



ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 8, 2013, 2 p.m.

[LWVDV Office](#), 500 St. Marys Road, #14, Lafayette, CA

Join us to discuss possible local priorities for 2013-2014, our current local positions and possible changes, and ongoing initiatives.

ANNUAL LWV OF DIABLO VALLEY PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Saturday, January 26, 2013, 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.

[Sequoia Room](#), 500 St. Marys Road, Lafayette, CA

Bring your own lunch!

Vote for our local priorities for 2013-2014. Our current priorities are "Mending the Social Safety-Net in Contra Costa County" and "Criminal and Juvenile Justice in Contra Costa County including Realignment." We will also consider amendments to our current local positions. Here is a chance for members to have a significant impact in deciding our priorities in our community. See more information on page 3.

LWV OF CALIFORNIA INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM UPDATE STUDY: ANSWERING CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Wednesday, January 16, at 1 p.m.

Friday, February 8, at 10 a.m.

Saturday, February 23, at 10:00 a.m.

[LWVDV Office](#), 500 St. Marys Road, #14, Lafayette, CA

Our responses to the League of Women Voters of California's update study on our Initiative and Referendum positions are due at the at the state League office by March 31 and must be voted on by our board on March 14. We will meet for continued study on January 16 and on February 8 at the League office. Our meeting on Consensus Questions will be on February 23. Your input will be valued and appreciated. Ballot measures are a key democratic process in our state, and one in which the recommendations of the League of Women Voters of California have a significant impact. The consensus questions are available [online](#), and there is a [Facebook group](#).

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY 2013

Water: California's Gold

Saturday, February 2, 2013, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

First Unitarian Church, [685 14th Street, Oakland](#)

See page 7 for details.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley

Election Review

What a Presidential Election season! Our League members provided substantial Voter Service, and we had impact on a significant number of voters. Kay James led our Pros and Cons program; we had **a record** 32 presentations of the best arguments for and against each of the eleven state ballot measures on the November ballot, reaching approximately 1620 voters! We also instituted poll observing, particularly in minority communities, to make sure all were able to vote unchallenged; seven League members were able to cover over 25 polling places. We had five live candidate debates as well as 30 televised candidate forums. We don't yet have numbers from the Contra Costa County Elections Office for our Youth Voter Registration Drive and ongoing voter registration efforts at post offices and libraries, but we think both these activities were very successful, due to our great volunteer members. Thanks to everyone for pitching in!

Program for 2013 and Initiative and Referendum Study

We will have an important Program Planning meeting on January 26 in the Sequoia Room at the Lafayette Community Center. This is your opportunity to suggest items for study or program changes at the local, Bay area, state, or national level. Our board will review all suggestions and, in dialogue with our membership, we will vote on our recommendations at our Annual Meeting in the late spring. We will also send your suggestions on to the boards of the other levels of the League for their consideration. Please consult our [website](#) for our current local positions.

A second way to understand how the League establishes the positions on which they base all advocacy is to participate in our state update study on the Initiative and Referendum Process. Please attend our study meetings and final Consensus Questions meeting (see page 1 for details) so you will understand this process and how we can impact our state positions. You can read the Consensus Questions and other study materials at

<http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/studies/2011-initiative-and-referendum/index.html>.

Leadership Development

Special mention to Gwen Watson and Mary Fenelon for the outstanding panel program on "Homeless in Contra Costa County" on December 1. We heard from many who run shelters and counsel homeless families and individuals and from the Contra Costa County's homeless initiatives. Affordable housing linked with support services and counseling led the list of possible solutions. Many of our 60+ attendees hope we can have future programs and help serve as a center of community support for volunteers and service providers. We look forward to future programs on "Mending the Social Safety Net" in 2013, including programs on children and families, people with disabilities, and funding for the courts.

Our deep gratitude to Jean Blazer, who has agreed to chair our Membership Committee; Jean is a retired professor of psychology and gerontology with excellent administrative skills, a great sense of humor, and she is an outstanding public speaker. We welcome her to our Board. Our membership area has been leaderless for several years, and we thank Carole Woods, Jeanne Melaugh, Peggy Huston, Joyce Kingery and Barbara Owens for keeping it going. If you would be willing to serve as a membership ambassador at our meetings or keep our roster up-to-date, please let Jean Blazer know.

We will be sending out our latest Member Interest Survey soon so that you can update us about your interests and how you would like to participate. There are lots of ways to contribute, and we hope you will let us know of anything you might like to try as we start off the New Year. We particularly are looking for Observer Corps members to help us monitor your local city council and school board meetings and be the eyes and ears of the League in your community. You can alert our Action Committee so we can advocate for relevant League positions. It's a great way to make the League visible and to have an impact for the public good. Happy New Year!

LWV OF DIABLO VALLEY PROGRAM PLANNING

Every two years League chapters convene to generate recommendations to the national League for revision or new study. We are having our scheduled Program Planning meeting for all members. The more members there, the better, because new areas of concern will be presented, old areas of revised study will pop up, and areas no one considered in the past will surface. Many heads working together are what keep the League vital. This is one of the ways to meet League members and become more involved in the activities of the chapter.

