



LWV BAY AREA COUNCIL

Saturday, May 4, 2013, 10 a.m. to noon

Woodside Independence Hall, [2955 Woodside Road](#), Redwood City, CA

Speaker on Plan Bay Area: Alicia Aguirre, Mayor of Redwood City and member of MTC

ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 7, 2013, 2 p.m.

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

LWVDV ANNUAL MEETING

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

[Lafayette Library Community Hall](#), 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., #107, Lafayette, CA

Our Annual Meeting Speaker is **Assemblymember Joan Buchanan**.

See more details on Page 7.

Please send reservations and payment in now.

PLANNING FOR AN INCLUSIVE WALNUT CREEK:

Tuesday, May 14, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

[Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church](#)

Bortin Fellowship Hall, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek

See details on page 7.

THE HEALTH CARE MOVIE

Thursday, May 16, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

[Ygnacio Valley Library](#), 2661 Oak Grove Blvd., Walnut Creek

Comparing the Canadian and US Health Care Systems. Discussion with **Pat Snyder**, Ph.D., R.N., Health Care Committee Co-chair for the LWV of California, and Co-chair of Contra Costa County Health Care for All.

LWVC STATE CONVENTION

Tuesday, May 17, to Thursday, May 19, 2013

Hayes Mansion, [200 Edenvale Avenue](#), San Jose

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley

This is my last President's Message, and I write it with a deep sense of gratitude and pleasure, both at what we have accomplished in the past two years and in anticipating the engagement of new people in our League work.

I am deeply grateful to our board. We have had a lot of help! A key highlight of League work is the opportunity to work with bright, active women and men who contribute enormously to each of our League's achievements:

First, a tip of the hat to our **past presidents**, whose continuing engagement with the League brings experience and expertise to our work: Joan Lautenberger, who has contributed sage advice and support; Martha Goralka, who comes from East County to take our minutes, with a long League perspective; Gwen Watson, renowned county leader, who led our Action Committee from 2011-2012; and Leslie Stewart, who has returned to re-engage with our League as liaison to the Bay Area League after outstanding work with the Rainbow Coalition, Progressive Punch, the Bay Area League, and the League of Women Voters of California. Leslie has been an outstanding chair of the Nominating Committee.

Second, we have welcomed many **new board members** who have made important contributions in the past two years. Jeanne Melaugh has served as VP for Administration and then became our *VOTER* editor and webmaster for the last year. She has produced a beautiful membership manual and membership roster, has coordinated our annual meetings, and made sure our PMP records match those of the national League. Her ten years of experience at the Monterey Peninsula League has informed our board's actions and policies. Ann Flynn stepped up last summer to lead our Voter Service activities, particularly with organizing our televised and live Candidate Debates with Sharon Burke, continuing to support our voter registration activities, and serving as the official Poll Inspector at our office. Mary Fenelon has served as our Action Director this year, running our Action Committee meetings, ensuring our letters supporting relevant legislation go to our elected officials, and presenting our League positions at town and city council meetings. Audrey Albrecht, a five-year League president from North Carolina, served as our Program Director, overseeing our local program planning and the completion of our consensus on the state update study for the Initiative and Referendum Process, chaired by Cynthia Landy. And we now welcome to our board Carol Murota, who has provided invaluable leadership for our Poll Observers in the fall election and to our new engagement and coalition with Money in Politics (see page 5).

Third, we have deep appreciation to our continuing, steady **officers and board members at large**. We highlight the work of our Treasurer, Carole Woods, who is endlessly inventive in finding ways to save us money, created our budgets, and has overseen our League's application to be a 501(c)(3), enabling our dues and donations to be tax deductible when the application is approved. Carole additionally makes sure membership checks and donations are recorded, deposited, and acknowledged. She also ensures our bills get paid, and our lights stay on. Her husband Allan is our techno-wizard, ensuring all our machines work and even successfully picking the lock of the long-inaccessible Action file cabinet. Sally Germain updates us with news of developments around the county and in Danville/San Ramon in particular. She has served as liaison to our Bay Area League, and guided us in our Land Use and Transportation policies. Joan Conley keeps us apprised of public library developments and is our liaison to the American Association of University Women.

