



# THE VOTER

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY**  
*Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities*

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The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose candidates or political parties.

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## **2018 Fall Kickoff**

### **Bob Barrett on *Civil Discourse***

**What is it? Why is it important? How is it done?**

**Saturday, September 22, 9 am - noon**

**75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton**

Bob Barrett has more than 30 years of experience as a mediator and collaborative problem-solving practitioner. He will present some basics about civil discourse as a path toward respectful conversations engaging those with opposing viewpoints. He will cover how civil discourse can be distinguished from robust debate and discussion, why civility is important for producing positive change, and why it does NOT mean stifling dissent.

**An important meeting you won't want to miss!**

Contact: Suzanne Fouché, 650-868-0320, [safouche@comcast.net](mailto:safouche@comcast.net)

# Facing Hard Truths About the League's Origin

By Chris Carson, LWVUS President & Virginia Kase, LWVUS CEO

(Excerpts chosen by *VOTER* editor)

Last week, Brent Staples of the New York Times published an op-ed titled, [\*How the Suffrage Movement Betrayed Black Women\*](#). The League of Women Voters was not mentioned in the piece, but we should have been.

The League was founded in 1920—just months before the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment—by American suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt. Catt was a complicated character, a political operative, and by modern standards, yes, racist. While fighting for the 19th Amendment and lobbying Southern senators, she famously claimed, “White supremacy will be strengthened, not weakened, by women’s suffrage.”

These remarks are sometimes brushed over as a sign of the times or a political strategy. But actions speak louder than words, and our organization was not welcoming to women of color through most of our existence.

Even during the Civil Rights movement, the League was not as present as we should have been. While activists risked life and limb to register black voters in the South, the League’s work and our leaders were late in joining to help protect all voters at the polls. It wasn’t until 1966 that we reached our first position to combat discrimination. Still, our focus on social policy was from afar—not on the front lines.

Today, we acknowledge this shortcoming and that we have more work to do.

The League of Women Voters serves millions of voters in underrepresented communities across America every year, but as an organization, our membership does not always reflect the communities we serve. As we approach our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are not only striving for better, we will do better.

**We have embraced a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy.** We know policy alone does not solve a problem. The League is committed to living our values and prioritizing inclusion.

We hope that as an organization we offer and nurture a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that is welcoming to all who are drawn to our mission and wish to make a positive impact.

## From the President

Welcome to a new year with the League. We've already begun organizing for the November election. Our League's primary purpose is to encourage all eligible citizens to register to vote and to provide them with the information they need to make educated and considered decisions. **HELP US TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Please contact Geoff Ryder, **Voter Registration**, Linda Atkinson, **Pros & Cons**, and/or Karen Moore, **Candidate Forums**, AND OFFER YOUR SUPPORT! (**See** following page for all the details.)

The Board held our Annual Retreat in August, where we discussed ways that we might address our program emphases on voter outreach, housing, transportation and sea level rise. Barbara Wallis updated us on the county transportation tax, Measure W, which will be on the November ballot. At our next Board meeting, we will decide if we should join the North and Central League in endorsing it.

We also added a new goal, to increase our League's diversity. Our South County region has a variety of races, languages, and cultures and our League should reflect that. Please contact me if you are interested in helping us **MOVE TO A MORE INCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP.**

The merger of our League and our Ed Fund is complete. The document was certified on August 8. Our former Ed Fund is now officially the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County and remains a 501(c)3 organization.

With a county transportation tax measure on the November ballot, we are trying to arrange a program with a representative from the transportation department. Watch your email for time and place.

And, finally, mark your calendar for September 22, 9 - noon for our **ANNUAL KICKOFF**. I hope to see you there! 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton.

**Shirley Des Marais**, President

## **Volunteer for one of our Voter Outreach Events!** **(or attend one, and tell your friends)**

**Candidate Forums** – We need question card collectors, card sorters, time keepers, and monitors at each event. All forums are 7:00-8:30. Contact Karen Moore, [klmoore2010@hotmail.com](mailto:klmoore2010@hotmail.com)

- Sept. 26      Redwood City Council  
City Hall Council Chambers, 1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City
- October 4    Woodside City Council  
Woodside Village Church, 3154 Woodside Road, Woodside
- October 10   Menlo Park City Council, District 2  
Belle Haven Library, 413 Ivy Drive, Menlo Park
- October 11   East Palo Alto City Council  
City Hall Community Room, 2415 University Ave, EPA
- October 17   Menlo Park City Council District 1  
Belle Haven Library, 413 Ivy Drive, Menlo Park
- October 22   Menlo Park City Council, District 4  
Little House, 800 Middle Avenue, Menlo Park

