



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY

Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities

www.LWVSSMC.org

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October 2017

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The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government.

Palo Alto October Meeting



Ali Noorani, Director of the National Immigration Forum, in conversation with **Raj Mathai, News Anchor for NBC Bay Area**

Wednesday, **October 18**, 7:30 pm Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills

Ali Noorani is the author of "There Goes the Neighborhood: How Communities Overcome Prejudice and Meet the Challenge of American Immigration."

Please RSVP by October 16 at 650-903-0600

For more information or to RSVP on Eventbrite, visit

<http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html>

Co-sponsored by LWV South San Mateo County

SAVE THE DATE!

San Mateo County Perspectives on Immigration

Sunday, November 19 at 2:00 at the San Mateo Public Library

A panel of speakers representing different perspectives on immigration including **Reverend Penny Nixon**, San Mateo Congregational Church and Solidarity Cohort; **Kayla Ladd**, International Rescue Committee; San Mateo County Sheriff **Carlos Banos**; **Marco Chavez** from the San Mateo County Office of Education, and immigrants' rights attorney **Araceli Martinez-Olguin**.

Sponsored by the Leagues of Women Voters of South San Mateo County and North & Central San Mateo County, and the San Mateo Public Library.

From the President

We are wrapping up our annual renewal drive. I want to express my gratitude to **Sharon Sherdon** who for many years has headed up this effort by getting out our notices and keeping track of the returns. If you have not yet renewed, please consider sending that check today, or renew online. Your \$75 is used at every level of the League to protect voting rights of all citizens, educate voters about issues that concern them and encourage people to exercise their right to help select the leaders who make decisions that affect us all.

On Tuesday, September 26, Leagues all over the country joined with other community organizations to participate in **National Voter Registration Day**. Eight of our members, including 5 new members, volunteered a couple of hours of their day to staff **our table at Sequoia Station in Redwood City**. We hope to continue our efforts leading up to the June primary and next November's election by having a presence at other community events and venues. We have a large group of volunteers ready to help. If you have a venue in mind, and can help to organize our presence, let me know.

Transportation is a big topic in San Mateo County right now, and is an Issue for Emphasis for our County Leagues. San Mateo County has asked us to send a representative to their stakeholders meetings to discuss funding needs and opportunities. If you'd like to learn more about this opportunity or others, please contact me.

Shirley Des Marais

New Voices for Youth



New Voices for Youth (NV4Y), a youth outreach program co-sponsored by LWV Palo Alto and South San Mateo County, is launching its fall classes. After a summer-long search, the Steering Committee filled our part-time paid staff position with a Co-Director team. We welcome Nimsi Garcia and Rebecca “Becca” Gourevitch as Co-Directors of Program. They will be carrying out our program’s mission to inspire civic participation by using video production for middle school students. We will continue conducting the program at the East Palo Alto Boys and Girls Club and the Siena Youth Center in the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.

Nimsi most recently taught our Siena Youth Center summer program. (See attached photo of Nimsi in July!) She came into New Voices as a Junior at Menlo-Atherton high school and continued with New Voices for two years after her graduation, as a class assistant and summer instructor. She went on to graduate from UC Berkeley and is now back with us until she finds more permanent work as an applied economist.

Becca grew up in Palo Alto and completed an MA in Social Documentation at UC Santa Cruz. She is currently working with tenants’ rights groups in the Bay Area and has documented evictions and displacement in San Francisco.

The NV4Y Steering Group consists of representatives of our 2 Leagues and provides oversight to the program. New Voices is funded by contributions from individuals and organizations. Volunteer opportunities are available to assist in the classroom and to serve on the Steering Committee. For more information, please contact Veronica Tincher or Sheila Botein, Co-Chairs, at our New Voices email: nv4youth@gmail.com

For more information and to view past videos, check our website at <http://www.newvoicesforyouth.org/>



Participate in a Conversation on Housing on Nov. 15!

On the Table is a day of community building through conversations designed to strengthen and connect our community. Join the conversation on Wednesday, Nov. 15!

On the Table SV will bring together thousands of local people to eat and talk about our region's housing challenges— and what we can do to solve them. Your voice matters.

Sponsored by Silicon Valley Community Foundation, this one-day event will feature meal-time discussions throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara counties on Nov. 15. It's a chance to get to know neighbors and colleagues, make new connections and inspire action.

We encourage you to mix it up a bit and expand your circles – perhaps by asking friends or colleagues to bring someone you do not already know. You could also partner with a local nonprofit or church, for example, or co-host with someone who invites new people from his or her own networks.

SVCF will use insights collected by the post-event survey to compile a report on housing challenges in our community; participants and hosts will eventually receive a link and access to the report.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Lisa Conrad, darnoc@earthlink.net or 650-556-6758.

CIVIL DISCOURSE

Bridging the Divide: Saving Democracy One Conversation at a Time

This workshop will start by learning the basics on **civil discourse**, then break into groups to work on rules and roles, and finishing up with a discussion on what we have learned.

Tuesday, October 24, 1-3 pm, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 1300 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo. Sponsored by the LWV of North & Central San Mateo County.

This meeting is open to the public.

Please contact Susie Raye, Program Director, for more information:

program@lwwncsmc.org or leave a message on the League phone (650-342-5853).

HIGHLIGHTS from the September 14th meeting BOARD Meeting:

Your Board

- Approved adoption of MyLO, the new website from National, and a plan to migrate relevant items from our current site.
- Approved purchasing the fee-based version of Survey Monkey to use for online member surveys, after determining the free version was inadequate for our needs.
- Agreed to sign up for a pilot period of free version of SignUpGenius, an online tool for people to sign up for activities, such as the Voter Registration Day table.
- Adjusted wording suggested by our consultants in a new sentence at the end of our mission statement (from “women and men” to “everyone”). The full statement:

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. We welcome everyone to join in our efforts to build a strong democracy.