Continued on Page 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, continued from Page 2

Finally, a shout-out to **off-board leaders**, such as Kay James, for her great Pros and Cons work; Janet Thomas and Chris Coons, for serving on our Nominating Committee; Phyllis Ceaser, for backing up our Action Directors and for organizing our Adopt-A-Poll; Barbara Owens, for her management of our office, staffers, and callers (who currently include Jean Kitchens, Cynthia Landy, Sally Germain, Joan Lautenberger, Audrey Albrecht, and Joan Conely); and volunteers, for keeping voter registration forms in our post offices and libraries (Joan Lautenberger, Martha and Joe Goralka, Carole and Allan Woods, Beverly Bilge, Lura Dymond, Clara King, Linda Soliven, Carrie Conners, Kay James, Cynthia Landy, Phyllis Ceaser, Gail Murray, Jan Howe, Annabelle Cloner, and Aldene Crowell).

LWVDV OPEN POSITIONS

By Leslie Stewart, Chair of the LWVDV Nominating Committee



The Nominating Committee has worked very hard on the slate of directors and chairs for 2013-2014. But there are several open positions. It is vital to the health of the League that we fill these spots. There is a large range of opportunities, some requiring considerable time commitment, some very little time, some of which are meeting-intensive, and some that can be done from home. The following are opportunities for you to be involved in our League:

The **President** is the chief executive officer of the LWVDV, representing the League in the community, overseeing the general progress of the total League program, and accepting final responsibility for all League actions.

The **Membership Director** focuses on the engagement and retention of members. She/he oversees the activities of the New and Prospective Member Secretary and the Dues Renewal Secretary. Attendance at League functions to answer questions about the League and “meet and greet” keeps the Membership Director actively involved in the League.

The **Program Director** coordinates and organizes meetings or forums to educate our membership and the public on League positions or subjects relevant to our issues for emphasis.

The **Voter Service Director** provides information on elections for LWVDV members and the public and works to encourage increased participation in elections.

The **Voter Editor** is responsible for gathering articles, for the formatting of the ten yearly issues of the LWVDV's newsletter, and for overseeing the distribution. The departing Editor will gladly mentor someone. No skills are required beyond a good working knowledge of WORD and spelling and grammar skills. It is preferable that this be a board position.

The **Webmaster** maintains the www.lwvdv.org website. This does not require any technical skills, as the site uses EasyWeb, a system developed by the LWVC (who provide excellent directions and support). The information to be posted to the website largely comes from the **Voter**. You would not have to be on the board to hold this position.

Item Chairs monitor issues associated with their area of interest as they affect the LWVDV and provide updates and recommend action to the Action Director and the Board when appropriate. The following Item Chair positions are available:

- Children and Family
- Education
- Energy
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Reproductive Rights
- State and Local Finance

LWVDV AND MONEY IN POLITICS

By Lee Lawrence, President, LWV of Diablo Valley



Money in Politics is a key priority for both our state and national Leagues. Last fall, we applied for a grant offered by the League of Women Voters of California to put on a program on money in politics and were awarded one. Carol Murota and I—item co-chairs for campaign finance reform—contacted Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer and UC Davis Law School professor Vic Amar about speaking and received positive possible responses, but for much later this year or next. We then began to organize a local coalition with groups also interested in this topic and joined them in co-sponsoring two events in our region. On April 7: David Cobb of Move To Amend at the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in coordination with the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center. On April 9: at the Lafayette Library, a video presentation of Harvard Law Professor Lawrence Lessig, followed by a live Skype interview/Q and A with Lessig (who has founded a national grassroots organization called Root-strikers). We have continued participating with the MoneyOut! – PeopleIn! coalition with a League seat on the Steering Committee. On April 20, I attended an all-day Root-strikers conference at San Francisco State University, which included most of the national and state leaders on this issue. Other members of the MoneyOut! – PeopleIn! Coalition include local MoveOn organizations (now 501c4 non-partisan entities), MoveToAmend-EastBay, Rootstrikers, the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center, the Brady Campaign, and the California DISCLOSE Act's California Clean Money.

