



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY

Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities

www.LWVSSMC.org

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May 2017

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Annual Meeting and Dinner: Chinese-American Relations in an Increasingly Globalized World

Tuesday, May 16, 6 – 9 pm
The Old Spaghetti Factory
2107 Broadway, Redwood City



Dr. Nicholas Hope will discuss areas of focus for the new administration in Chinese-American relations including:

Trade

Climate Change

The South China Sea

North Korea

Dr. Hope was the China Director for the World Bank, and the Director of the Stanford Center for International Development, where his personal area of focus was China.

He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Tasmania, his Bachelor of Philosophy from Oxford, and his Ph.D. from Princeton. He retired from Stanford in January.

Agenda for the Evening:

6 pm: Registration and Socializing
6:20: Dinner
7:10: Speaker
8:05: Business Meeting

RSVP by May 11, 2017; please bring your Roster and the Annual Meeting Kit.

If you did not receive the Kit in the mail, or if you have any questions, please contact Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net

No-host bar; dinner is \$30; entrée choice of lasagna, fettucine alfredo, or chicken marsala will be made at the restaurant. You may attend the speech and business meeting at no cost.

FROM THE BOARD

A Personal Statement

At our upcoming Annual Meeting, I will be handing over the Presidency of our League to the highly capable hands of Shirley Des Marais. Before I leave office, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for four wonderful and productive years.

I would also like to make a personal statement.

I love the League. I love its history, its principles, its integrity – and I love each and every one of the friends I have made. (You know who you are!)

But – my first passion (other than Nick, who is in a class by himself) is kids. First my own children and grandchildren, but all kids. So – I have been thinking about what children need to grow up strong and healthy, and also about how our work in the League benefits them.

What do children need?

First, they need enough to eat. We know that there are children in San Mateo County who go to bed hungry. This is not something we as a League directly

address, but it is something we as individuals – as citizens of the village – can help with. I strongly recommend Second Harvest.

Second, they need shelter. Our housing priority lends our weight to measures to provide affordable decent housing for the children in our area.

Third, they need security. They need to know that when they come home from school their family will not have been evicted, or their parents scooped up by ICE. Here, our policies on housing and immigration can help.

Fourth, they need a decent education. Good schools are critical. They provide knowledge of potential life options and the skills to work toward them. If you don't know your options, you are not free.

Fifth, they need adequate health care. Single payer, anyone?

And **finally**, they need a vibrant democracy and a clean world in which to work toward their goals. This is where the League truly comes into its own. Voting rights, voter education, and mitigation of climate change are critical to the long-term well-being of children in San Mateo County, the United States, and around the world.

Thank you all.

Ellen

The May meeting of the LWV **Book Group** will be Thursday, May 25th at noon at Mary Kneip's, the Vi, 620 Sand Hill Road, #109E, Palo Alto. Free valet parking, no tipping allowed.

We will discuss ***The Negotiator*** by George J. Mitchell. Please bring your own lunch; beverages will be served.

Our book choice for this summer is ***Broad Influence: How Women Are Changing the Way America Works***, by Jay Newton-Small.

BAY AREA LEAGUE BIENNIAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT—Ann Draper

The Bay Area League's Biennial Council meeting was held in Sausalito on April 29th. All Leagues throughout the Bay Area were represented. Evan Hughes and Linda Craig were our League's representatives. Ann Draper also attended as a member of the Bay Area League Board. Each League was provided with a thumb drive containing documents which can be resources for all of us.

The first item on the agenda was the final vote to merge the Bay Area League with the Bay Area Education Fund and voting members unanimously approved the merger. Next, the members considered and approved the regional budget. For the past few years, reserves have supplemented the costs for producing the regional Monitor. The reserve fund has been large due to a member contribution. However, the reserves for the Monitor will be drawn down in the next two years. One of the major issues for next year will be the examination of options to decrease the costs of producing the Monitor and determining if there are any new available funds to help supplement the revenues. The current approach of producing/printing/distributing the Monitor is not sustainable.

Several Board members provided overviews of their regional portfolios. The Bay Area Board is seeking monitors for several environmental agencies. Members thought that observing would be a good way for new members to get involved and there was significant interest in being a monitor. The Bay Area President will re-send out the list of regional agencies needing monitors to all Leagues, and will request that each League discuss this matter.

One of the major issues in the Bay Area is regional governance. The Bay Area League is very active in the discussion and actions to merge MTC and ABAG. (Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments) Because regional governance is so important, the next Bay Area Conference will focus this topic.

Melissa Breach, Executive Director of LWV of California, made a presentation on the topic of the need for courage in today's times. She also commented on the difficulty of the League on the topic of non-partisanship. We were reminded of the new guidance to say "LWV does not support or oppose any political party or candidate", not simply to say we are non-partisan. Her presentation can be found at <https://youtu.be/CcLI4ZWMIA4>.