At the same time, our local chapter sets its priorities for the next year for the focus of their public presentations, outreach efforts, and community education. In years past, the LWV of Diablo Valley has targeted local/state education, state budget issues, national/state health care reform, the frayed social safety net, and the state water controversy. There are a myriad of local, state, and national issues to mine for the coming post-election year. There will be opportunities to work together on many issues and bring vital, balanced education to the public, as only the League is able to do.

Review the [League's positions](#). Ask yourself these questions:

- Is there widespread member interest?
- Is this a timely issue?
- Is government action the most effective way to address the problem?

We use the program planning process as an opportunity to think strategically about the work of the League on the local, state, and national levels. We consider where there is the most **need**, where we will be most **effective**, and what activities best serve our **mission**. And we consider the **indirect impact** of these choices, particularly on membership recruitment and retention, fundraising, and our reputation—all of which are crucial to the future of our local League as well as that of the LWVC and the LWVUS.

We need to hear from you personally. Become engaged and help set our priorities! Please, bring your lunch and join us on Saturday, January 26, at 10:30 a.m. in the Sequoia Room of the Lafayette Community Center.

LWVDV JOINS CCISCO, C.C.P., AND SHERIFF IN DRAFTING AN IMMIGRANT DETENTION POLICY

Our League position supporting alternatives to incarceration and participation in the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) budget process for realignment funds has led to an alliance with the Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization (CCISCO), both in the pre-election campaign in support of Prop. 30, and in the passage on December 7, 2012, of a community-oriented, evidence-based budget for the rehabilitation of former state prisoners returned to the county. The budget included \$4 million for programs recommended by their Community Advisory Board (CA). With other CAB members, League President Lee Lawrence met with Public Defender Robin Lipetzky to ask her to make the motion to accept the CAB budget at the December 7th CCP meeting; The PD made some suggested changes and her motion passed 6 to 1 (see page 5).

At CCISCO's invitation, the LWV of Diablo Valley president Lee Lawrence has participated this fall in meetings with David Livingston, Sheriff of Contra Costa County, and the subcommittee he created to help draft a policy regarding immigrant detention. The national League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position after our immigration study to oppose deporting undocumented workers who have no criminal history. The League supports a pathway to citizenship. We will also be participating in visits to local police chiefs to educate them about League positions and to advocate for their support of the possible new policy.

FROM THE LWVUS PRESIDENT

November 29, 2012

Dear Supporter,

So much good work was done during election season that it is truly hard to come off the post-election high and shift toward influencing public policy. But we are doing it.

Across the country, Leagues are planning holiday parties, many of which will include state legislative delegations. Congress is back in session with a fiscal cliff very much on legislative minds. The League is speaking out on this issue from [our position on funding the federal government](#). The League studied this issue back in the 1980's, another time when the size and role of the federal government were very much at issue.

So much of what is being debated in Congress right now is less about the specifics of debt and deficits than it is about the proper role of government. The League position on funding the federal government recognizes and supports the positive role that government can play in leveling the playing field and making it possible for every American to realize his or her dream. Deficit reduction is important, but we can't harm the economy as we address that issue. Even as we are focusing on going another round in the state legislatures on voting rights, as we prepare to help our communities understand the importance of the Voting Rights Act, we need to stand up for our vision of an America in which every citizen has a chance to make a better life, where every immigrant has a chance to become a citizen and where citizens who have worked hard all their lives can look forward to living out their lives with independence and dignity. That is what is truly at issue as we debate the so-called fiscal cliff.

The League has always stood for fairness and openness and a voice for all in our democracy. Let us use our voice to stand up for the community that our federal government represents.

In League,
Elizabeth MacNamara

December 20, 2012

Dear Member,

We are all deeply distressed by the shootings in Newtown, Connecticut, and share in the country's grief. As leaders in your community, remember that the League of Women Voters is singularly well suited to gather disparate members of the community together to discuss difficult issues and work to find common ground to solve problems. At the same time, there will be opportunities to take action through legislation at the state and federal levels. Members of the U.S. House and Senate have already signaled their intent to introduce legislation to reinstate the ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines when the 113th Congress meets in January, and President Obama has asked Vice-President Biden to oversee a task force that will develop new gun control and mental health policies. The Task Force report is expected in January. Since 1990, the League of Women Voters has had [a position](#) to protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons, and we supported the original ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines when it was passed in 1994. ... We will be looking for opportunities to share the League's views as this very complex debate progresses. In the meantime, **you can reach out to your representatives when they are home to express the League's view that there is no role for assault weapons or high-capacity magazines in civilized society.**

In League,
Elizabeth MacNamara

LWVDV ADDRESSES CONTRA COSTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PARTNERSHIP

AB109 makes fundamental changes to California's correctional system to stop the costly, ineffective, and unsafe "revolving door" of lower-level offenders and parole violators through our state prisons. The seven voting members of the county's Community Corrections Partnership (CCP), which includes District Attorney Mark Peterson, Contra Costa County Sheriff David Livingston, Chief Probation Officer Phil Kader, Public Defender Robin Lipetzky, Behavioral Health's Cynthia Belon, Court Executive Officer Kiri Torre, and Richmond Police Chief Chris Magnus., must craft a spending plan for "realignment" dollars associated with the shift of hundreds of low-level offenders from the state system to county supervision. **Lee Lawrence, LWVDV President, made the following statement to the CCP** on November 9, when they met for a final vote on the AB109 budget:

I am Lee Lawrence, President of the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley. We represent League members in Central and Eastern Contra Costa County.

