



ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, February 5, 2013, 2 p.m.

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

LWV OF CA INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM UPDATE STUDY AND CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Friday, February 8, at 10 a.m.

Saturday, February 23, at 10 a.m.

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

February is our last chance to consider and answer the consensus questions on our LWV of California update study on the Initiative and Referendum process. We will meet on February 8 to discuss the issues and prepare for our Consensus meeting on February 23. Consensus questions can be found at the LWVC website at:

ca.lwv.org/sites/lwvc.org/files/downloads/studies/ConsensusQuestionsMay312012.pdf

We have had really interesting discussions of the way the I-R process works in other states and in other countries. We have explored the pros and cons of initiatives from Prop 13 to the establishment of the non-partisan Citizen's Redistricting Commission. How can we reform the negative aspects of initiatives while preserving the positive? How can we protect the voice of the people from being drowned out from corporate special interests? Please join us for these last two opportunities to affect our state League's position on these important issues.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY RALLY

Monday, February 14, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Outside of [Contra Costa County Clerk's Office](#), 555 Escobar St., Martinez

Join Leslie Stewart and others in supporting our League position endorsing same-sex marriage.

MENDING THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Saturday, March 2, 10 a.m. to 12 noon

[Diablo Valley College, Humanities Building](#), Room 109

Panel:

- Jane Garcia, CEO, La Clinica de La Raza, on health issues
- Carol Carrillo, Executive Director, Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Larry Sly, Executive Director, Contra Costa Food Bank
- David Gerson, Executive Director, Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa

Please plan on attending, and bring others who are interested in these important issues for children and families. There is free, convenient parking close to the Humanities Building.



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley

We are off to a busy start in 2013! At the state level, Governor Jerry Brown has specified four initiatives that touch on established LWV of CA positions: improving K-12 education, possibly involving greater resources to poor schools, and more financial support for higher education; considering changes to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); creating 30 mile tunnels under the Delta to refurbish the state's water system, and beginning the first leg of the bullet train from Madera to Bakersfield.

At the federal level, President Obama seeks to pass a comprehensive immigration bill, including a pathway to citizenship for unauthorized workers, which is also supported by the LWV-US Immigration position. Gun control legislation banning semi-automatic assault weapons, encouraging careful background checks, and closing the gun show loop-hole is supported by our Gun Control policies of the last 25 years. The League's Health position supports speedy implementation of the Affordable Care Act which will be completely operational on January 1, 2014. The counties will have a major role in expanding MediCal enrollment, and here is an opportunity for local League engagement and advocacy.

Our state League appears to be focusing on healthcare, money in politics, and encouraging local advocacy. We hope you will all join us at the May 17-May 19 League of women Voters of California Convention in San Jose. It is very inspiring to see representatives from 65 different Leagues across the state and see how working together magnifies the expertise and impact of our many members. There will also be very informative workshops for members. It's a great way to charge our batteries after our long Presidential election season. Save the date and be sure to join us!

Our own Program Planning meeting saw members expressing interest in Immigration, Water, Campaign Finance Reform, and Fracking, as well as completing our Mending the Social Safety-Net priority, continuing our focus on criminal and juvenile justice (particularly realignment), and possibly adding a public education priority regarding smoking, alcohol, and drug abuse. We also hoped the state League would pounce on any opportunities to reform Prop 13.

Last year's Presidential election resulted in historic majorities in both houses of our state legislature which provides opportunities for passage of significant legislation this year, as opposed to the chronic gridlock we have experienced over the past decades.

Our League did a terrific job in providing Voter Service to our region last year, and I look forward to 2013 as a year of impressive opportunity for Action and Advocacy for our members. Please sign up to engage with the issues closest to your heart. We will be conducting our Legislative Interviews this month, and I look forward to reporting to you what our elected representatives have in mind for improving our state and communities.

We will proudly celebrate the League's 93rd birthday on February 14 and Susan B. Anthony's birthday on February 15. As Anthony said, "Failure is impossible!"