Discussed

- Our response to a request from the National Voter Corps to be listed on their website; we agreed to do so in the context of voting matters and voter registration, with the caveat that we have a short training on how the League approaches signing up voters.
- A request for assistance from Common Cause/Protect our Democracy Coalition. We will participate in their work to protect democracy in San Mateo County.

Learned

- Our membership is now 150; 4 onboarding meetings have been held for new members; there are 15 mentors and some 20 mentees.
- November Sea Level Rise meeting postponed indefinitely because the City of Palo Alto is not ready with its presentation.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in **Transportation in San Mateo County**? We are looking for a **Chair** for our Transportation Committee, as well as someone to participate in meetings to help identify transportation funding needs and opportunities, as part of the **San Mateo Transit District Stakeholder Advisory Group**.

Contact Shirley Des Marais, 650-322-0778, or sdesmarais@pacbell.net.

Items Of Interest

15 HOUSING BILLS PASSED BY LEGISLATURE SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

Gov. Jerry Brown has finalized lawmakers' most robust response to California's housing affordability problems in recent memory.

The "15 good bills" Brown signed into law here Friday morning include a new fee on real estate transactions and a \$4-billion bond on the 2018 ballot that together could raise close to \$1 billion a year in the near term to help subsidize new homes for low-income residents.

"Today California begins a pivot from a housing-last policy to a housing-first policy," said Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), who wrote one of the key measures.

Excerpted from Los Angeles Times, September 29, 2017

<http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-housing-legislation-signed-20170929-htmstory.html>

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**We do not elect our government officials for thoughts and prayers. We elect them to make law.**

--Statement from Florida LWV about the responses from our elected officials to the Las Vegas shooting.

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You can watch a lively, wide-ranging conversation on many local political topics, produced by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto, recorded live on September 9th:

In Studio with Congresswoman Anna Eshoo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7Re1tvp3MQ>

**OFFICERS AND CONTACTS FOR OUR LEAGUE
(LWV OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY, 2017-18)**

President: Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net
 Vice-President Administration: Lucile Spurlock, caspurlock@aol.com
 Vice-President Program: Suzanne Fouché, safouche@comcast.net
 Treasurer & Database Manager: Jack Morris, jhmsvcs@sbcglobal.net
 Media Relations: Rita Comes Whitney, [ravrita@aol.com](mailto:ravrta@aol.com)
 Member Notices: Anne DeCarli, anne.decarli@sbcglobal.net
 Webmaster: Sanneke Jang, sannekejm@gmail.com

**League Office: LWVSSMC, 3723 Haven Avenue, Suite 112, Menlo Park, CA
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2244, Menlo Park, CA 94026-2244**

UPCOMING EVENTS		
OCTOBER		
4 Weds	11:30 am	LUNCH WITH MENLO PARK MAYOR KIRSTEN KEITH , Yum Cha Palace, 1039 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Contact: Carol Louchheim 650-854-8500 or Joyce Shefren 650-851-0817.
11 Wed	12 noon to 1	LET’S TALK! FREE SPEECH is the topic for an informal brown-bag lunch discussion with LWV NCSMC . League Office, 444 Peninsula Avenue, Suite 1, San Mateo. RSVP not needed, but is helpful—650-342-5853 or lwvnscmc@sbcglobal.net .
12 Thurs	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING at Lucile Spurlock’s house, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Contact: Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net or Lucile Spurlock, caspurlock@aol.com
17 Tues	6:30- 8:30 pm	FILM SHOWING: “The Raising of America” why is it hard for our children to thrive? Refreshments before; discussion after film with early childhood educator. PAUSD Headquarters, 25 Churchill Street, Palo Alto. Sponsored by LWV PA and others. Film trailer at http://www.raisingofamerica.org
18 Weds	7:30- 9 pm	CONVERSATION ON IMMIGRATION with Raj Mathai, Ali Noorani, and Evelyn Rengal-Medina . Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills. LWV PA, co-sponsored by LWV SSMC and others.
24 Tues	1-3 pm	WORKSHOP ON CIVIL DISCOURSE-- Bridging the Divide: Saving Democracy One Conversation at a Time. Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 1300 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo. Sponsored by LWV NCSMC .
24 Tues	7-8:30 pm	AN IMPARTIAL JUDICIARY: A Cornerstone of Democracy . An educational forum with panelists. Reception 6 - 6:45 pm. Free, open to the public, registration on Eventbrite requested. Presented by the Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County. Quinlan Community Center, Cupertino Room, 10185 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino.

26 Thurs	12 noon	Book Group Meeting to discuss <i>Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right</i> , by Arlie Russell Hochschild. At Lucile Spurlock's, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Contact: Judy Orttung, jorttung@comcast.net
NOVEMBER		
1 Weds	7-9 pm	WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL—Wonder Girls: Changing Our World Author-photographer will present slides and stories of activist girls. Los Altos Youth Center, 1 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.
7 Tues		ELECTION DAY!!!
9 Thurs	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING at Lucile's house, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Contact: Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net or Lucile Spurlock, caspurlock@aol.com
19 Sun	2 pm	PANEL: SAN MATEO COUNTY PERSPECTIVES ON IMMIGRATION, JOINT GENERAL MEETING WITH NORTH & CENTRAL SMC LWV , San Mateo Public Library, 55 W. 3 rd Avenue, San Mateo.



Fall Kickoff with speaker Jim Irizarry