**Pros and Cons** – Presenters are needed to discuss the Propositions on the November ballot. The State League provides information on each proposition; training and coaching will be provided. Contact Linda Atkinson, [leatkinson@comcast.net](mailto:leatkinson@comcast.net)

- October 2, 7:00      St. Matthias Catholic Church, Redwood City
- October 14, 11:45   Saint Bede's Episcopal Church, Menlo Park
- October 15, 7:00    The Sequoias
- October 16, 1:00    Little House, Menlo Park
- October 17, 7:00    Woodside Road Methodist Church
- October 20, 2:30    Belle Haven Library, Menlo Park
- October 24, 7:00    Menlo Park Main Library

**Voter Registration and Information Events** - Help staff a table with information on how to register to vote and information on the November election. Contact Geoff Ryder, [gryder@gmail.com](mailto:gryder@gmail.com)

- Sept 8            Facebook Fiesta, 1:00-3:00 and 3:00-5:00
- Sept 12          Canada College Student Club Rush 9:00-1:00
- Sept 13          Canada College Constitution Day, 9:00-1:00 & 7:00-8:00
- Sept 17          Constitution Day, time and location to TBD
- Sept 20          Onetta Harris Community Center Annual Open House 6:00-8:00
- Sept 25          National Voter Registration Day, 2 to 3-hour shifts  
Menlo Park Main Library, 2:00-9:00  
Belle Haven Library, 3:15-9:00  
Canada College, TBD
- Oct 13          Facebook Truck Yeah, 1:00-3:00 and 3:00-5:00
- Most Sundays   Menlo Park Farmer's Market, 9:30-11:30

## **Sea Level Rise – Advocacy and Action - Ann Draper**

In February, the two San Mateo County League presidents signed a letter to the County Board of Supervisors, recommending acceptance of the County sea level rise vulnerability assessment. The Leagues had been part of the citizens advisory committee helping to create the assessment.

Cities and the County are beginning to take actions to reduce the impacts of sea level rise. Check out the County's web page at <http://www.seachangesmc.com/get-involved> to find a map showing actions that are now underway and events that are being held. Our members can determine where they want to know more and learn how to be involved. We can make a difference in helping to educate ourselves and the community and support efforts to reduce our vulnerability to sea level rise.

## **San Mateo County Charter Review Committee - Ann Draper**

San Mateo has a charter which addresses governance of the County. Approximately every ten years, the Board of Supervisors creates a review committee to consider potential charter changes generated by both the Board of Supervisors and by the committee itself. In 2017, the Board created a review committee and designated one of the committee members to represent the Leagues in San Mateo County. Ann Draper is the representative from the Leagues to the committee. The term of the committee is from January to June 30, 2018. The Board had three topics for the committee to consider:

1. Should the recruitment requirements for a county executive as shown in the charter be changed? Right now, the charter has specific recruitment requirements that are often hard to implement.
2. Should there be an appointed director of finance?

Several counties now have an appointed director of finance. San Mateo has an elected treasurer and an elected comptroller.

3. Should the elections functions be separated from the current structure that has an elected official as its head and has other duties including assessor and county clerk recorder?

Some counties have a separate appointed head of election services.

The committee heard a variety of ideas for additional Charter changes as proposed by my members and by the public. After consideration, no new Charter changes were added.

## **On The Table Report – Barb Wallis**

On November 15, 2017 there were 7,000 Bay Area residents who met in small groups at tables for a meal and conversation on housing in the Bay Area. It was called On The Table. Many organizations and individuals sponsored conversations. Data on the ideas and conversations were gathered and the data was recently shared at follow-up meetings at the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. For a summary go to: <https://www.siliconvalleycf.org/onthetable>.

With elections in November this year, October 23rd, 2018 was chosen for On The Table 2018. It is not just to repeat 2017, but to give feedback to citizens and possibly move forward toward solutions to the affordable housing crisis in the Bay Area. There will be housing issues on some citizens ballots in November.

Another interesting website in our league's area is the site for the Fair Housing Council out of Redwood City. I found going to the Facebook sites for these two organizations was also intriguing.

## **Note from the Treasurer – Jack Morris**

**THE MERGER OF OUR LEAGUE AND ED FUND IS FINAL! BOTH DUES AND DONATIONS MADE TO LWVSSMC AFTER AUGUST 2, 2018 CAN BE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.**

NO CHECKS should be written to LWVSSMC Education Fund.

