen Shamble, Dennis Mar, Jillian Wilson

Conducting Legislative Interviews:

Organizing Hetty Eddy; Reporting Helen Shamble; Asking a question Laura Abihider, Helen Shamble, Joanne Webster, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller; Observing Laura Abihider, Sharon Miller, Dennis Mar

Youth Outreach: Jane Haines, Linda Deutsch, Sharon Miller, Jillian Wilson

Review Financial Records: Jillian Wilson

Register Voters: (*participate but not organize*):

Candidate Forum Support: *Moderator:* Laura Abihider, Dennis Mar; *Timer* Joanne Webster, Helen Shamble, Hetty Eddy, Anton Prange, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson; *Sorting Questions:* Helen Shamble, Anton Prange, Bev Kreps, Sharon Miller, Jillian Wilson; *Runner:* Laura Abihider, Joanne Webster, Helen Shamble, Anton Prange, Bev Kreps, Pat Fletcher, Jillian Wilson

Serving on LWVMC Board: Tama Olver

Lending Talents or Skills: Jillian Wilson (*librarian with skills for organizing information and research*)

Making Connections with Other Organizations:

Laura Abihider (*Treasurer, Democratic Women of Monterey County and Monterey County Democratic Central Committee Member, District 5*); Hetty Eddy (*Landwatch, Girls Inc.*), Pat Fletcher (*American Association of University Women*)



Miscellaneous Responses: "*Hearing loss prevents me from doing more*" (from two respondents); and **Anton Prange** expressed interest in being on a **Healthcare Policy Committee** if one is formed.

What About Voter Registration Events?

While many respondents expressed interest in registering voters, no one responded positively to a question about willingness to organize voter registration events. As a result, our only means to satisfy member interest in voter registration will be when we are occasionally asked to help with events organized by others.

Thank you to everyone who responded to Tama's call! The various committee chairs will contact you as needed (with the understanding that answering the call depends on your availability at the moment).

Regina Doyle



LWVMC MEMBER PROFILE: DIANA MARTINETTO



Diana Martinetto joined our League chapter about 10 years ago. She's not yet served on any committees, but has performed other voter-related and public service activities.

*"I helped register students and adults at two locations for the **Democratic Party** before the 2016 election, when **Hillary Clinton** was running for President," Diana recalls, "and I worked with **Alliance on Aging** for nearly a decade."*

Diana's first volunteer job with **Alliance on Aging** was using her lifelong work experience by doing



Medicare counseling for seniors. *"I helped them figure out which Medicare insurances would work*

best for them," she recalls. "Most people came to us not knowing much about Medicare options. It's quite an educational process because of the complexity, options and decisions they have to consider."

Most of the people Diana saw were 65 and above, but some were younger and eligible for Medicare because



of disability. *"Then there's a larger growing group of*

seniors who continue working part-time or full-time past 65 and may not have insurance through their work," Diana says. "They want to know what they should be thinking about."

After that volunteer job ended, Diana spent six months as a **senior peer counselor**, also with Alliance on Aging, a service where she met with seniors to help them verbalize issues they were having in their daily lives and possibilities for change.



Born in Los Angeles, Diana spent the first 22 years of her life there. *"My first degree was in registered nursing," she recalls. She graduated from **Los Angeles Harbor Community College** in 1974. Shortly after graduating, she met **Jeffrey Latts**, a Board-Certified Internist. They married and spent the next 50 years together.*

*"We moved from Southern California to Chicago in 1976 and Jeff did a fellowship in pharmacology," Diana says. "I went to the **University of Illinois***



*and completed a **BS degree in Nursing**. We planned to spend just two years before returning to the Los Angeles area. Jeff worked in pharmacology and I enrolled at **UCLA** for my **Master's in Nursing**, which I completed in the early 80's while working as a critical care nurse."*



Over approximately the next decade, Diana and Jeff lived between **Ann Arbor, Michigan**, and the **Philadelphia suburbs**. Jeff worked in pharmacology while Diana worked as a **critical care nurse** and earned a second graduate degree in **Business Administration**. Then she became a **health care management consultant**,

traveling to hospitals throughout the country. She helped hospitals with strategic planning and operations to strengthen their future competitive position and productivity.

