



## Candidates' Forum for District 2 Supervisor



**Monday, May 7, 7 to 9 p.m.**

[Orinda Library Auditorium](#), 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA

With the retirement of long-time Supervisor Gayle Uilkema, a contested race for her seat as the representative for District 2 has developed, serving Alamo, Canyon, Danville, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and Saranap. The Election takes place on June 5.

**Sponsored by:** Orinda Association

**Moderated by:** A member of the LWV of Diablo Valley

## LWVC Leadership Council 2012 Leadership for the Future



**Saturday, May 19 – Sunday, May 20**

[Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, 300 J Street, Sacramento CA 95814](#)

This conference offers leadership development, advocacy, and voter service training and even League basics. League board members, committee chairs, and interested members are encouraged to attend. On-line registration will be available until May 17, but you can also register on-site at Council. Non-delegates are welcome to observe plenary and participate in workshops and events with single day or multi-day registration.



## LWVC Initiative & Referendum Update Study

**Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:30 p.m.**

[LWVDV Office, 500 St. Mary's Road, #14, Lafayette, CA](#)

Should we abolish the Initiative and Referendum Process in California? Or should we reform it? How can we get big money out of the system? This is a fun way for new members to learn about the League and a great way for long-time members to make a difference using their skills. Join us! See articles on pages 5 and 6 for more information



## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley*

It's a great time to get involved with the League! This spring we are bursting with activities as we work to keep our communities strong, safe, and vibrant. We look forward to seeing old friends who have been long-term members and to meeting new members who want to "put a toe in" with our pre-June 5 primary activities. It's a wonderful way to get to know the League and to catch up with developments in our state and in Central/Eastern Contra Costa County.

The League of Women Voters is the organization where your hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to tangible civic improvement. And it is in these next six months that your hands-on work provides invaluable services to voters before the June 5 Presidential Primary and the November Elections. How can you participate?

You can assist at the upcoming **Supervisor District II Candidates' Forum on Monday, May 7, at 7 p.m.** at the Orinda Library Auditorium. The forum is not sponsored by the LWVDV, but by the Orinda Association. However, it is moderated by our outstanding League member Ann Flynn. Ann is a former member of the Walnut Creek School Board and is recently returned from five years as a Foreign Service officer abroad. Watching her is a great way to train to do League of Women Voters moderation, and there is a new moderator update symposium on the LWV-US website with further hints. We hope you will help at our table, welcoming attendees, and providing information about the League and membership. We also urge you to help with timing. We have stopwatches to time candidates and yellow warning and red times up cards to signal participants. We also video, edit, and put the opening statements, questions and responses, and closing statements online. Anyone with videotaping and editing skills is particularly encouraged to join us. We will also have moderator trainings later this year so you can perfect the League moderation skills that made us famous moderating many presidential debates.

We are also kicking off our Pros and Cons presentations on ballot measures, first for the June 5 primary, then for the November election. There are two ballot measures on the June 5 ballot, one on legislators' term limits, the other a tobacco tax in support of cancer prevention. We will supplement Pros and Cons presentations, where 2 League members present opposite arguments pro and con each ballot measure, with information about the new top-two open primary system. Did you know only the presidential and vice presidential candidates are "party-nominated?" Candidates for all other offices will all be on the same ballot without party affiliation but can list party preference. The top two candidates for each position will be on the November ballot, independent of party, so it will be possible to have 2 candidates from the same party competing. We will also continue to educate voters about the new court approved maps created through redistricting by the League-supported Citizen's Redistricting Commission. Volunteering for pros and cons is a great way to hone your public speaking skills, to present the League in action at a variety of organizations, and to make new friends—pros and cons are always two person events, and great partnerships are formed!