ALL CHECKS should now be written to LWVSSMC (League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County).

NOTE: If you are holding any un-cashed check from either LWVSSMC or LWVSSMC Ed Fund that was issued to you prior to August 14, 2018, **do not attempt to cash or deposit it**. IT WILL BOUNCE BECAUSE THE OLD LEAGUE ACCOUNT HAS BEEN CLOSED. If you are in this situation, please return the check to the treasurer and you will receive a replacement check.

Also, if an organization is donating to OUR League on your behalf, please be vigilant in ensuring that they have OUR mailing address—recently a contribution from a trust, intended for NV4Y, actually ended up at the North & Central SMC LWV offices!

## **HIGHLIGHTS from the August 11<sup>th</sup> BOARD Meeting: Your Board**

### **Discussed**

- Studying Measure W, the county transportation tax proposal, and voting at the next Board meeting to decide whether or not we join N&C in supporting it.
- The need to develop a generic process and structure for managing separate projects such as New Voices; subcommittee proffered draft project submission form.

### **Learned**

- NV4Y has received \$5,000 in funding from Silicon Valley Community Foundation; and that we must confirm security requirements for personnel working with youth.
- County transportation survey results show residents prioritize funding for potholes, infrastructure, reducing vehicle miles traveled, incentives for alternative transport methods, and complete streets policies.
- That artistic pins from other Leagues presenting at National have been used as a marketing tool, and whether we utilize this concept, either involving local artists, or licensing from other Leagues.

### **Considered**

- A proposal to work with North & Central League on a program about human trafficking in early 2019.
- A suggestion to set up an advocacy group that can be used to share initiatives from State and National Leagues.

## **MEET OUR OFF-BOARD CHAIRS**

by Cheryl Ray

Our **WEB MASTER** is Sanneke Jang. Sanneke grew up in the Netherlands. She now resides in Redwood City. Sanneke attended high school, then took web design classes at community college. She is retired from a career in web design. She joined the League in 2017 after being recruited for Web Master. Sanneke's hobbies include crafts and scrabble.

Nancy Lou 'Lalu' Kiesling is **NOMINATING COMMITTEE** chair. Lalu grew up in Houston, Texas and graduated from Stanford University in Physical Science. Her volunteer work includes the Environmental Volunteers, which she helped to found, and docenting at Jasper Ridge. Lalu first joined the League in Los Altos, later joining ours. She joined because she wanted to know 'what was going on' and Lucile Spurlock urged her to join. She enjoys hiking and 'botanizing.' Lalu has four children and lives in Menlo Park.

Chairing **ROSTER** and **MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS** is Anne DeCarli. Anne grew up and has spent most of her life in the Bay Area, and now resides in Redwood City. She is a widow and has two adult children, who, along with their spouses, live in San Francisco. Her education includes Cal State East Bay and UC Berkeley. Her career consists of programing and teaching. Anne joined the League about 1965. She says, "someone took me to a meeting, and I was persuaded this was a good thing to do." Her hobbies are hiking and music.

Chairing **BUDGET** is Wanda Ginner. Wanda grew up in Visalia, in California's central San Joaquin Valley. After several moves, Wanda and her husband and two sons settled in Portola Valley in 1982. She received a B.S. from San Jose State University and passed the CPA exam. She opened her own CPA firm and operated as an independent 9-person office. In 1999 she merged her company with a large regional firm. In 2005 Wanda joined two favorite employees to form Magnolia Group LLP in Los Altos. She is now semi-retired and devotes time to charitable activities including Women GO! and as a board member on Dining for Women. Her hobbies are tennis and pickleball. She joined the League in the 1970's. Wanda's sons are now adults, she has a daughter-in-law and a 20-year old grandson.

