




ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING
 Tuesday, October 2, 2012, 4 p.m.
LWVDV Office, 500 St. Marys Road, #14, Lafayette, CA

SENIOR SAFETY NET

What: "Senior Safety Net?"
 When: **Saturday, October 6, 2012, 1 to 3 p.m.**
 Where: Dollar Clubhouse, **1015 Stanley Dollar Drive**, Rossmoor, Walnut Creek, CA
Open to the public. No cost. See more information on page 7.

LAST CHANCE VOTER REGISTRATION



This year we are hoping to do extensive Last Chance Voter Registration on **Monday, October 22, 2012**, the last chance to register to vote before the election. We are the only way voters can register in the evening after work. We have a special arrangement with the Contra Costa County Elections Office to deliver registration forms until midnight and have them included for the election. A tip of the hat to Joan Lautenberger, who has driven forms to Martinez from a central collection point in Walnut Creek. This year we hope to combine high traffic stores such as Safeway, Grocery Outlet, etc. with registering at BART stations. We are also inviting other groups to join us so the number of volunteers does not limit us. We are reaching out to diverse groups such as United Latino Voices, East County NAACP, the Japanese American League, and others. **We NEED volunteers!** Please call the office at (925) 878-1162 or contact VP for Voter Service Ann Flynn to let us know you are interested. We will cover **grocery stores in two-hour shifts, from 5 to 7 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m.** We will have two people at each BART station from 5 to 7 p.m. Thanks to extensive TV and radio coverage, unregistered voters will know of our whereabouts and often come out just for the purpose of registering. Instructions for registration will be included for all volunteers.

POLL WORKERS / POLL OBSERVERS
 Tuesday, November 6, 2012

League members and friends wanting to work at the polls are urged to contact the Contra Costa Elections Office at (925) 335-7800 and to take the online training available for half day clerk positions. Members Gwen Watson, Ann Flynn, and possibly Lucia Trujillo will serve as Inspectors, and you can request to work with them. All members who can donate their stipend to the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley will be met with deep gratitude.

We are also planning to have members serve as poll observers for two-hour shifts from 7 to 9 a.m. and from 5 to 7 p.m. in the evening particularly in minority precincts in Concord, Pittsburg and Antioch. Volunteers will need to attend training at the Elections office in Martinez, which is not yet scheduled. We hope to work in pairs with other volunteers from United Latino Voices, the East County NAACP, LULAC, and possibly Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization (CCISCO). Please call the League office at (925) 283-2235 to volunteer. This is a great way to ensure new minority voters are not unjustly challenged and are able to cast their vote. And it's a great way for us to make new friends.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley

September and October before a Presidential Election are probably the most exciting months for the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley. It is now when our connection to the community and service to voters is at its height. We also count on our members to volunteer, as your participation is critical to our effectiveness and impact. I am deeply impressed with the dedication, skills, and hard work of our volunteers. I am very grateful to Mary Fenelon for her leadership of our Action Committee, and to our board for its votes on the Action Committee's recommendations regarding local measures covered on pages 4 and 5 of this *Voter*. Ann Flynn's performance as a new VP for Voter Service has been flawless as she organized our televised roundtables and live candidate debates, administered our fundraising to cover an extra day of TV, and now takes on organizing Last Chance Voter Registration. Bravo to Gwen Watson and Sharon Burke for helping contact candidates and providing leadership at the TV studios. Kay James' careful and tireless work on Pros and Cons makes this outstanding program possible, and we all value her intelligent and thorough scripts on each proposition. Ashley Coates has taken charge of SmartVoter.org, our premier website for accurate information about all candidates on our ballot, and is assisted by Lura Dymond and myself in making sure candidates post their information. Kudos to Jan Howe for arranging our upcoming "Senior Safety Net?" event with excellent panelists. We hope to see you there. A tip of the hat to both Mary Fenelon and Gwen Watson for arranging the upcoming "Homeless in Contra Costa" program on December 1. This is the time of year when the League comes into its own, and we rely on our membership participation to make all our work bear fruit. Thanks to all for making the work of democracy possible.