[SmartVoter.org](http://SmartVoter.org) is the premier League website for voter education and unbiased information before an election. I read it as I mark my ballot every election, as it provides invaluable information about candidates' background, experience, priorities, endorsers, and that clarifies many issues and helps me pick the candidate most likely to share my values. This is particularly useful for "down ballot" offices where there has been little public discussion of the candidates. How does information about local candidates and issues get into the SmartVoter

*Continued on the next page.*

*President's Message, continued from previous page.*

website? League volunteers help call candidates for their information, help submit information to the website, and follow up on stragglers. We are making these calls now and welcome you to join us. It's a good example of how smart, active women create lasting change in our communities through the League.

Our Youth Voter Registration Drive continues. League volunteers help us contact government teachers in our 23 local high schools to make sure all seniors turning 18 get registered to vote. We will also focus on local colleges. It's a great way to help in your local community, both before the June 5 primary and before the November 5 election.

We also invite you to the **League of Women Voters of California's Council May 18 to May 20** in Sacramento. Workshops focus on the Initiative and Referendum Study, Fundraising, Voter Service, and Communications. Did you know the League has over 65 local Leagues in California? Sisterhood *is* powerful! (and brotherhood too!)

Congratulations to the organizer for our **Adopt-A-Poll participation on June 5** at the League office. Our office serves as a polling place, and we serve as clerk and inspector. The Contra Costa County Elections office provides training, and we donate our modest stipends to the LWV-Diablo Valley. We hope to staff 2 polls in November and we want you involved.

We will be having a League Orientation this month to help members connect to League processes and we will be contacting you about updating your Interest Survey so we will know just how to fit you in! Call the office at (925) 283-2235 to learn more about any of the activities described above! Volunteering with the League is a wonderful way to have a significant impact in your community, to make interesting new friends and have fun, and to support and safeguard democracy. We count on you.

Heads up on the upcoming LWV of Diablo Valley **Annual Meeting at 8:45 a.m. on June 16**. It will be at the Lafayette Library and will be catered by Café Soleil. We will review the past year, elect a new Board of Directors, and conduct other annual business. The speaker will be Lisa Vorderbrueggen, reporter and political columnist of the Contra Costa Times. Watch for the Annual Meeting mailing in mid-May, and save the date!

## **JUNE 5, 2012, PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION**

On June 8, 2010, California voters approved Proposition 14, creating a Top Two Candidates Open Primary. This new method to determine finalists for the General Election will take effect in Contra Costa County with the Presidential Primary on June 5, 2012. Voters used to only be able to vote for candidates with the same political party affiliation as themselves. In recent years, decline to state (non-partisan) voters were given the option to vote for partisan candidates when a party allows for such participation. The Top Two Candidates Open Primary system permits all voters to vote for any candidate, no matter the voter's or candidate's political party preference except for the offices of President and County Central Committees. The Top Two Candidate Open Primary system will make a difference for registered voters in the primary election for state constitutional, U.S. Congressional, and state legislative offices. Voters will then be able to vote for any candidate on that ballot, no matter the voter's political party preference. Only the top two candidates from this single Primary Election ballot will advance to the General Election in November 2012. See the next page for commonly asked questions.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Top-Two Primary System (New)</b>	
Who can I vote for?	Any candidate running for President and County Central Committee representing the same party preference that you are registered with <b>and</b> any candidate for voter-nominated and non-partisan offices on the ballot.	
Which offices are voted on by voters of the same party only?	<b>Party Nominated Offices (Formerly referred to as Partisan)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President/Vice President</li> <li>• County Party Central Committee</li> </ul>	
Which offices are voted on by all voters, regardless of party?	<b>Voter Nominated Offices (Formerly referred to as Partisan)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. House of Representatives</li> <li>• United States Senator</li> <li>• Member of the State Assembly</li> <li>• State Senator</li> <li>• Attorney General</li> <li>• Member of the Board of Equalization</li> <li>• Controller</li> <li>• State Treasurer</li> <li>• Secretary of State</li> <li>• Lieutenant Governor</li> <li>• Governor</li> </ul>	<b>Non-Partisan Offices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judicial</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Countywide</li> <li>• Municipal</li> </ul>
Which candidates advance to the General Election?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For party nominated offices, the one candidate from each party that receive the highest number of votes at the Primary Election advance to the General Election.</li> <li>• For voter nominated offices, the two ) candidates regardless of party preference that receive the highest number of votes advance to the General Election.</li> <li>• For non-partisan offices, the candidate that receives a majority of the vote at the Primary Election wins. Non-partisan contests do not appear on the General Ballot unless there is need for a run-off election.</li> </ul>	
What information appears on the official ballot about each candidate?	<b>Name</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional Ballot Designation – describing the candidates principal occupation, vocation or profession</li> <li>• Party Preference – voter-nominated offices ONLY, a candidate can choose to have their party preference as they are registered appear on the ballot. One of the following statements will appear with their name on the official ballot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “My party preference is the _____ Party.” When a candidate is registered with a political party and chooses to have it appear on the ballot the name of that party will fill in the blank space. If the candidate is registered with a party but does not want it to be printed on the ballot, the blank space will be left blank.</li> <li>▪ “No Party Preference.” When a candidate is registered with no party preference (formerly referred to as decline to state).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
When can write-in candidates run?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For party nominated offices write-in candidates are eligible to run at any election.</li> <li>• For voter nominated offices, write-in candidates are eligible to run only at the Primary Election. Write-in candidates are not allowed at the General Election.</li> </ul>	