Ann Draper, our new LWVBA Natural Resources Director, discusses the League observer program, and the current need for water & air agency observers. **LWVBA needs you to help us** attend or e-attend meetings, then email a summary paragraph of the hot topics. If you would like to be a regular e-observer or an occasional e-observer, please send a note to communications@lwvba.org. Agencies for observation include:

Bay Area Air Quality District (BAAQD)
Bay Conservation and Development (BCDC)
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transit Authority (WETA)

The League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County is pleased to announce the following new members:

From Atherton: Elizabeth Miller & Terri Train

From Menlo Park: Ora Chaiken; Julianna Dodick; Marian Egbert; Jean Lum Hoy; Katherine Hunt; Alan Miller; MaryAnn Miotto; Patricia Page; Kathleen Peregrin; Marilyn Press; Keahi Scott; Roni Strauss; Katherine Webb

From Portola Valley: Jean Eastman & Janice Klein

From Redwood City: Suzanna Jang; Geri Kennedy; Paula Opal; Linda Popky; Pamela Schwartz; Juda Tolmasoff; Nancy Whitecar

From San Carlos: Cheryl Ray

Returning members: Jacqueline Gomez (Atherton) and Sue Crane (Portola Valley)

A very warm welcome to you all from the Board and members of the LWVSSMC!

New Voices for Youth Update: Veronica Tincher Co-Chair, Steering Committee

For the past 5 years, New Voices for Youth has conducted a video class at the Siena Youth Center in the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City. Since January, New Voices has initiated a program with kids in the East Palo Alto Boys and Girls Club. Our North Fair Oaks and East Palo Alto youth spend time identifying and studying social issues with meaning to them (rising rents and housing displacements, bullying, and unsupervised youth, to name a few.) They next storyboard, shoot, and edit videos on these issues. The final products have been shown to parents, teachers, Service Clubs and at League events. Many of your fellow League members give their time on this steering committee.



Storyboarding

Working in Class

Members of the Siena Youth Center (SYC) Advocacy group testified before the Board of Supervisors. They described the current situation in Redwood City: there is neither rent stabilization nor rent control, tenants are rarely offered leases; there are no "just causes" required for eviction; and there is no relocation assistance.

The students described their own situations: one student's family lost their housing when their rent increased suddenly. The family moved to Concord and the student moved in with her aunt so that she could stay at Sequoia High School. Another student's family was struggling to find more affordable housing after their Redwood City rent was increased by \$800. (We subsequently learned that the family

relocated to Richmond. The student is living with her aunt in Redwood City so that she can graduate from high school in June.)



Speaking to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

April General Meeting Report—Suzanne Fouché

On April 19th, we had the opportunity to hear from **Jay Laefer**, a volunteer speaker with the **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)** since 2002. Jay described how the ACLU has opposed the Trump administration’s Muslim ban and has sought to protect immigrant communities from federal overreach. He provided examples of the ways in which our local citizens, cities and counties are harmed. One piece of legislation that will help some, the California Values Act, in support of landmark protections for immigrant families in California, was approved by the Senate thanks to supporters like the LWVC. **(SB54)**

Jay also spoke about two identical California bills dealing with bail bond reform in the Senate and Assembly. For many, it was the first time we had understood the issues surrounding these bills and their importance. **(AB42 & SB10)**

The last bill on the agenda was the California Religious Freedom Act. This bill’s aim is to ensure that California does not participate in any way in a registry targeting Muslims. **(SB31)**

His explanation of the legislation, his compassion and our discussion were invaluable in helping us broaden our understanding of these issues.

LWVC CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION POLICY—Adopted March 2017

The LWV of California has adopted a Climate Change Action Policy. It is posted on their public website <https://lwvc.org/issues/climate-change> In summary, it says:

The League of Women Voters of California supports actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change in order to protect our state from the negative physical, economic, and public health effects. Local Leagues and ILOs are urged to engage at their local and regional levels. Our actions are to:

- a. Promote energy conservation and efficiency in transportation, buildings, and infrastructure, including energy efficiency standards and land use policies that reduce vehicle miles travelled.
- b. Promote carbon pricing by market mechanisms such as cap and trade systems and carbon taxes.
- c. Promote a clean, low-carbon energy economy that is sustainable, including all forms of renewable energy and transportation infrastructure.
- d. Promote policies that mitigate impacts of climate change by adaptation in urban, rural, agricultural, and natural settings.
- e. Promote basic research and technology development, encouraging the use of a portfolio of technologies.
- f. Promote solutions that ease consequences of climate-related hardships to low and moderate income households.
- g. Promote public access and involvement in the decision-making process.

KEPLER’S “COMMUNITY PARTNERS” INCLUDES OUR LEAGUE
Don’t forget when you are buying books, or anything, at <u>Kepler’s</u> any time of year, to mention the League when you check out. They will donate back to us 6% of the sale. If you make your purchase online through Keplers.com, begin your shopping by clicking Community Partners, then Shop For Your Nonprofit, and then League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County.