We continue to be out and about with a League presence at community activities. Mary Fenelon and I attended a groundbreaking in Lafayette for affordable senior housing on Mt. Diablo Blvd, with past LWVDV president Carol Federighi playing a significant role. League members Lucia Trujillo and Linda Soliven joined me at an Education Summit held by the new United Latino Voices group at Diablo Valley College. And former president Marilyn Langlois joined me at the funeral of NAACP leader Darnell Turner in Pittsburg this month. Darnell was outstanding in articulating local problems and speaking up for minority communities. We valued our work with him and Willie Mims in ensuring minority students in the Pittsburg school system were not underserved and overly suspended and expelled.

Our voter service activities in this election season give us an opportunity to continue our outreach to diverse communities. Currently more than 50% of K-12 students belong to various minority groups. If Leagues are to survive and grow we must reach out and welcome members from a variety of backgrounds whose perspectives will enrich our work. Working together toward common goals, such as voter education, voter registration, and ensuring access to the polls is a great way to make new friends and help new groups see League work and its value in action. We will be adding poll observation as a new activity this year. The county provides training that will help us deal with potential challenges to new voters at the polls. There's always a chance to learn something new with the League! Join us!

ONGOING PROS AND CONS, LED BY KAY JAMES

We currently have 23 requests for Pros and Cons presentations on the 11 state ballot measures, and have already completed 5 of them. More requests come every day, and we anticipate we may surpass the 31 presentations the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley did last year. A presentation to the Rossmoor Democrats by Diane Mader and Lee Lawrence drew over 200 people. This is clearly a very popular service, and 15 people participated in a training conducted by Kay James at the League office last week. Several other League members are old hands at Pros and Cons and join us in this important education activity. A tip of the hat to our confirmed presenters: Kay James, Janet Thomas, Jean Blaser, Jennifer Mahoney, Carol Murota, Diane Mader, Lucia Trujillo, Martha Goralka, Linda Soliven, Ken Coates, Gwen Watson, Gabby Zacco, Ann Flynn, and Carole Woods. You can still volunteer to participate: just contact Kay James or call the League office.

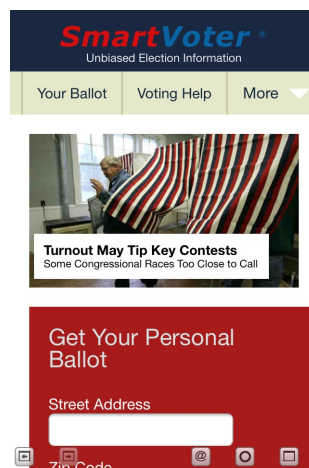
NEW DESIGN FOR SMART VOTER



A revolutionary experience is waiting for you at Smart Voter's brand new Next Generation website! You can go to the special web address of m.smartvoter.org right now to check it out. This cutting-edge update of the League's award-winning service sports a new streamlined look and an array of feature stories that changes every day. The many enhanced features are especially helpful for the quick information needs and small touch screens of smartphone and tablet owners—but promise to be fun and interesting for desktop and laptop computer users as well. Get together with your friends and compare the appearance of the Next Generation site—its exact layout will depend on the size of the screen and type of device each of you is using.

The Next Generation site addresses dramatic changes in the way that the public now accesses and uses information on the Internet. According to national market analyses and surveys, a majority of the computer devices now being purchased are smartphones and tablets rather than desktop or laptop computers, and a rapidly-increasing proportion of voters are relying primarily on such mobile devices to get information on politics and elections.

For this November's election, Smart Voter will be available to California voters in both its traditional format and the new Next Generation design. For future elections the state League will expand the capabilities, features, and innovative content of the versatile Next Generation site. If you have questions, comments or suggestions regarding it, please email ca-director@smartvoter.org. And click the "More" button on the new site to sign up for the Smart Voter newsletter, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#) to receive our latest updates.



LWVDV PRIORITIES: Criminal and Juvenile Justice in Contra Costa County and Contra Costa's Social Safety Net in a Time of Economic Downturn

The Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) of key department heads in Contra Costa County—chaired by Probation Chief Philip Kader and including the District Attorney, the Sheriff, Behavioral Health, the Public Defender, Richmond Police Chief Chris Magnus, and others—have been meeting to decide how to budget the \$19 million dollars allocated by the state to help rehabilitate and serve AB 109 prisoners transferred to the county. Our League has been monitoring these meetings. In attendance have been President Lee Lawrence, Juvenile Justice Item Chair Gabriella Zacco, Action Director Mary Fenelon, and Director Joan Lautenberger. One key issue has been the Sheriff's plan to spend \$2.9 million on constructing 150 more prison cells in West County.