In 1990, they gladly relocated to the Bay Area. *"Jeff got a job in Alameda. We sought the weather and*

the culture of the West Coast,” Diana explains. “We lived there for eight years. I continued with nursing, and then decided to retire. That lasted only a couple of weeks. I wanted to be my own boss and to use the skills I had—education, management, communication, organizational dynamics.” So, she became a **residential real estate broker** in **Marin County**, where they moved in 1998.



Diana and Jeff stayed in the Bay Area until their final retirement in 2011. “We wanted to find a location that would be our last,” she says. They looked all up and down coastal California and finally decided to build a house in Pasadera. “*The Peninsula was our favorite location,*” she explains, “*the best climate and quality of life.*”

Unfortunately, Jeff was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease in 2018 and he died this September. Now,

Diana is dealing with grief and contemplating a future. She’s joined a grief group at the **Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula** which is facilitated by LWVMC member **Sharon Miller** and doesn’t require membership in UUCMP.

Diana says she especially appreciates the professionalism of our League’s website, the educational resources made available to the public, and the Lunch & Learn monthly presentations. Still, she agrees with most of us that we need to recruit younger generations to become members.



Nancy Baker Jacobs

★★ STUDENT ART: PRAISE IN RECOGNITION OF A JOB WELL DONE ★★



Sometimes we adults forget how important recognition is to teens. We say, "Good job" or "That's good", and let it go at that.

were bright, colorful and very original. Like the LWV, they believe every eligible voter needs to participate.

Seeing their work up in public and being praised is a memory that the students who attended the reception at the **Monterey Regional Airport** will long remember.

Their encouraging posters everyone to vote



We hope that, as travelers pass through the hall, they'll stop for a moment and look at the message. Maybe they'll even make mental notes to remember to get their ballots in the mail or check their in-person polling place!

Beverly Kreps

Monterey Regional Airport's Art Program installation of entries from the **LWVMC Student Art Contest: "Your Vote is Your Voice,"** are on display in the mezzanine area through November.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE OCTOBER UPDATE

WVMC sent a letter to the **Monterey County Planning Department** in January of this year, urging improvements in the planning process. So far there has been no response or improvement.



<content/uploads/FinalCDOPage-1.htm>) in 2025.

Climate Action Plans were discussed. The various **Air Quality Control Boards** are debating the relative value of **limiting greenhouse gas emissions** from mobile sources (autos, trucks) vs stationary sources (gas fired stoves, heaters). The overwhelming evidence points to mobile sources as the biggest polluters.

Senator John Laird's recent "**Senate Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Water**" was informative. There seems to be an opening for the State to consider lifting the 2016 **Cease & Desist Order moratorium** (<https://dev.mpwmd.net/wp->

George Riley

★★★ LWV CALIFORNIA & CLIMATE CHANGE ★★★

Heat records are being broken, glaciers are melting, seas are rising. We're at a point where no matter what we do, we can't avoid a very different climate future. **We must act now to prevent truly catastrophic consequences.** Existing groups you can join are:



are taking a large toll (<https://groups.io/g/lwvclimateteam/wiki/28916>).

LWVCA Climate Change action began in 2006 with the **Berkeley-Albany-Emeryville League** and grew to encompass California. In 2020 the **California Climate Interest Group** (<https://lwvc.org/california-climate-interest-group/>) joined with other Leagues across the US to form the **LWVUS Climate Interest Group (CIG)** (<https://groups.io/g/lwvclimateteam/wiki/26861>).

LWVCA's Water Interest Group, active for decades, works on understanding and policy for surface waters, groundwater, water conveyance (canals), and, more recently, climate change and water (<https://groups.io/g/lwvclimateteam/wiki/26889>).

Adverse impacts of a warming climate are felt more by disadvantaged communities housed in low-lying areas vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding, without air conditioning in hot climates, and near air pollution sources. The League's **Climate Justice team** is working to ensure these disparities are considered in climate policy as it is developed (<https://lwvc.org/climate-justice>).