Don't forget to visit [www.SmartVoter.org](http://www.SmartVoter.org) to look up information about all of the June 5 State Primary contests and candidates on your ballot and where you vote. And tell a friend!



## PREPARATION & TESTING OF VOTING EQUIPMENT

*Press Release from the Contra Costa County Elections Division, May 7, 2012*

At 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 14, 2012, the Contra Costa County Elections Division will commence the preparation and testing of the voting equipment to be used in the June 5, 2012, Presidential Primary Election. Testing will continue through approximately Thursday, May 24, 2012.

Interested persons, who would like to observe this process may call (925) 335-7800 or go to the Elections Office located at [555 Escobar Street](#) in Martinez for more information. Observers will be asked to show picture identification and sign in to be admitted to the testing observation area.

## LWVC RECOMMENDS... VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE



### June 5, 2012, Statewide Primary Election



#### **PROP 28 Term Limit Reform**

#### **SUPPORT**

The League of Women Voters of California supports Proposition 28, which will modify California's term limits law. Legislators are currently limited to three terms in the Assembly and two terms in the state Senate. Prop 28 will reduce this fourteen-year limit to twelve years. Legislators will be allowed to serve the whole twelve years in either house of the legislature or serve a combination of terms in the two houses. Prop 28 will not benefit any current or former legislator. This simple measure is a step in the right direction that will improve accountability. Legislators will no longer be constantly looking for the next office to run for; they will have time to develop expertise and get things done.

#### **PROP 29 Additional Tax on Cigarettes to Fund Research**

#### **NEUTRAL**

Proposition 29 establishes an increased tax on cigarettes, with the money collected from this tax earmarked to fund research on cancer and other tobacco-related diseases. The League does not generally support earmarks, but is neutral on this measure because of the health benefits that would come from reduced smoking and the increased funding for medical research.

## JOIN OUR OBSERVER CORPS



Be the eyes and ears of the League in your community! Observers attend city/town council meetings and/or school boards at least once a quarter (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) to be a League presence at the local level, to monitor compliance with the Brown Act for public meetings, and to alert the LWV of Diablo Valley board to local issues and measures relevant to League positions so the League can speak out. Observers greatly increase the reach, visibility, and effectiveness of our League, and help form important relationships for our future. Contact our office at (925) 283-2235 to volunteer. We hope to have pairs of volunteers in each of our communities in central and eastern Contra Costa County.

