



**MONTHLY MEETINGS**

See calendar, back page

**SAVE THESE DATES:**

**Tuesday, Feb 17**

Candidate Forum

CCTV, Martinez

**Saturday, March 21**

Hear from our LWVDV

Cuba travelers!

Cedar Room

Lafayette Comm. Ctr.

**Fri-Sun, May 15-17**

LWV California

Convention, San Diego

**Tuesday, May 19**

Special General Election

## *All-Member Program Planning*

**February 7, 2015**

**LWVDV Office  
Lafayette Community Center  
10 am - Noon**



## *Third Saturday Meeting*

**Learn about the new  
Family Resource Center for  
Domestic Violence**

**February 21, 2015**

**Pleasant Hill Cohousing – Common House  
3:00–4:30 PM**

**2200 Lisa Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA**

*For a map and detailed directions, please visit*

[www.phch.org/findoutmore.htm#map](http://www.phch.org/findoutmore.htm#map)

All League members and friends invited!  
Free program, light refreshments.

### **Special Primary March 17!**

Five candidates are running for former State Senator Mark DeSaunier's seat. LWV Diablo Valley is doing full voter service for this election – Smart Voter as well as TV and live forums.

**See page 4 for more info.**



## LEAGUE LEADER'S LETTER

*By Leslie Stewart, LWVDV President*

### Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday, LWV!

A couple of years ago I caught the genealogy "bug" and started going through old family papers learning about my family history. My original career was as a librarian, so I've always been interested in preserving archives, and this was right up my alley!

For the past few months, I've also been elbow-deep in LWV Diablo Valley's "family history" as I've been working through sorting and weeding our office files. I've been setting aside clippings and folders of activities from years ago that reflect our organization and its members to be added to our scrapbooks and archive files, while tossing duplicate newsletters and obsolete LWV publications.

In the process, I've been reminded how much our organization has done for our community – and continues to do. The folders with the history of the special elections that only the League could run – such as the election to choose the name for Bay Point – sit side by side with folders of action letters on waste disposal and forums on land use.

Shortly after I began weeding, I got a request from a researcher at a university in St Louis. He was working on justice issues – specifically juvenile justice – in Contra Costa County in the 1970s. Did we have any material on what the League had done? Between our files of two studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s, our action letters and our Voters, I was able to supply him with the kind of material he told me was very difficult to get! And I discovered that based on those studies, our League had lobbied for better jails, better treatment for women prisoners and a new Juvenile Hall. In addition, both Leagues in the county had joined a lawsuit to allow family visits for women prisoners!

*[Dorothy Ross, LWVDV President, did a small history of our League many years ago. It probably needs to be updated to acknowledge how much we've done since then.]*

For now, as we continue to make history, it's important to do our studies and to use them, as those earlier members did with the issue of justice in the county. We have our chance to do that with our Program Planning on February 7, and with our monthly Action Committee meetings which everyone is welcome to join. It's important to play our voter service roles, as we will be doing in the upcoming special election.

And on February 14<sup>th</sup>, along with the candy and flowers and hearts, stop for a moment to say "Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday, League of Women Voters!". Maybe your flowers should be daffodils – yellow flowers were the silent symbol of women suffrage a century ago!

*PS – Don't miss our next bit of history, as LWVDV members go to Cuba – see page 6.*

## LWV PROGRAM

### Third Saturday: New Domestic Violence Center

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior which involves violence or other abuse by one person in a domestic context against another, such as in marriage or cohabitation. It is non-discriminatory – it affects all social groups and classes. In Contra Costa County, 40% of police calls are due to domestic violence.

Contra Costa County is addressing this problem with a trio of one-stop Family Resource Centers across the county. One is already open in West County, and the second one is due to open in Concord in March 2015. There will be a third in East County in the future.



Concord Mayor Tim Grayson is a minister and police chaplain and has been very active in working to get this resource in Central County. He will discuss this at our meeting on **Saturday, February 21** from 3-4:30 pm in Pleasant Hill.

### Inside the Crystal Ball – State and Local Program Planning

Help to shape the future! At the All-Member Program Planning meeting on **Saturday, February 7**, members will make some important decisions about what the League will do in the coming months and even years.



Why is this meeting so important? Because League members can't speak out on issues without basing the statements on League positions – and we get those positions by studying the issues. New members are sometimes surprised when they discover that League can't just speak up on any ballot proposition, but we haven't studied everything that is on the political agendas. Program Planning is where we pick the next study topics or decide to work on advocacy around existing positions.