California's 77,500 farms and ranches produce more than 400 commodities and two-thirds of the nation's fruits and nuts. **Greenhouse gas emission (GHG) goals** rely on changing lands to be net carbon sinks, but currently natural and working lands, and food waste are net carbon emitters (<https://lwvc.org/food-soils-agriculture/>).

Cities are on the front lines in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The **Climate Action Plan (CAP) Team** within the LWVUS CIG reviews plans from cities and counties to find the most effective actions and processes to reduce **Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs)**.

Last but not least, our **LWVMC Natural Resources Committee** discusses and takes action on local Climate Change issues. All members are welcome to join (see *calendar back page*).

Beverly Bean



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, 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 Local Impact Fund (LWVCLIF)

(formerly LWVC Education Fund)
are tax deductible,

but please continue to make the donations payable to LWVCEF.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

New Members Welcome!

In our October issue we listed four new members who joined over the summer.



If you have friends or family who might benefit from joining our League, bring them along to a **Lunch & Learn**, show them where to view our **online videos**, or share your copy of **The Voter** to show what we have been doing to promote non-partisan voting locally.

Contact Correction

Rosemary Wells rwells13oaks@gmail.com

Thanks to Our Generous Donors

Our October issue also listed over 40 members who graciously gave to our LWVMC General Fund, LWV California Education Fund, and Florence Curlee Scholarship Fund.

★★★★★★★★★★

Contact: **Janet Brennan**
brennan_janet@comcast.net

WEEKLY ELECTIONS RUMORS BRIEFING FROM LWVUS MARCH 18 - DEC 30, 2024

The Weekly Election Rumors Briefing by the US League covers growing national and local trends in mis- and-disinformation. The briefings highlights pieces



of disinformation that have made headlines and how best to track and address them. At the end of the briefings there will be time for Questions & Answers. Sessions occur on **Tuesdays at 3:30 PM ET** (adjust your viewing to Eastern Time).

Go to <https://web.cvent.com/event/dc6ab7b4-7ece-4bf8-bef6-05634ca82ee6/regProcessStep1?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=6ac97c31-981f-4484-8761-287f6662f1ed>

DID YOU MISS A GENERAL MEETING?

Find them all online at tinyurl.com/LWVMCVideos



**"California State Ballot
Proposition Pros & Cons"**
Marianne Gawain and
Marilyn Maxner (10/9/2024)



"Monterey Civil Grand Jury"
Tom Mastre and Maria Garcia
(5/8/24)



"Ranked Choice Voting"
Arash Sayadi & Steve Chessin
(4/10/24)



**"Voting Matters:
What About Turnout?"**
Vinz Koller (3/13/24)



**"Regulation of STRs in
Monterey County"**
Mary Adams (2/14/24)



**"The Equal Rights Amendment:
The Heart of Alice Paul"**
Zoe Nicholson (1/10/24)

Debby@DegnanDivers.com

Board of Directors **League of Women Voters of Monterey County**

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Shelley Sweet

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Jackie Jacobberger

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Linda Gin (2023-25)
Marjorie Kay (2024-26)
(Appointed)

Marianne Gawain
Beverly Kreps
VOTE411
Arlene Guest

Videographer
Joe Asling

"The Voter" Biographer
Nancy Baker Jacobs

Website Coordinator
Debby Majors-Degnan

★ **LWVMryCo The VOTER** ★

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF MONTEREY COUNTY
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★ **LWVMryCo Calendar** ★
2024 - 2025



NOVEMBER 2024

Board Zoom Meeting
Monday, November 4th, 11:30am
contact: **Dennis Mar**

In-Person General Meeting
Wednesday, November 13th, 12 noon
"Our Polarized Politics"
Guest Presenter: Dr. Steven W. Hughes,
Professor Emeritus Politics & Public
Administration, Director Center for
Public Policy Studies, CSU Stanislaus
contact: **George Riley**

Natural Resources Committee Zoom Meeting
Thursday, November 14th, 12 noon
contact: **George Riley**

DECEMBER 2024
WINTER BREAK

No Board or Committee Meetings
or "The Voter" Newsletter
until January 2025

JANUARY 2025

Board Zoom Meeting
Monday, January 6th, 11:30am
contact: **Dennis Mar**

General Meeting
Wednesday, January 8th, 12 noon
(format and speaker
to be announced)