## LEAGUE 101 ORIENTATION: LET'S ENGAGE!

New and returning members are invited to come to individual or small group orientations at times convenient to your schedule to get a hands-on overview of League processes and activities. As a 92-year old organization (101 years in California), we are a deeply trusted nonpartisan organization because we scrupulously follow tested, tried, and true procedures to accomplish our mission. Contact the League office at (925) 283-2235 for a personalized orientation focused on connecting your interests, strengths, and skills with our League's projects and positions. We hope to develop the leadership potential of all our members and to make sure your League membership is a deeply gratifying experience.

## LWVDV IRS APPLICATION

Our League has taken the first step in changing over to a 501(c)(3). Section 501(c)(3) is the portion of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code that allows for federal tax exemption of nonprofit organizations, specifically those that are considered public charities, private foundations, or private operating foundations. One of the most distinct provisions unique to Section 501(c)(3) organizations, as compared with other tax exempt entities, is the tax deductibility of donations. 26 U.S.C. § 170, provides a deduction, for federal income tax purposes, for some donors who make charitable contributions to most types of 501(c)(3) organizations



The LWV of California Treasurer, invited interested local leagues to join in a group application to the IRS. We had always thought that our advocacy actions precluded our having an education fund status. Tom looked into it and it came down to two things. One, advocacy is not the same as lobbying, and, two, expenses for either advocacy or lobbying do not reach the percentage threshold to keep us from being classified as a 501(c)(3). Our overwhelming function and expense is directed to voter service and non-partisan, non-legislative action.

The decision on the application probably won't be made until next fall. Until then, dues and donations to the LWVDV will continue to be non-tax deductible and donations to the LWVCEF will be tax deductible. When we get the OK from the IRS, we will have to change our by-laws and create a separate board to oversee our accounts. We will see if the new status makes a difference with other state and county taxes and fees.

**DONATE**

To support our newsletter and other activities, please donate online by clicking on this button or visiting our website at [www.lwvdv.org](http://www.lwvdv.org).

**The League of Women Voters  
of Diablo Valley Voter**

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## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND DIRECTORY UPDATES

If your name appears below, then it is time to renew your membership. Please use the form on the back cover, and send it with your dues to the League Office. If you already have renewed, thank you!

## SAVE THE DATES



**May 21:** Last Chance Voter Registration 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
League members will register voters at local Safeways, etc.

**June 5:** Primary Election in California  
Adopt-a-Poll at League Office, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Volunteer!

**June 9-10:** LWV of the United States Convention, Washington DC

**June 16:** Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley



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 500 St. Mary's Road, #14  
 Lafayette, CA 94549

**ADDRESS SERVICE  
 REQUESTED**

**The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.**

**Membership: Join Us or Renew!**

Membership is not based on ability to pay. To pay alternate dues or to request a scholarship, please contact Carole Woods at the League office: (925) 283-2235.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$65 Individual Membership. Indicate NEW \_\_\_ or RENEWAL \_\_\_
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$95 Family Membership (2). Indicate NEW \_\_\_ or RENEWAL \_\_\_
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Associate Membership. Indicate NEW \_\_\_ or RENEWAL \_\_\_  
 (For a student or non-citizen non-voting member)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ GIFT MEMBERSHIP (circle appropriate category above)

Gift Membership from: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please write recipient's information below.)

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 included to receive printed copies of the *Voter* by US Mail
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Donation to LWVDV (not tax deductible).
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL** of ALL above enclosed to LWVDV (not tax deductible).
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION to LWVC.  
 Please make separate check payable to LWVC - Education Fund.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please print, complete, and mail this form along with your check to:  
 LWVDV, 500 St. Mary's Road #14, Lafayette, CA 94549

**CALENDAR**

- May 7 Candidates' Forum**  
7 pm [Orinda Library Auditorium](#)
- May 8 Board Meeting**  
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- May 16 I.R. Study Meeting**  
1:30 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- June 5 Apopt-a-Poll**  
[LWVDV Office](#)
- June 16 LWVDV Annual Meeting**  
Lafayette Library