LWVDV PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

Our Program Planning meeting took place in January, led by our excellent new Program Director, Audrey Albrecht (pronounced “Albright”) and attended by Leslie Stewart, Mary Fenelon, Sally Germain, Martha Goralka, Cynthia Landy, Dee Sabiston, and Lee Lawrence. We established recommended priorities for our local League and for the state League that we will send to the board meeting on Valentine's Day, February 14th.

Final recommendations by the board will be sent to the state League by the end of the month. We did a careful review of all the positions of the League of Women Voters of California, seeing if any should be dropped or updated. We then considered possible priorities for the state and for our local League. The presence of many long-time League members made this a rich, wide-ranging discussion. The board of the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley will establish recommendations for our local priorities to be voted on by our membership at our Annual Meeting on May 11th at 8:45 a.m. at the Lafayette Library Community Room.

LWV CELEBRATES 93ND BIRTHDAY

The League of Women Voters is elated today to celebrate our 93rd anniversary. Since our founding in 1920, the League has worked tirelessly to protect and uphold the constitutional right to vote, a right that composes the very foundation of our democracy.



However, while we celebrate our successes, we are concerned by stark challenges to our democracy. In the upcoming Supreme Court case *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*, the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 will be reviewed. The VRA is landmark legislation that ensures every American citizen, regardless of race, has an equal right to vote. Should the Court rule against the VRA, which prevents states from passing discriminatory voting rules, the right to vote for millions of Americans would be at risk.

The thought that the Supreme Court might soon overturn the Voting Rights Act and limit voting rights should send a chill down the spine of every American. The League believes we should be expanding voting rights, not curtailing them, and working to make elections free, fair and accessible to all eligible citizens.

The League has been committed to protecting voter rights since 1920, and we're not stopping now. The upcoming Supreme Court review of the Voting Rights Act shows that even 93 years after our founding, the League's work is needed more than ever.

The League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley is one of nearly 800 Leagues in all 50 states that works to protect voters' rights. Since 1920, the League has worked to educate and inform voters. We respect all points of view, and never support or oppose candidates for office, or political parties. This is what sets us apart from so many organizations, and it is why we welcome new volunteers to take part in our work here in Contra Costa County. Contact our office at (925) 283-2235 if you would like to help.

LWVDV CONTINUES IMMIGRATION DETENTION NEGOTIATIONS WITH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley



In December 2012 and January 2013 the six-month process of establishing a budget for spending \$20 million in Contra Costa this year for 500 realignment prisoners transferred from state prisons to our local county jail concluded in a compromise vote in the Board of Supervisors. During this time the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley was active in advocating for funding for rehabilitation and community based services, based on the LWV-US position adopted at the June 2012 convention recommending "exploration of alternatives to incarceration." We were successful in increasing the funds allocated for community-based services from \$2 million to \$4 million dollars.

Our position helped us create an alliance with Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization (CCISCO), who subsequently asked us to join their meetings with the Contra Costa County Sheriff's office in creating a new policy at the county level for dealing with ICE holds. In the past several years, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) created the "Secure Communities" Program (S-Comm) in which anyone arrested automatically has their fingerprints taken and sent to the FBI, who forwards them to ICE to see if the prisoner is a candidate for deportation. ICE then sends the county jail a "hold" request, asking the prisoner to be held in jail at county expense until ICE has a chance to interview them and make a determination. While Secure Communities was advertised as focused on violent felons, in fact 80% of deportees have only low-level misdemeanors, and the program has resulted in many broken families. Parents are deported while their American citizen children remain here.

In line with our national Immigration position, the League supports a path to citizenship, and does not support deportation of unauthorized workers without criminal records. At the county level and at the state level our elected officials are trying to determine where to draw the line. Assembly member Tom Ammiano has drafted the Trust Act, which would require only felons need be held for deportation, and others support a criteria of public safety: for example, possessing a certain amount of narcotics is a felony, but not a threat to public safety. In addition to CCISCO organizer Claudia Jiminez, other participants include staff attorney Anjie Junck from the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), Grisel Ruiz also from ILRC, Bob Lane from the Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek, Rev. Will McGarvey, executive director of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County, members of the Safe Return Project, and other community based organizations. The sheriff's office is represented by Special Agent Robert Nelson, formerly a police captain in Fremont and Assistant Sheriff Matt Schuler.