To date, the League of Women Voters of California has sponsored SB2 and SB3 with Senators Yee and Lieu and supports SB26 and SB27 (Correa), strengthening California's laws for prompt disclosure of contributions. Our LWVC has not endorsed this year's version of the DISCLOSE Act, despite endorsing it last year.

Strategies for dealing with big money in politics currently focus on public campaign financing, possibly with modifications to Senator Loni Hancock's Prop. 15, which received 42% of the vote in California in 2010. Voters have enacted similar legislation in Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut. Current versions, supported by Lessig's Root-strikers, suggest issuing \$50 vouchers to voters who can then donate their vouchers to the candidates of their choice. This eliminates the idea that our tax payer money is going to fund candidates we don't like, which caused many voters to vote no.

Other organizations urge us to pass a constitutional amendment that would overturn problematic Supreme Court decisions such as *Buckley v. Valeo*, *Citizens United*, and *McComish v Bennett*. Some would abolish corporate "personhood." The League initially opposed this approach due to the amount of time it would take, but is now considering possible versions. It has yet to find one that would be consistent with League positions, according to a press release issued by the LWV-US on April 7, 2013:

"These issues demand a multi-dimensional approach: federal legislation on disclosure, 'independent' spending, coordination rules, real enforcement by the IRS of violations of the rules for non-profit organizations, reform of the Federal Election Commission, etc....The League has not yet found a proposed constitutional amendment that we can support within our positions. Because Money in Elections is a priority for the League, we will be continually re-evaluating the opportunity for legislation in this area."

Carol Murota and I will continue to update you about developments and League positions. Please join our email list for Action Alerts and Money in Politics updates and events: call the League office at 283-2235 or contact Lee or Carol.

LWVDV WEBSITE UPDATES

www.lwvdv.org has been slightly reorganized. More importantly, a new menu item called [Members](#) has been added with links to a brand new Membership Manual, a brand new Job Description Handbook, and our Member's Interest Survey. Take a look! The website is a great way to orient yourself to League policies, practices, and activities!



California LWV Legislative Priorities

Adopted by the LWVC Board of Directors on March 24, 2013



- **Money in Politics (Campaign Finance Reform)**
 - Support stronger campaign disclosure requirements, including higher penalties and stricter enforcement
 - Support other changes to the Political Reform Act that are in accord with League positions
- **State and Local Finances/State Budget/Education Financing**
 - Support improvement of and transparency in reform of the state budgeting process
 - Support equitable and adequate generation and distribution of tax revenues
- **In addition, as a second tier of focus, consider Program Director recommendations for action on:**
 - Protection of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
 - Election reform and voting rights
 - Fracking
 - Water
- **Other Legislative Issues, As Time and Resources Permit**
 - Support requests from local Leagues and Inter-League organizations (ILOs) for advocacy on bills of specific interest to their jurisdictions
 - Take action as appropriate on core issues: Redistricting, Elections, Initiative and Referendum Process, Voting Rights, Campaign Finance Reform, and Reproductive Choices
 - Consider Program Director recommendations for action on the highest priority bills in their program areas.

National LWV 2013 Legislative Priorities

- Money in Politics
- The many facets of Election Reform

In addition, the following were included as a second tier of focus for 2013:

- Climate Change
- Gun Safety
- Immigration

Other issues, such as Health Care Defense and Budget/Taxes may be acted on as opportunities arise for League action, if they do not interfere with action on an LWVUS priority, and it appears the LWVUS can make an impact.

The Board considered many issues and the responses from League members suggesting Legislative Priorities. The decisions were based on what issues are likely to come before the 113th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made by members at the last Convention, member interest, and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if necessary.



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY PLAN BAY AREA HEARING



By Mary Fenelon, Action Director of the LWVDV

Lee Lawrence, Sally Germain and Mary Fenelon attended the April 22 Contra Costa County Public Hearing on the Plan Bay Area proposed by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The two agencies are responsible for integrating long-range transportation and land-use/housing plans to support a growing economy, provide more housing and transportation choices, and reduce transportation-related pollution in the San Francisco Bay area. Overall, Plan Bay Area covers 101 communities.

