



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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August 2017

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UPCOMING DATES

AUGUST 2—KEVIN MULLIN

Independence Hall, Woodside

SEPTEMBER 23—FALL KICKOFF

75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton

OCTOBER 4—LUNCH WITH THE MAYOR

Lunch with the League!

Kirsten Keith, Mayor of Menlo Park

will discuss

Challenges and Successes for Menlo Park

Wednesday, October 4, 11:30 am

Restaurant Location TBD

Lunch with the Mayor

What sorts of issues does Mayor Keith deal with? All of them! She and her Council address problems of traffic, infrastructure, transportation, housing, increased population, school capacity, the environment and development. Each of these is exacerbated by the others and the increases in business and building in eastern Menlo Park. Each of these is of interest to our League--just check our positions in the Roster! 11:30 arrival time; by 11:45 everyone should be seated as Mayor Keith will commence her remarks then.

Contact: Carol Louchheim, 650-854-5800, or clouchheim@yahoo.com

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*.

FALL KICKOFF & GENERAL MEETING

We are again grateful to longtime member (and past president) Lida Urbanek for opening up her lovely house and garden to us for our Fall Kickoff, on Saturday morning, September 23.

Our speaker will be Jim Irizarry, the Assistant Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder for the County of San Mateo. He will be speaking about our Voter Registration information, its collection and safeguards, and how the recent request by the Trump Administration's Voter Fraud Commission (the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity), for all voter registration information--including partial Social Security numbers, military statuses, political party registrations and felony records--is being answered by California. He will also speak about SB 450, the election reform bill signed last September. San Mateo County will be among the counties where new voting options would begin in 2018, while the remaining counties would be allowed to adopt SB 450 reforms in 2020. The new election model makes voting easier by expanding early and mail-in voting, increasing drop-off options, and by allowing in-person voting throughout one's county of residence, not only at a specified precinct. There will be time for Q&A after his presentation.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The right of every citizen to register and vote for our government representatives is under attack, and the League is very active in resisting every effort to thwart that right. According to the LWV website, The Pence-Kobach Election Integrity Commission “has requested sensitive voter roll data, including the names, addresses, dates of birth, political party affiliation, past voter history, and even partial social security numbers of registered voters. This is a dangerous violation of privacy and the League has serious questions about the legality of releasing this personal information.

“The League is dedicated to ensuring that all eligible voters – particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, communities of color, the elderly and low-income Americans – have the opportunity and the information to exercise their right to vote.”

Our League has signed up to participate in National Voter Registration Day on September 26. We hope to get information that will help us target areas with low voter registration. If you have returned your member survey indicating an interest in voter outreach or registration, you will be contacted soon to help us plan our efforts. If you would like to join us, please contact me at sdesmarais@pacbell.net.

Our Kickoff on September 23 will feature Jim Irizarry, the Assistant Chief Elections Officer for San Mateo County who will talk to us about how they safeguard our voter registration information and about how the county and state can push back against requests from the Pence - Kobach Commission. He will also explain how they will be implementing SB 450, California’s new voter reform bill, which expands vote-by-mail and creates county-wide vote centers so that citizens are not tied to a single polling place.

To sign the LWV petition to “Stop Voter Suppression”, sign up for Action Alerts, or learn more about what the National League is doing to protect our right to vote go to:

<http://lww.org/issues/protecting-voters>

Shirley Des Marais
President

In Memoriam: Sarah Fries, LWVSSMC President (1979-81)

Sarah Fries, former LWVSSMC president died on May 25, 2017. She was a member of our League for nearly 50 years, living first in Ladera and then in Woodside (with her beloved horses). Sarah and her husband, Jim, MD and professor of medicine at Stanford, were active in health improvement efforts their entire lives. Jim was an author of the book Take Care of Yourself, and they founded Healthtrac together in the 1980s where Sarah served as president and CEO for 16 years. They also founded the Elizabeth Fries Health Education award in memory of their daughter, Liz. In recent years, Sarah had a major health challenge roughly a decade ago, but amazingly continued to visit friends, travel, etc., with assistance. She often attended our LWVSSMC president's lunch with her assistant. We will miss her.