Other Leagues are already lobbying for their choices, which they will be proposing to LWV California, hoping to get chosen as a "recommended study" prior to state Convention in June. We've been asked to support Livable Minimum Wage, Death with Dignity, and Electoral Methods (that can be used to address voting-rights lawsuits). You may be enthusiastic about one of these, or you may have other ideas!

And what should LWV Diablo Valley focus on? We are still looking at some of our previous positions, determining if a re-study of land use planning is needed, for example. But what about other timely topics? Do we have the local knowledge we need to address our local issues? Obviously, we need your voice!

## **VOTER SERVICE**

### **Special Election News!!**

#### **Call for Poll Workers**

The election for the vacant seat in the 7<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District includes much of Contra Costa County, including East Contra Costa, Lamorinda and San Ramon Valley areas, Concord, Walnut Creek and Clayton. Poll workers are needed to work both the Special Primary Election on Tuesday, March 17 and the Special General Election on Tuesday, May 19. Please contact the County Elections Department if you want to help!

#### **Forums! We Will Do Forums!**

*Gwen Watson, Voter Service Chair*

A Special Primary Election has been called for March 17 to fill the seat of former State Senator Mark DeSaulnier. Two days after the filing deadline for candidates, members of Diablo Valley League held a kickoff meeting to plan an hour-long televised Candidates Roundtable on CCTV. Our partners are: Tom Barnidge, columnist for the Contra Costa Times, who will moderate; Betsy Burkhart and Chris Verdugo from CCTV; and Joe



Canciamilla, County Clerk for Contra Costa County, and his associates Paul Bugarino and Lori Haywood. Five candidates have qualified for the election: Democrats Terry Kremin, Susan Bonilla, Joan Buchanan, and Steve Glazer; and Republican Michaela Hertle. The proposed date for filming is Tuesday, February 17, at CCTV. Two Timers will be needed.

Our League will also co-sponsor two live candidate forums, one with the East Bay Leadership Council on February 11, and the other with St. Mary's College, also in February. Timers may also be needed for these events.

The General Election for this seat will be May 19. More information, including a map of District 7, is available at <http://www.cocovote.us/press-releases/special-election-called-for-this-spring/>.

#### **Smart Voter**

Ashley Coates, who has headed our Smart Voter team for several years, is stepping down. It's time for a new head (and maybe new team members). If you want to do your volunteer work from home, this is for you!

This is a great election to try your hand at Smart Voter – small and manageable, but important! Please contact the League office, 925-283-2235 or email [info@lwvdv.org](mailto:info@lwvdv.org) ASAP if you would like to work on this – training is available but time is short.

## Wrapping Up the Election Season, Part III (and looking ahead!)

### League Poll Observing on Election Days

One way to have a real impact in Voter Service is poll observing on election day. Many of us have taken the county's training to learn to help at the polls on Election Day. Under the new clerk's management, to work at the polls now requires an all day commitment (about 6 am through 9 pm) which many of us can't do. A great alternative is poll observing, which both publicizes the League and makes an impact, so that polls actually work according to plan.

This last November, Sally Germain and Lee Lawrence observed over 20 polls in Walnut Creek, Alamo, Danville, San Ramon, and in Moraga, Pittsburg, and Antioch. Wearing our big LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS buttons, we would go to a poll, introduce ourselves to the inspector and election workers, and sit and watch for about half an hour at each poll. We particularly watched to see how voters were treated, to make sure every voter could cast either a regular ballot or a provisional ballot, and to see that workers were following state laws and county policies in their conduct. We were very impressed by most polls, and the professionalism and courtesy with which voters were treated.

We were also able to help in some polls: Sally discovered that winds had knocked over signs indicating where the polling place was, and mentioned this to an inspector who was able to retrieve and replace signs so voters would know where to go.



Lee observed one poll worker in Pittsburg was standing over the machine in which voters were to insert their ballots, clearly observing the ballots as they entered the machine, and thus depriving voters of their right to a secret ballot. After mentioning this to the inspector the situation was immediately rectified, and she was pleased to note that at all other polls the workers were careful to stand at least five feet away from the machines unless a voter specifically asked for their help. At another Pittsburg poll Lee noticed the roster clerk asking all voters for identification when they came in and stated their names. Again, after conferring with the inspector this was stopped.

We also had a special phone number for the County Elections Office to call in case there were problems we couldn't resolve with the inspectors. This has been helpful in the past presidential elections where observers Carol Murota and Shirlee Loret found some inspectors did not have enough worker support, etc. These little incidents can be reported to the county officials in charge of training poll workers so that service to voters and protection of their rights can improve in the future.

