

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

The Voter

*The official newsletter of the League of Women
Voters of Ventura County.*

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February 2023

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy Birthday to the League!

On February 14th 2023 the League of Women Voters will be celebrating it's 103rd birthday! Leagues around the country will be marking this event. Many of you know that the league was founded in 1920, six months before the ratification of the 19th amendment which gave women the right to vote.

Carrie Chapman Catt, a Suffragist, is credited with the founding of the League. It's mission was to help the 20 million newly eligible voters, women, learn about voting. However, from the beginning the League believed that education aimed at all of the electorate, not just women, was needed.

Over the decades the League has been involved with many different activities. For instance, did you know that after WWII the League helped to ensure US participation in the United Nations and served as a consultant to the US Delegation? To this day the League still maintains official observer status to the UN. Another interesting tidbit is that in 1976 the League won an Emmy Award for the Presidential Debates which the League sponsored. The League sponsored debates focused on nonpartisan issues

with the goal of informing voters. The League withdrew its sponsorship of general election debates in 1988 due to increasingly partisan conditions.

The National League has also been involved in campaigning for voter registration reform, redistricting reform, equal access to the ballot and more. Happy Birthday to the US League!



February 14th is also Valentines Day and a good time to show our love and appreciation for our local league, its leaders and its members. Our local league was formally recognized in March 1960 after a group of women in Ventura started organizing it in late 1958.

We have many volunteers and board members who are active and deserve recognition. At this time, I would like to formally thank a few of them who often work behind the scenes. Many thanks to Pat Butler, who not only is our membership director but is also the editor of The Voter. Thanks also to Karen Savitt, our treasurer, Judy Murphy, our secretary, Matty Park who manages our website, Cheryl Collart who is chair of both the Nominating and Budget Committees, and Chelsea Sutula who handles our social media and public relations. There are many others who dedicate a lot of time and effort to our league as well. We thank you all for your dedication. Happy Valentines Day to all and Happy 103rd Birthday to the League!

thank
you!

Kathy Morgan, President

COMING EVENTS



Ventura County Grand Jury Open House

02/23/2023, 3-6pm

646 County Square Drive, Ventura

Contact: Lori Macdonald

lori.macdonald@ventura.org

The Grand Jury is an investigative panel of 19 citizen volunteers selected by the Superior Court to oversee and investigate most aspects of local government. This includes the County of Ventura, the ten cities in the County, and special districts. The work of the Grand Jury is confidential until it produces a report of its findings and recommendations.

Tour the Grand Jury Chambers. Learn about the qualifications to serve on a grand jury, benefits of serving, and more.



Walk Against Hate

By the Anti-Defamation League

02/26/2023, 1-4pm

Conejo Creek North Park,
1379 E Janss Road, Thousand Oaks

Register Here: <https://www.walkagainsthate.org/vc>

ADL's Walk Against Hate is not just a walk. It's an opportunity for community organizations, school groups, families, and businesses across Ventura County to unite against hate and to express a shared vision of mutual respect and appreciation.

The afternoon will begin with a diversity festival, followed by a walk to celebrate our community in action. Join ADL and community leader in a bipartisan, diverse, and positive event affirming Ventura County as 'No Place to Hate'.



Observer Corps Report

Submitted by Betsy Patterson and Pat Essick

Democracy was at work the last week of January. The Ojai Unified School District Board held three special meetings to hear from the public and to consider options for rectifying the significant financial shortfall facing the Ojai USD. In each session we heard many members of the community who made passionate and informed public comments as well as multiple emailed public comments.

These meetings were the first opportunity for the school board members to hear each other's perspectives and ideas. All of the members had received much input from emails, phone calls, one-on-one discussions with teachers, school staff, and parents, but seemed restricted from discussing issues with their fellow board members. Is that really how the Brown Act works? Check it out here: https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/the_brown_act_summary.pdf.

The state Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team presented their review of the Ojai USD that led to a fiscal health risk score of 67.9%. A score of over 40% is high risk. No action was taken but it was acknowledged that the \$2.3 million deficit must be fixed.

The second meeting presented options for reconfiguration or consolidation of schools and answered questions from board members. No action was taken but more information about the effectiveness of the proposed plans was requested.

A huge concern expressed repeatedly by the teachers, staff, and community members was the current superintendent's lack of trustworthiness and transparency. No Board member had addressed this concern at any of the meetings. One parent spoke and presented notification of a petition to recall his elected Board member. A recall election is part of our California democracy, but not in all states. Learn more here: <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/recall-of-state-officials>.



Observing our elected officials in action is as important as being informed about the candidates before we vote. Consider joining the Observer Corps and watching!

Lunch With the League

Contact: [Patty Chan](#)



The popular "Lunch with the League" series will return soon. **We are looking for new topics.** Your ideas are welcome. So far, the suggestions have been to have a local judge discuss how voters can learn more about judicial candidates, interview the County Counsel on how the language for initiatives/referendums is created, interview water board members about plans to conserve rainwater, etc., explain ranked choice voting, interview mayors and/or school board members.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & COMING ACTIVITIES

Wednesday, February 1st – Black History Month Begins.