To say the hearing was contentious is an understatement, with the majority of speakers from Orinda Watch and a smattering of one or two from several other CCC communities. Of the sixty some speakers, only a handful of mostly younger persons or those working with underserved communities spoke in favor of the plan. The [Post Sustainability Institute](http://www.postsustainabilityinstitute.org) (www.postsustainabilityinstitute.org) is threatening a lawsuit against ABAG to stop it.

Perhaps the most reasonable comment made—after several people complained about lack of awareness of the plan and the short time period residents and communities had to review and comment on Plan Bay Area—was that the process had gone awry and should be reviewed. Otherwise, there were accusations of socialism, erosion of community control over their own destinies, and that “the tentacles of the United Nations were going to ruin their communities.”

BOARD MEETING, APRIL 11, 2013

By Martha Goralka, Secretary of the LWVDV



The meeting focused on our upcoming Annual Meeting, with the Nominating Committee reporting that there are several open elected positions, with more meetings and phone calls to be made. Jeanne Melaugh reported that she is working on an updated Membership Directory, updated Board Job Description Manual, and an Membership Manual, all of which she hopes to complete before her term is up. Lee Lawrence reported on her efforts to find a speaker for the May 11 Annual Meeting.

President Lee Lawrence reported for Audrey Albrecht that the affordable house event at the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church will be held on May 14 at 7 p.m. The Healthcare movie—cosponsored by AAUW and HCSA—will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, at the Ygnacio Valley Library on Oak Grove in Walnut Creek. Lee reminded us that the California League State Convention is in San Jose from May 17 through 19.

Action Chair Mary Fenelon reported on the April 2 Action Committee Meeting. She will make a presentation at the Moraga Planning Commission's public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) in Moraga on April 17. Lee Lawrence will sign and mail letters in support of AB 1229 and SB 391.

Under new business, Leslie Stewart reminded the Board of the Bay Area Council on Saturday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Woodside Independence Hall in Woodside. The Board selected Saturday, July 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the Board Retreat in the Lafayette Community Center Sequoia room.

DONATE

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

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

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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!

SAVE THE DATES

MAY 14—PLANNING FOR AN INCLUSIVE WALNUT CREEK: THE WEST DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN



Speakers Include

- **Rev. Leslie Takahashi Morris**, Co-Minister, Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church
- **Sean Potts**, Children and Family Minister, St. Paul's Episcopal Church: Role of Faith Communities in Pursuing Affordable Housing in Redevelopment Plans
- **Laura Simpson**, Housing Division Manager, City of Walnut Creek: What are the City's Responsibilities (and Plans) for Affordable Housing Development?
- **Sen. Mark DeSaulnier**, California 7th District: California's role in supporting housing for all economic levels.
- **Emily Chang**, Executive Director, Downtown Business Association: Business and City Advantages to a Close-by Labor Pool and New Consumers
- **Dan Sawislak**, Executive Director, Resources for Community Development: How Does Affordable Housing Fit Into and Enhance the Community?

Sponsors: Social Justice Council, Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church; East Bay Housing Organizations; League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley; Social Justice Alliance, Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County; St. Paul's Episcopal Church; St. Paul's Trinity Center

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 **please send payment and reservations in NOW**. A quorum of our membership is necessary for us to conduct business. We will be using the excellent caterer who supplied outstanding food for this event last year. The speaker will be Joan Buchanan.



LWVDV VOTER

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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

- May 4** **LWV Bay Area Council**
10 am [2955 Woodside Road](#),
Redwood City, CA
- May 7** **Action Committee**
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- May 9** **Board Meeting**
2 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- May 11** **Annual Meeting**
8:45 am Lafayette Library
[Community Hall](#)
- May 14** **Planning for an
Inclusive Walnut Creek**
7 pm [Mt. Diablo Unitarian
Universalist Church](#)
- May 16** **Health Care Movie**
7 pm [Ygnacio Valley Library](#)
- May 17** **LWVC Convention**
to [200 Edenvale Avenue](#)
- May 19** San Jose