We have a special election primary in March and general election in May for a new state senator to replace now Congressman Mark deSaulnier in Diablo Valley this spring. This may be a great time to practice poll observing. Please call the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley office (925) 283-2235 if you would like to participate! It's fun, it's interesting, flexible, and it's a real public service!

## LWV AT OTHER LEVELS

### Sisters Across The Straits

LWV Florida is leading its seventeenth educational delegation to Cuba in mid-February, and five Diablo Valley members will be part of the group. They will meet with university professors, healthcare workers, and a sewing workshop. The five LWVDV members are Juliana Boyle, Mary Fenelon, Ann Flynn, Amy Worth, and Gwen Watson. The LWVDV Program Committee has scheduled the March "Third Saturday" meeting for a report from the travelers.



### California Water Update:

California voters approved Proposition 1, the water bond, in November by a wide margin. Attention is now focusing on the \$2.7 billion of bond funding that is continuously appropriated to the nine-member California Water Commission (CWC) for decisions regarding storage. The CWC is responsible for evaluating public benefits of water storage proposals but must consult both with the Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding ecosystem benefits and with the State Water Resources Control Board regarding water quality benefits.

This month the CWC is considering a timeline for preparing a final draft plan for the Office of Administrative Law to review in the fall of 2015. They will use spring and summer to work with stakeholders, get other input, and get questions answered. The OAL will have until December 2016 to finalize the regulations. After that, the Commission can begin spending the bond money.

Planning for federal Central Valley Project storage referred to in the water bond is well advanced. The feasibility study for raising Shasta Dam is already being considered in Washington D.C., and a Record of Decision (the formal decision document) could be released in mid-2015. A ROD for Temperance Flat Dam on the upper San Joaquin River could be ready by mid-2016. However, these projects still depend on state funding for public benefits. Planning is also underway for Sites Reservoir north of Sacramento, to be operated as part of the State Water Project.

In addition to surface storage projects listed in the water bond, the CWC is being asked to consider nonstructural strategies for recharging the state's overdrafted aquifers and for improving retention of water in the upper watersheds. The LWVC's letter to the Commission is found at <http://lwvc.org/statement/2015/jan/lwvc-comments-quantification-public-benefits-water-storage-projects>.

Regarding other funding approved as part of the 2014 water bond, the LWVC Water Committee is interested in learning how money is being spent locally for projects like watershed restoration, conservation, recycling, groundwater recharge, and water quality for disadvantaged communities.

*Excerpt from the LWVC Water Committee January 2015 Update, <http://lwvc.org/issues/california-water-resources>*

**DONATE**

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

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## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS & UPDATES**

If your name appears below, then it is time to renew your membership. Please use the form on the back page. If you have already renewed, thank you! *(We send three notices before deleting but remember: expiration date does not change even if payment is later.)*

Nancy Balles  
June Boschin  
Jane Britton

Kay James  
Jacquelin Pels  
Joyce Pollack

John Thursby  
Nancy Thursby  
Steve Weir

Elizabeth Williams

**Welcome, new members! Sally Scholl, San Ramon, and Linda Johnson, Walnut Creek**



**We're on Facebook!**

Visit us and LIKE our Facebook page.  
[www.facebook/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Diablo-Valley](http://www.facebook/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Diablo-Valley).



**And Twitter!**

Follow us on Twitter -- @LWVDiabloValley  
***Please help us grow our social media network!***

### **Reminder:**

The Nominating Committee is now considering 2015 Board and off-Board positions.

Is there a topic you'd like to cover off-Board? Would you like to join the Board but don't know exactly what that means?

Talk to the Committee members: Sally Germain, Mary Fenelon, Frank Sullivan, Barbara Coenen and Audrey Albrecht. They'll be happy to hear from you!



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**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
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL** of ALL above enclosed to LWVDV.  
*(LWVDV is a 501(c)3 organization. Dues and donations to LWVD are tax-deductible. Tax ID number supplied on request.)*

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**

- Feb. 7** **Program Planning**  
 10 am- Noon [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 10** **Action Comm.**  
 2-4 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 12** **Board Meeting**  
 2-4 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Feb. 21** **Third Saturday Meeting**  
 3-4:30 pm 2200 Lisa Lane  
 Pleasant Hill
- Mar. 10** **Action Comm.**  
 2-4 pm [LWVDV Office](#)
- Mar. 12** **Board Meeting**  
 2-4 pm [LWVDV Office](#)