We are pleased that standing up for League positions in the public square helps us make an impact on county policy, which in turn changes people's lives. It also helps diverse community organizations perceive us as an ally on issues of importance to them, and also as a future ally on other issues as well. Walking into meetings of the Community Corrections Partnership (for Realignment) or the Board of Supervisors wearing my League of Women Voters pin, I was initially met by blank looks; now I am greeted with smiles, and suggestions of future collaboration. Join us in local advocacy!

LWVDV LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEWS IN FEBRUARY

This month we will be conducting Legislative Interviews formatted by the LWV of California with our state elected representatives. We have four interview questions suggested by the state League and one question for each local League to formulate and ask. We will be scheduling interviews with state Senator Mark deSaulnier, and Assembly members Joan Buchanan, Susan Bonilla, and new Assembly member John Frazier. We usually limit our attendance to four to five League members. If you would like to participate, please call the League office at (925) 283-2238, and indicate which representative's interview you would like to attend.

LWVC AND DISCLOSURE LAWS

*by Chris Carson, LWVC Campaign Finance Program Director
January 2013*



One of the League's primary goals has always been to promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive, and that assures opportunities for citizen participation in government decision-making. To further this goal, for more than three decades the League has been a leader in seeking campaign finance reform at all levels of government.

As an example, all of us are deeply concerned about the current state of political financing in California. Due to the high cost of campaigning, candidates focus heavily on raising funds rather than addressing the concerns of voters. And too often, they raise those funds from sources that seek and receive special access, special consideration, and special treatment once the candidate is elected to office. Equally troublesome is the proliferation of independent expenditure ads by groups unrelated to the candidates— sometimes overshadowing what the candidates themselves spend.

This year, the League of Women Voters of California has begun working intensively to strengthen California's disclosure laws to ensure that voters can get the information they need to make informed decisions about candidates and ballot measures. We want public disclosure about the sources of previously secret money coming from all interest groups— individuals, corporations, unions, and trade associations. The League is supporting:

- Strengthening the disclosure regulations about contributions for both candidate and ballot measure campaigns
- Stand by your ad" candidate statements on TV and radio ads
- Disclosure of sources of funding for political ads
- Measures to increase and simplify voter access to contribution information
- Stricter enforcement and higher penalties for those who seek to flout those laws

Overall, we want to make sure that the now infamous \$11 million donation to defeat two November ballot measures cannot happen in California again.

Right now, the most important thing we can do to preserve the integrity of our electoral process is to increase transparency and let the sunlight shine in. Substantive improvements to California's disclosure laws will allow voters to identify who is trying to influence them as they make their decisions. And we need your help! Talk to your family and friends about what the League is doing. Sign up at ca.lwv.org/stay-informed for LWVC Action alerts so that you can support our advocacy as we go forward. It will take all of us—not just League members—but millions of concerned citizens across California raising our voices together to achieve victory.

e-SCRIPT UPDATES

By Carole Woods, LWVDV Treasurer



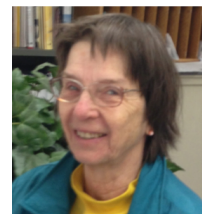
eScrip contributions to LWVDV are small but every little bit helps. Stamps, toner cartridges, copy paper—all minor costs helped by your using eScrip. I would encourage you to check and make sure your account is up to date. I checked mine by going to www.escrip.com. The web site asks first if the email address needs to be updated. (Mine didn't.) The first page has a link called myescrip. When I clicked on that, the web site recognized my email address and asked for the password. (There's a link if you don't remember your password.) Then there are links for managing your account. You can check or change your password, address, phone number, credit and debit cards, or view purchase reports.

If you have not yet signed up for eScrip, please follow the following simple procedure. Registration is easy:

- Log on to www.escrip.com and click on step 1 of the sign up.
- You can bring up LWVDV by Group Name (League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley) or Group ID 137235362.
- Provide your name, address, and email address.