The League of Women Voters [of the United States] *believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.* The offenses of prisoners involved in realignment under AB 109 are non-violent, non-sexual, and non-serious. The funding to support their rehabilitation should be spent on alternatives to incarceration; particularly community based initiatives that help transform both the prisoners and their environments. We support the suggestions of the Community Advisory Board, pre-trial detention, and bail reforms, and the focus on community-based alternatives to incarceration. We specifically support programs for employment, housing, behavioral health including drug and alcohol treatment, and mental health services.

Programs without evidentiary support for reducing recidivism in studies with control groups should not be funded. This would include constructing more prison cells, funding more attorneys for victim rights instead of community-based restorative justice programs, and increased numbers of probation officers who are effective with serious offenders but not in reducing recidivism in the non-violent, non-sexual, non-serious offender population AB 109 intends to address. Money should not be diverted from community programs with successful, evidence-based practices, to county departments seeking to expand staff without controlled studies that demonstrate their effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

League positions also support standardized data collection procedures to enable analysis of outcomes in comparison with other counties.

We also believe, regarding immigration, 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.*

LWVDV DUES CUTOFF

The cutoff for LWV national roster updates is January 31, 2013. We will pay state and national per member payments on any member on the roster after that date. Please, if your dues are over due, **PAY NOW** so that you are not removed from the roster or so we do not make payments on unnecessarily!

REMINDER OF WHAT WE HAVE

By Sally Germain, LWVDV Director at Large

My recent encounter with Bev Lane (a LWV member and the Director for the East Bay Regional Park District in our Ward) led me to join a group of watershed-saving enthusiasts October 20 gathered to meet in Walnut Creek's Civic Park with Mary Grim, the Watershed Coordinator with the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District in Concord. Mary introduced us to Jim Hale by the bridge linking the parking lot with the huge park area beyond. He demonstrated his vast knowledge of the original native American settlers and artifacts they either made themselves or traded with distant tribes who traveled throughout the western region. Jim has taught at UC Santa Cruz, San Jose State University, and many other venues. He has collected archeological treasures in many regional parks, Mt. Diablo, and creeks in our county.

Jim took us next across the bridge, pointing out the native vegetation and rich animal life seen along Walnut Creek underneath our feet. On the other side, he guided us along the Creek, eventually below the level of the bright green lawn to see signs of animal activity. The beaver gnawed tree trunks as the animals seek nutrition from its bark, the muddy slide into the Creek by resident river otter, and further kinds of evidence left behind them. This area is gorgeous after the City cleaned it up and provided many picnic tables along the edge of the lush lawn.

Years ago in the mists of history, at one of our LWV invitations with local officials to speak with us, a Walnut Creek Councilman (Greg Page) mentioned the council had been offered a trade: the central park area, largely undeveloped, for a hilltop site about where the Toyota agency is today. We all said the council would be crazy to make the switch. On my visit back from the Creek Talk, I wandered over to the new library and discovered inside next to the Friends of the Library Book Store that the new café is now open. I took lunch there from a menu of pastries, soup, salad, sandwiches, and teas or coffees by Peets.

Take a few quiet moments and enjoy your own similar mini-vacation. Look down upon this area with parking lot and the green park area.





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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MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND DIRECTORY UPDATES

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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 DATE



Bay Area League Day 2013

What: **Water: California's Gold 2013**

When: **Saturday, February 2, 2013, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Where: **First Unitarian Church, [685 14th Street, Oakland](#)**



Speakers will address the history, policies, and vision of Bay Area water.

There will be three panels of experts on:

- California Water Background,
- Governance at the federal, state, and local levels, and
- Water Conveyance, the Bay Delta Conservation Plan, and Tunnel Vision.

Cost in advance: \$30, \$15 without lunch.

Cost at the door: \$35, \$20 without lunch.

To register, please write a check payable to LWVBA and mail, including your name and any guests' names, to LWVBA, 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612. Registration is also available to 1/31/2013, via PayPal, at www.lwvbayarea.org. For more details, email editor@bayareamonitor.org or call (510) 839-1608

LWV of the Bay Area has positions on Regional Government, environment, Natural Resources, Hazardous Materials, Social Policy, & Transportation. Learn more at www.lwvbayarea.org.



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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: _____
 (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. Marys Road #14, Lafayette, CA 94549

CALENDAR

- Jan. 8 Action Committee**
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Jan. 16 IR Update Study**
1 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Jan. 17 Board Meeting**
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Jan. 26 Program Planning**
10 am [Sequoia Room](#)
Lafayette Comm. Center
- Feb. 2 Bay Area League Day**
9 am [685 14th Street](#)
Oakland
- Feb. 8 IR Update Study**
10 am [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 23 IR Update Study**
10 am [LWVDV Office](#)