Our League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position that it "believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime." We will be joining what we hope is a majority of the CCP in supporting evidence-based practices and services with a proven history of reducing recidivism and achieving successful rehabilitation. The prisoners transferred to the county committed non-violent, non-sexual, and non-serious crimes, and are known as "non-non-nons." Reforming our bail and pre-trial detention system so that non-violence rather than economic ability is a key criteria for bail eligibility, providing support and assistance in finding employment and housing, treatment for drug and alcohol addiction, facilitating community connections and a positive peer group, and mental health services are examples of evidence-based practices worth investing in. We are providing leadership on these issues in Central and Eastern Contra Costa County and have been thanked from a variety of groups, such as the Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization (CCISCO).

LWVDV Priorities, continued from page 3

The cell spaces held by undocumented workers on ICE holds from the Federal Immigration Service are another source of controversy. The relevant League Immigration position is that “while policy reforms, including a path to legalization remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.”

Regarding our other local League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley priority, Contra Costa’s social safety-net in a time of economic down turn, we are pleased that in the midst of election activities Jan Howe has scheduled the October 6 “Senior Safety-Net?” at Stanley Dollar Clubhouse in Rossmoor (see page 7 for details), and Mary Fenelon and Gwen Watson have a “Homeless in Contra Costa” program for December 1, 10 a.m. to noon, at the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek.



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DIABLO VALLEY
RECOMMENDS
November 6, 2012, STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION**

This year we have many cities, towns, school districts, and special districts requesting increases in revenues. Many have experienced cutbacks in state funding due to our economic recession and resulting decreases in state revenues. Many have already made significant cuts to their budgets. The League of Women Voters has positions supporting government having sufficient funds to perform its duties. We also consider the history of a government entity's spending policies, and the provision of time limits, citizen oversight, and public audits.

Contra Costa Community College District, Measure A **SUPPORT**
To provide Diablo Valley College, Contra Costa College, Los Medanos College, and the Brentwood and San Ramon Centers with funds that cannot be taken by the state; maintain high quality education; support course offerings and instructional programs, including healthcare, technology, and public safety; increase access to support services, and prepare students for university transfer, shall Contra Costa Community College District levy \$11 per parcel for six years with Citizen's Oversight, no funds for administrative salaries, and all funds spent locally? (Two-thirds vote required).

The League of Women Voters has positions of strong support for public education. Our community colleges provide a crucial path to universities or to skilled employment for many students. Due to state cutbacks, students find overcrowded classes or are unable to take the academic courses they need. This modest tax increase would provide crucial services and strengthen academic offerings. No opposition arguments were filed.

Antioch Unified School District Measure B **SUPPORT**
To modernize Antioch High School by renovating classrooms including science and computer labs, improving critical safety and security systems, building a library and cafeteria, upgrading athletic facilities, replacing inefficient building systems, and improving student access to classroom technology, shall School Facilities Improvement District No. 1 of Antioch Unified School District issue \$56.5 million in construction bonds at legal interest rates with funds monitored by an Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee with no funds spent on Administrators?

The League of Women Voters supported the previous measure to renovate the aging Antioch High School which narrowly lost. We support continued attempts to modernize this facility. Access to contemporary technology is a crucial part of public education. This measure provides for audits, oversight, and a time limit. We support the use of bonds for financing major capital improvements.

Martinez Unified School District Measure C **SUPPORT**
To continue funding academic programs that provide college and career pathways and help maintain student-teacher ratios, offset State budget cuts to education funding, improve access

The LWVDV Recommends, continued from page 4

to modern technology, and maintain art, music, and band programs, library services and counselors, shall Martinez Unified School District renew its expiring parcel tax at \$50 per parcel annually for five years, with an exemption for seniors, age 65 or over, a time limit, an independent citizens' oversight committee, and all funds benefitting local schools?