Chairing **MEDIA RELATIONS** is Rita Comes. Rita grew up in New York City. She now resides in Portola Valley, along with an enthusiastic, active, creative eight-year old. Rita attended the University of Hartford. Her career includes research and project management positions. Among her current volunteer activities are Board of Hidden Villa, Local and National Fencing positions for "the business of Fencing," and the American Cancer Society. Rita joined the League years ago because she cares. Two of her hobbies are fencing and reading.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

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<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
9 Sun	2 – 4 pm	<b>ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: The Power of Words.</b> Nationally acclaimed historical interpreter Susan Marie Frontczak performs at Palo Alto High School Media Center, 50 Embarcadero Road. <a href="#">Tickets at Eventbrite</a>
15 Sat	11 am - 1 pm	<b>NEW VOICES FOR YOUTH VIDEO SCREENING.</b> See how kids use video to make their voices heard. Meet the students, co-directors and LWV volunteers! MidPen Media Center, 900 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto. Contact: Kathleen Weisenberg, 650-232-7146, <a href="mailto:davkatweisenberg@att.net">davkatweisenberg@att.net</a>
20 Thurs	7 – 9 pm	<b>LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING</b> at Bernadette’s house, 146 Atherwood Avenue, Redwood City. Contact: Shirley Des Marais <a href="mailto:sdesmarais@pacbell.net">sdesmarais@pacbell.net</a> or Bernadette Burns, <a href="mailto:bernadetteburns362@gmail.com">bernadetteburns362@gmail.com</a>
22 Sat	9 am - noon	<b>FALL KICKOFF AND SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING.</b> 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton. Prospective members welcome to attend—invite your friends. Contact: Suzanne Fouché, <a href="mailto:safouche@comcast.net">safouche@comcast.net</a>
23 Sun	2:30 – 6:30 pm	<b>WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL FALL KICKOFF.</b> 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton. Speaker Colin Kahl on <u>US Foreign Policy in the Age of ‘America First’</u> followed by reception. Contact: Katie Zoglin, <a href="mailto:peninsula@worldaffairs.org">peninsula@worldaffairs.org</a>
25 Tues		<b>NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY!</b> Contact: Geoff Ryder, <a href="mailto:gryder@gmail.com">gryder@gmail.com</a>
27 Thurs	12 noon	<b>Book Group Meeting</b> to discuss <i>Grant</i> , by Ron Chernow. At Lucile Spurlock’s, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Please bring your own lunch. Guests are welcome. Contact: Judy Orttung, <a href="mailto:jorttung@comcast.net">jorttung@comcast.net</a> 650-342-5853.
29 Sat	1 – 5 pm	A multi-League-sponsored <b>civil discourse workshop around immigration</b> , including interactive exercises and role playing. \$10 to cover materials & refreshments; registration required. <a href="#">Register here.</a> Ladera Community Church, UCC, Peabody Hall, 3300 Alpine Road, Portola Valley. Contact: <a href="mailto:communications@lwvcs.org">communications@lwvcs.org</a> or 408-730-4413
29 Sat	12 noon – 4 pm	<b>SILICON VALLEY CANDIDATE FORUM.</b> A discussion on <b>The Role of Government in The New Economy</b> featuring candidates for California statewide (and Bay Area) public office on issues considered of importance to the technology industry. <a href="http://www.svcforum.com">www.svcforum.com</a> . In San Francisco.
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
17 Weds	7 – 8 pm	<b>18<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES FORUM with Anna Eshoo and Christine Russell.</b> Campbell Community Center, Roosevelt Room (#80), 1 West Campbell Avenue, Campbell. Contact: <a href="mailto:lwv.swscv@gmail.com">lwv.swscv@gmail.com</a> Free, but registration is required. <a href="#">Register at Eventbrite</a>

18 Thurs	7 – 9 pm	<b>LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING</b> at Bernadette’s house, 146 Atherwood Avenue, Redwood City. Contact: Shirley Des Marais <a href="mailto:sdesmarais@pacbell.net">sdesmarais@pacbell.net</a> or Bernadette Burns, <a href="mailto:bernadetteburns362@gmail.com">bernadetteburns362@gmail.com</a>
25 Thurs	12 noon	<b>Book Group Meeting</b> to discuss <i>Facts and Fears: Hard Truths from a Life in Intelligence</i> , by James R. Clapper. Contact: Judy Orttung, <a href="mailto:jorttung@comcast.net">jorttung@comcast.net</a> 650-342-5853.

## SEE PAGE 4 FOR ALL OF OUR VOTER SERVICE DATES!

The League of Women Voters Ed Fund AmazonSmile Account



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), you’ll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization.

Donate money automatically every time you shop.

### KEPLER’S “COMMUNITY PARTNERS” INCLUDES OUR LEAGUE

Don’t forget when you are buying books, or anything, at Kepler’s any time of year, to mention the League when you check out. They will donate back to us 6% of the sale. If you make your purchase online through Keplers.com, begin your shopping by clicking Community Partners, then Shop For Your Nonprofit, and then League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County.