Wednesday, February 1st, 6:30 pm - Happy Hour on Zoom hosted by [Matty Park](#).
[Members and guests are welcome.](#)

Thursday, February 9th, 11:30am - **In person Board Meeting**, Ventura College of Law, 4475 Market Street, Ventura. [Members and guests are welcome.](#) To join us, please email [Kathy Morgan](#) for the Zoom invitation.



February 14th – League of Women Voters 103rd Birthday.

Wednesday, February 15th , 5:30pm –Happy Hour on Zoom (3rd Wednesday of the month) hosted by [Kay Armstrong](#)- [Members and guests are welcome.](#)

Thursday, February 16th, 4:00pm – Race and Social Justice Committee (3rd Thursday of the month) hosted by [Kay Armstrong](#).

February 20th – President's Day



Tuesday, February 21st, 12:00 pm-2:00 pm - LWVVC Program Planning. Contact: [Betsy Patterson](#)

Thursday, February 23rd, 3-6pm – Grand Jury Open House, 646 County Square Drive, Ventura. Contact: Lori Macdonald lori.macdonald@ventura.org

Thursday, February 23rd, 3:00pm – Climate Change Committee meets on the 4th Thursday of the month. Contact: [Wayne Morgan](#)

Sunday, February 26th, 1:00-4:00pm – Walk Against Hate sponsored by ADL Register here: <https://www.walkagainsthate.org/vc>

Sunday, March 5th, 11:30am-1:30pm – Planned Parenthood Brunch, Spanish Hills Country Club. Event is sold out.



May 18-21, 2023 - LWVC Statewide Convention in San Francisco. The Convention will be in-person at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco, Downtown Soma. (Soma means south of Market Street.) Mark your calendars! The LWVVC will subsidize the cost of attending the convention.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES



Be a Part of the Greater League

Participate in LWVUS and LWVC.

Sign up for Updates and League Groups

For All League Members

- **Updates from [LWVUS](#) and [LWVC](#).**
- **LWVC Google and Facebook Groups** - The LWVC has several different interest groups, they include: Advocacy, Communications, Voter Service, Climate Change,

Criminal Justice Reform, Healthcare, Homeless, Immigration, Money in Politics, Program Planning, Redistricting, Schools and Communities First, and Water. For details see the [Join an Online Discussion Group](#).



New Year, New Goals!

LWVVC Program Planning

Tues., February 21st at 12:00 pm-2:00 pm.

Contact: [Betsy Patterson](#)

What part of Making Democracy Work do you want to work on? How can we affect Climate Change locally here in Ventura County? What are the issues facing our communities and how can we make the social justice system work for all of us? What do you remember about your Civics class in school - or would you like to refresh your memory and learn more about how our government works? What's happening to local journalism and how can we combat mis/disinformation? What are workable solutions to homelessness and affordable housing? How does the Observer Corps keep our elected officials accountable? What is Advocacy and how is it done? How can we educate and register voters?

Bring your ideas and your readiness to be a part of the future of the League of Women Voters. Register [HERE](#) or look for an email with the invitation to register soon. Be a part of planning our next year.



Climate Committee

4TH Thursday of the month

3pm on Zoom

Contact: [Wayne Morgan](#)

The new year seemingly is bringing more attention to climate change. People are trying to figure out what incentives and rebates the Inflation Reduction Act will offer to local governments, business owners and especially, residents. What actions can we take to save our planet? What are ways to save money in the new year? These are just some of the questions we will be exploring in the next climate committee meeting. Please join us.

Racial and Social Justice Committee and DEI Committee



3rd Thursday of the month

4:00pm on Zoom

Contact: [Kay Armstrong](#)

We met for our first meeting of the year January 19th. We talked about a zoom meeting of the LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group on Sheriff's. This meeting highlighted the LA Sheriff Oversight Commission.

We also had a lively discussion of social issues and our plans for this year.

Next meeting will be February 16th.



Government 101

Contact: [Patty Chan](#) or [Cheryl Collart](#)

The new year is an exciting time to be a LWVVC Observer. New city council members and new members of the County Board of Supervisors are taking their positions and beginning their work. Let them know the League is paying

attention.

Observers are asked to wear their blue League shirts (available from [Karen Savitt](#)) and LWVVC "Observer" buttons (available from [Pat Butler](#) or [Karen Savitt](#)). Please complete the easy one-page orbserver form available on our website and return it to [Pat Butler](#).



Voter Registration Committee - High School, College & Community Events

Contact: info@lwvventuracounty.org or leave a message at (805) 303-1476.

The Voter Registration team is gearing up to begin high school voter registration events in Ojai, Oxnard, and Ventura. We would love your help in making contact with the Conejo Valley, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Santa Paula, and Fillmore school districts. If you have a contact or want to help, please let us know. Also, tell us if you would like to help in the classroom or would like to be trained to lead or help with voter registration. Voting is a right but also a responsibility. Let's show the next generation why voting is important to them.