Timely Topics Report

The first in our new Timely Topics series was held on April 13 to further examine Fake News, featuring David Iverson, an award-winning journalist and independent filmmaker. The discussion also went into how we navigate information, as he encouraged us to open our sources to increase our understanding of the world around us.

For those who missed the March 15 panel discussion in Palo Alto, here is some practical advice given by each panel member about how to identify and deal with fake news.

Sarah McGrew, researcher at the Stanford Graduate School of Education, recommended researching bylines, sources, and www.snopes.com, a website that checks fake news. She also recommended supporting reliable sources that you like (for instance, by subscribing). Sarah is a co-author of the recent report “Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning”, which found that students have trouble judging the credibility of online information.

Matthew Gentzkow, Stanford economist and co-author of *Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election*, recommended trying to understand ‘the other half’ of the country and where they are coming from; understanding their reality is critical.

Daisuke Wakabayashi, tech reporter with the New York Times, and formerly the Wall Street Journal, recommended that we know our own biases. Don’t automatically accept a story because it agrees with our own previously held ideas, or reject it if it doesn’t. Understand the motivation of the writer of the article.

Free Online Course: The Active Citizen in the Digital Age

In today's political environment, many of you are contemplating your role in shaping our communities, country and world for the better.

Starting on **May 15**, Stanford University is offering a new 6-week online class on the ways we engage as active citizens in our communities, shaped by our access to and understanding of digital tools. Hosted on the NovoEd platform, the class is **free and open to anyone**. The class has been designed to introduce the idea of digital civil society and to help participants consider the ways they engage in the issues that they care about.

Register Today! <http://bit.ly/2nRgQsz>

BOARD NOTES from the April 10th meeting:

- Discussed plans for the annual meeting scheduled for May 16th; to be held at The Old Spaghetti Factory in Redwood City.
- Bay Area LWV meeting is Saturday April 29th in Sausalito. Our representatives are Linda Craig, Evan Hughes, Ann Draper and possibly Lisa Conrad.
- LWVC state convention is June 2-4 In Sacramento. Shirley Des Marais will be attending. Other representatives to be determined.
- Discussed our upcoming programs on Fake News and immigration issues.
- Speaker for the annual meeting will be Nick Hope, discussing US relations with China and Korea.
- Other programs are being planned for June, July and August.
- Our Fall Kickoff is planned for Saturday September 23, 9-12 noon.
- San Mateo County supervisors are beginning to address local housing issues; Lisa Conrad will be our new housing chairperson.
- Also discussed iLead community meeting at East Palo Alto academy.
- And a discussion about National Voter Corps' plans to request our state's leagues for assistance with increasing voting in California and with their studies analyzing Voter ID and voting requirements in other states.

Mailing List for *THE VOTER*

If you received a paper copy of this issue of *The VOTER* and do not want it mailed to you, please tell Shirley Des Marais (sdesmarais@pacbell.net). Or, if you want to be mailed a paper copy and did not receive one, please contact Shirley to be added to the mailing list for *The VOTER*.

**OFFICERS AND CONTACTS FOR OUR LEAGUE
(LWV OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY, 2016-17)**

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UPCOMING EVENTS		
MAY		
8 Mon	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING in the new office conference room. Contact: Ellen Hope, ellenjhope@aol.com
9 Tues	5:30-8 pm	I Ran for Office and Won: Five Women Candidates Tell Their Story. Castro Valley Library, 3600 Norbridge Avenue, Castro Valley. Refreshments will be served. Co-presented by LWV of the Eden Area.
16 Tues	6-9 pm	LWVSSMC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING at the Old Spaghetti Factory restaurant, 2107 Broadway, Redwood City. Speaker is Nick Hope, China and the US—Areas of Focus for the New Administration. Business meeting to follow.
16 Tues	1-3 pm	LWV North/Central SMC General Meeting. “Right Type, Right Place – Assessing the Environmental and Economic Impacts of Infill Residential Development through 2030.” Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 1300 South El Camino Real, San Mateo. Open to the public. Contact: Susie Raye, Program@lwvncsmc.org .

25 Thurs	12 noon	Book Group Meeting to discuss <i>The Negotiator</i> by George J. Mitchell. At Mary Kneip's, the Vi, 620 Sand Hill Road, #109E, Palo Alto. Free valet parking, no tipping allowed. Contact: Judy Orttung, jorttung@comcast.net
JUNE		
2-4		LWVC Annual Meeting, Sacramento.
12 Mon	7-9 pm	LWSSMC BOARD MEETING in the new office conference room. Contact: Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net
27 Tues	6:30- 8:30 pm	Speaker Pamela S. Karlan , Stanford Law School professor, a leading scholar on voting rights and the political process. Our JUNE GENERAL MEETING . Redwood City Main Library Community Room, upstairs, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City. Contact: Suzanne Fouché, safouche@comcast.net

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