There are a series of "pages." You can skip any page that doesn't apply by clicking "Next" (Grocery/Community cards, Credit and Debit Cards, Retail Credit, and Gift Cards).

MEMBER PROFILE: JOAN LAUTENBERGER



Meet Joan Lautenberger, who has been a member of the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley for over 30 years. Joan joined in 1979, when our League office was on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. She describes herself as "kibitzing" at board meetings before first becoming Secretary, then Treasurer, and then President from 1996 to 1998, during the second term of the Clinton administration. Her long-term support of the League and willingness to serve in many positions has made her an invaluable member who brings humor, optimism, and good will to everything she does. For the past 12 years or so she has coordinated Voter Registration for our Voter Service team.

Joan negotiates our contract with the County; the \$5000 we receive is a crucial support for our League budget. Joan works with the county personnel at the Contra Costa Elections Office, picks up the boxes of Voter Registration applications, distributes them to over 22 League members all over central and eastern Contra Costa County, who then deliver them to our displays in every post office and many libraries, and keep refilling them. This operation is central to our League's mission and history as the group who made women's right to vote possible. Joan's starring role has been her work with Last Chance Voter Registration, when after registering voters at Safeway for four hours, she waits in the CVS parking lot on Olympic in Walnut Creek for all our volunteers to bring their completed forms to her, usually around 10 p.m., and then she drives them to Martinez to put usually 100 completed forms in the Elections Office mail slot so all last minute voters will be able to vote successfully on Election Day. Joan also has been invaluable as an at-large member of the board, and a vital advisor to the president. We want to thank her for all her sustained work for the League and applaud her as she retires from the Voter Registration coordinator position.

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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Current/past issues are posted on our [website](http://www.lwvdv.org).

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!

Jane Britton	Cynthia Curbo	Kay James
Jacquelin Pels	Joyce Pollack	
Susan Christie address change: 718 El Paseo Circle, Walnut Creek, CA 94597		

SAVE THE DATES



LWVC Convention 2013

What: “myLeague: Leading the Charge for Change”

When: Friday, May 17 through Sunday, May 19
(Preconvention workshops on Thursday, May 16)

Where: Hayes Mansion, 200 Edenvale Avenue, San Jose

Registration: begins February 19



Convention registration will begin on February 19, 2013. You will need to arrange for sleeping accommodations separately with the hotel. [Make your reservation online](#) or call **408-226-2300** before **April 15** to receive the special room rate of **\$119 per night**. The hotel has free parking for Convention attendees.

Pre-Convention workshops will occur on Thursday, May 16, including the traditional [SmartVoter.org](#) dinner that evening. Friday, May 17, through Sunday, May 19, we will conduct the business of approving the budget, adopting program, reaffirming our positions, and electing LWVC officers and directors. There will be workshops, caucuses, and networking. The three days of Convention will be filled with work, but there will be time to relax.

LWVDV Annual Meeting

When: May 11, 8:45 a.m.

Where: Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., #107, Lafayette, CA

This is an opportunity for the membership to vote on our local priorities for 2013-2014 and elect their new board and new president. We will also vote on new bylaws, which will include our decision to change our status from a 501(c)(4) to a tax-deductible 501(c)(3) organization. We hope all League members will mark their calendars now. A quorum of our membership is necessary for us to conduct business. We are hoping we can retain the excellent caterer who supplied outstanding food for this event last year.



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 500 St. Marys 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. Marys Road #14, Lafayette, CA 94549

CALENDAR

- Feb. 2 Bay Area League Day**
 9 am [685 14th Street](#)
 Oakland
- Feb. 5 Action Committee**
 2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 8 IR Update Study**
 10 am [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 14 Board Meeting**
 2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 14 Marriage Equality Rally**
 3:30 pm [C.C.C Clerk's Office](#)
- Mar. 2 Mending the Social Safety Net: Children & Families**
 10 am [DVC Humanities Bldg.](#)
- May 11 Annual Meeting**
 8:45 am Lafayette Library
[Community Hall](#)