The League of Women Voters has positions of strong support for public education. State budget cuts have been severe, and increased revenues are needed to maintain and update school offerings. This modest increase with an exemption for seniors, citizens' oversight and audits meets our requirements for support.

San Ramon Valley Unified School District Measure D

SUPPORT

To improve local elementary, middle and high school classrooms, labs and learning facilities by adding classrooms to prevent school overcrowding; upgrading fire, security and earthquake safety, updating science labs and instructional technology infrastructure for 21st century learning; improving energy efficiency; and renovating, constructing and equipping schools, facilities and classrooms, shall San Ramon Valley Unified School District issue \$260 million in bonds, at legal rates, with citizens' oversight, annual audits, no funds for administrators' salaries and all funds benefitting local schools?

The League of Women Voters has a long history of support for public education. San Ramon has been proactive in refinancing earlier bonds to take advantage of historically low interest rates. The capital improvements funded by the bonds in Measure D are appropriate and forward looking. Students need access to contemporary technology and safe, modern buildings to learn in. This measure meets League requirements for oversight and public audits.

Knightsen Elementary School District Measure H.

NO POSITION

City of Concord, Measure J

NO POSITION

Shall the office of City Treasurer be appointive?

Town of Moraga, Measure K SUPPORT

To keep local streets from falling into disrepair and to maintain Town services, including fixing potholes and cracks,; maintaining neighborhood police patrols and response times; repairing neighborhood streets; maintaining recreation programs for youth and seniors; other general Town services, shall the Town of Moraga enact a one-cent sales tax for 20 years with authority to incur debt to accelerate infrastructure projects, with annual audits, citizens' oversight, no funds for Sacramento and all funds spent only for Moraga?

The League supports government having sufficient funds to perform its duties. All five town council members endorse this measure. It is structured to allow borrowing which should save the community money by permitting early completion of infrastructure projects at lower prices. It is time-limited, audited, and provides for citizens' oversight, as League positions require. No opposition arguments were filed.

City of Orinda, Measure L:

SUPPORT

To help protect and maintain city services, including repairing failing roads, fixing potholes, improving traffic safety on local streets, fixing drains, and providing for other city services, shall the City of Orinda enact a one-half cent sales tax for 10 years, with financial audits, public review of all expenditures, and a citizens' oversight commission?

The League supports government having sufficient funds to perform its duties. Measure L is time-limited, audited, and provides for citizens' oversight, as League positions require. This measure is approved by Orinda's Citizen's Infrastructure Oversight Commission, as the first part of a plan to repair Orinda's residential roads and update drains. Revenues will go to Orinda's general fund, providing flexibility for the city, and enabling the measure to pass by majority vote, not a two-thirds requirement.

Contra Costa Fire Protection District Measure Q.

STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION

SUCCESSFUL EXPANDED TELEVISED CANDIDATE ROUNDTABLES

This year we had three days of candidate roundtables, a 50% increase from the past. We were able to cover most city/town council races and school boards, including contests with at least 10,000 registered voters. Lisa Vorderbrueggen was our moderator for 27 round-tables and did an outstanding job. We particularly congratulate Ann Flynn, our new Vice President for Voter Service, who administered the entire process and was present all day all three days. Ann also worked with Mary Flott in writing grant applications, and we are grateful to Gwen Watson and Sharon Burke who were lead coordinators on Wednesday and Thursday. Assistant coordinators included Lisa Borba, Mary Flott, and Ashley Coates. Timers included Carol Murota, Jean Blaser, Barbara Owens, Lucia Trujillo, Cynthia Landy, Annabelle Cloner, Joyce Kingery, Joan Conley, Lee Lawrence, Phyllis Ceaser, Sally Germain, and Lisa Borba. We have received thank you notes from several of the candidates, and were prominently mentioned in Lisa Vorderbrueggen's coverage in the *Contra Costa Times* on September 28. The televised candidate forums can be viewed on Contra Costa TV and on the website of the *Contra Costa Times* at www.cctimes.com/elections. In total, 17 League members made this possible. Thank you!