Communications Committee



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Contact: [Chelsea Sutula](#).

We coordinate local media relations and public outreach, including press releases, letters to the editor, social media, television, radio, and website to communicate to the members and the public. We could use your help! If you have graphic design expertise, website administration background, or if you love to engage on social media, please contact the chair, [Chelsea Sutula](#).

Nominations Committee

Contact: [Cheryl Collart](#)



The Nominations Committee will be meeting in February to work on the slate of officers for the coming program year and will be seeking involvement from any members who want to be more active in the organization. Any member with interest or questions about the League leadership should contact [Cheryl Collart](#).

We are seeking a new **Membership Director** to start the position as of July 1st. The position requires a working knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Word (or Numbers and Words for Mac). Mentoring, Spreadsheets, detailed Work Instructions with when and how to do each task, form letters and formats are all available. You will not need to reinvent the wheel. For more information about this position, please contact [Pat Butler](#)

Budget Committee

Contact: [Cheryl Collart](#)



The Budget Committee will be meeting in February to work on an audit and to plan for the coming budget year (July 2023 - June 2024). Any member with interest or with questions about our League's budget process, please contact [Cheryl Collart](#).

The Committee will prepare a budget for the Board's review prior to adoption at the June Annual Meeting. If you are interested in the budget process and would like to assist in the preparation of this important League document, please join us.

Bylaws Committee

Contact: [Pat Butler](#)



The Bylaws Committee will meet in March for a quick review and update of our bylaws. Few if any changes are anticipated. If you want to know about the inner workings of the League, this is the place for you. Anyone interested in serving on the Bylaws Committee, please contact [Pat Butler](#). We will also be reviewing Work Instructions and Policies and Procedures in the coming months.

Happy Hour

1st Wednesday @ 6:30pm, hosted on Zoom. Please RSVP to [Matty Park](#).
3rd Wednesday @ 5:30pm, hosted on Zoom. Please RSVP to [Kay Armstrong](#).

Not just for new members – **everyone is welcome, including guests.** Join us for an informal conversation about all things LWVVC. Interested in becoming more involved in our mission of "Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy"? Come, learn about what we're doing and how you can help.



You don't have to be a League member to join. Come for five minutes, the whole hour or anywhere in between. We hope to see you there! **You are welcome to attend either or both Happy Hours.** Please register with the host in advance.

There are two opportunities to attend. Choose one or both. If you would like to have an in-person Meet the Members in your area, please let us know.

Membership



ALL NEW MEMBERS: Please contact any officer, board member, or committee chair to volunteer for the activities that spark your interest. You can be partnered with an experienced member if you like. We will help you learn what you need to know. And please sign up for whatever committees you would like to participate in by contacting the committee chair to be invited to meetings. Do as much or as little as you like. We look forward to your participation.

RENEWING MEMBERS: Many thanks and gratitude to our members who have renewed their membership and to those who have made an additional contribution toward the expenses of operating the LWVVC.

To join or renew your membership you can find our membership form and online payment option [here](#). Or you can send a check to P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006. Your support is critical!

Ventura County Information

For all relevant news about Ventura County, go to:

<https://www.ventura.org/>. Find out how to view Board of Supervisor agendas, documents, broadcasts, and videos. Connect with County services.

LEAGUE INFORMATION

[Join or Renew Form | MyLO \(lww.org\)](#)

The dues rates for 2022-2023 are:

Individual Membership	\$75.00
Student Membership	\$25.00
Family Membership	\$125.00
Associate Membership	\$25.00



Join at: <https://my.lww.org/california/ventura.county/join.league.or.renew.here>

OR make your check payable to LWVVC and send it to
P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006

Membership Scholarships available with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Contributions Welcome

[Donate | MyLO \(lww.org\)](#)

Tax deductible donations may be made to:

- General Fund
- Scholarship Fund
- Ann Gist Voter Education Fund
- Ann Gist Scholarship Fund

Please send checks to LWVVC, P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006, or donate online [here](#). If you wish to donate in remembrance of someone, please include their name and a few lines about their life. Please specify the fund you want to support. Thank you.

Raise Awareness of the League

Wear a **LWVVC Shirt** to all our public functions. Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL. Donation of \$20.00 or more requested. For shirts, please contact [Karen Savitt](#).



Making Democracy Work...

Please join us!

Membership Form Available online.

Website: LwvVenturaCounty.org

Email: info@lwvVenturaCounty.org

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/LWVVenturaCounty>

Mailing Address: LWVVC, P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006

Phone Number: (805) 303-1476



Facebook: [@lwvventuraco](https://www.facebook.com/lwvventuraco)



Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LwvVentura>



Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lwvofventura/>



Find candidate funding and proposition information on:
<https://votersedge.org/ca>

The League of Women Voters of Ventura County is a 501 (c) 3 organization.

All contributions are tax deductible.

The League of Women Voters, a grassroots non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose candidates or political parties.