VOTER ID LAWS = VOTER SUPPRESSION

By Helen Hutchison, LWVC Second Vice President for Program and Advocacy



The LWV is all about voting: encouraging voting, educating voters, helping people make their voices heard by voting. ... Then why do we protest so loudly about voter ID laws? Because these laws are a form of voter suppression; they are a solution to a problem that doesn't exist.

Supporters of voter ID laws point to charges of voter impersonation or voter fraud. The facts simply do not support this charge. Despite many allegations and frequent careful examinations of voting records and patterns, **little or no evidence of voter fraud has been found**. When studies are done, they consistently point at vote by mail (absentee) voting as the place where most voter fraud might occur. Voter ID laws deal only with voters at the polls, not vote by mail voting.

What has been shown, repeatedly, is that **voter ID laws reduce access to voting** and do this disproportionately among the elderly, students, women, people with disabilities, low-income people, and people of color. In a study commissioned by the Brennan Center for Justice, eleven percent of those surveyed did not have a government-issued ID that would be required for voting. Using census data, this means approximately 21 million otherwise qualified voters who would be turned away at the polls. Of these 21 million:

- More than 70 percent are women
- Over one-third are seniors
- Approximately 20 percent are between 18 and 24 years old

Even among those with a government-issued ID, many do not have an ID that shows their current address. This is even more likely among those who earn lower incomes and young people, regardless of income level, because they tend to move more frequently than average.

These same groups of people—women, the elderly, students, people with disabilities, low-income people, and people of color—also are more likely to have difficulty obtaining the required photo ID to be able to vote. They may not have the required back-up documents, and they may have more difficulty taking time off work during business hours, getting transportation to the government offices that issue the IDs, and finding the money to pay the application fees.

Voting is a fundamental right. The League of Women Voters stands with those who protect access to voting rather than those who would disenfranchise eligible voters. **The impact of voter ID laws is to restrict voting, especially among certain groups of voters**. We do not need to protect ourselves against a problem that doesn't exist. **We do need to ensure that the greatest number of people possible is offered the chance to exercise their right to vote.**

DONATE

To support our newsletter and other activities, please donate online by clicking on this button or visiting our website at www.lwvdv.org.

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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!

SENIOR SAFETY NET?

Saturday, October 6, 1 to 3 p.m.

[1015 Stanley Dollar Drive](#), Stanley Dollar Clubhouse, Rossmoor

State and county revenues for all budgets have shrunk dramatically during this recession, while an aging population grew and its needs expanded. Demand is up, but supply is on a downward slide. Tax money ultimately fuels the civic obligations for low income or disabled senior residents of the county. Just as downward adjusted property valuations or foreclosures have cut into cash for our schools and unemployment has cut into sales or income taxes, the money stream for everything else has been drying up, including services for seniors.

Money to provide services to elders was funneled through our county to various non-profits via contracts set by our Board of Supervisors. The county Advisory Council on Aging started this process by examining how various non-profit vendors met the criteria for ever-shrinking funding. Paid county employees whose expert ranks are shrinking also, guided these committed volunteers through contract assessments and compliance. The entire membership of the Advisory Council voted on the recommendations for funding before sending them on to our Board of Supervisors.

Speakers:

- **Shirley Krohn:** President of the Contra Costa Advisory Council on Aging, California Senior Assembly Member on the California Senior Legislature (representing Contra Costa County) and an expert on senior legislation
- **Debbie Toth:** Chief Executive Officer at Rehabilitation Services of Northern California, Executive Director of the Mt. Diablo Center for Adult Day Health Care, and an expert on law affecting implementation of federal and state regulation for senior services



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**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: _____
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- \$ _____ \$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

- Oct. 2 Action Committee**
4 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Oct. 6 Senior Safety Net?**
1 pm Rossmoor
- Oct. 8 Vote by Mail Ballots Mailed**
- Oct. 9 Last Day to Register to Vote to Receive a Mail-in Ballot**
- Oct. 11 Board Meeting**
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Oct. 22 Last Chance Voter Reg.**
BART & Safeway Stores
- Oct. 30 Last Day to Request Vote by Mail Ballot**
- Nov. 6 Election. Poll Observers. Adopt a Poll**
- Dec. 1 Homeless in CC County**
10 am Mt. Diablo UU Church