~Linda Craig

Linda's lovely testament to Sarah's well lived life inspired memories of my own...

For me, she was the leader of our League's health care study and efforts to make improvements in the field. Sarah & I were our League's delegates to the 1980 LWVUS convention in DC where we lobbied very hard to get a national study of health care delivery and financing. It was passed with the caveat that the League raise the money necessary to do the study.

Jim Fries offered to talk to his contacts at Robert Wood Johnson and other Foundations, but LWVUS did not take him up on that, and in the end, the funding never happened. So, we had to wait to get the study passed in 1990 without the funding proviso.

In the 1980s, Sarah also set up an extremely first-class, well-attended all-day LWV conference at Stanford with the help of LWV members from our League and LWV Palo Alto. It was an amazing accomplishment as she was able to recruit Stanford health care experts who have just grown in stature since those days--not that they were unknown then. We had a huge attendance with MDs and RNs able to get continuing education credit for the day.

~Kathleen Weisenberg

REPORT: Marc Berman, Assembly District 24, July 25th

Assemblymember Berman was the speaker for our July 25 meeting in the Menlo Park City Council Chambers. He began with a short presentation and then took questions for the majority of the meeting.

He first described what he considered 3 key accomplishments of the State Assembly this year:

(1) SB 1 in April to raise the state gasoline tax and automobile registration fee to fund transportation infrastructure maintenance and upgrades via a 2/3 vote of both Assembly and Senate;

(2) AB 398 last week to extend to 2030 the Cap & Trade as part of the 2006 Climate Solutions Act (AB 32), also with a 2/3 vote to approve it as a tax/fee increase; and

(3) a funding/reform set of three bills to address the severe shortage of affordable housing. The Housing action is yet to come, as it is to be taken up in August when the Legislature reconvenes after the summer break. Mr. Berman has been, and is, in favor of all three.

He is leading an effort on a 4th item: a multi-year effort to create a revised Master Plan for Higher Education in California, updating the 1960 plan that led to our current 3-tiered system with UC and Cal State campuses, along with numerous community colleges.

In the Q&A session Mr. Berman spoke of the items noted below, and others.

Climate Change Action and Environmental Justice. AB 398 (Eduardo Garcia) required compromise to achieve the 2/3 vote needed, and the separate bill AB 617 (Cristina Garcia) that addressed local air pollution (and did not raise taxes or fees, thus not requiring 2/3) was part of the set of compromises worked out. In, or after, August the Legislature is expected to do allocations of revenues from Cap & Trade, including some that are to give support to disadvantaged communities and families that face special financial or health problems, such as higher gasoline and automobile expenses or air pollution near refineries, freeways and freight routes.

Voting Integrity. Mr. Berman supports California's Secretary of State, Alex Padilla, in his joining a number of other states' Secretaries of State who are refusing to supply voter registration lists to the Trump Administration's Voting Integrity Commission. Berman joins the national LWV and many others in opposing this Commission because it appears to have been created to make findings that will, falsely, justify voter suppression.

Single Payer Healthcare. He approves of Assembly Speaker Rendon's decision not to move SB 562 (Single Payer) to committees this year, agreeing that it is too big a financial item and too complex to take up this year and that budget/finance/tax considerations require much more detail and analysis, and that this is a multi-year project in order to get it right.

Immigration/Deportation (SB 54 to prevent/limit information sharing with federal ICE). He is in favor of some statewide action and expects action on SB 54 in September.

California Response to Repeal/Replace the Affordable Care Act. He supports protecting our values and our successes in expanding healthcare. Specific actions by California to do this cannot be legislated yet, because Congress has not yet changed the federal law.

Other topics in the Q&A included protecting privacy of names/addresses in voter registration data; transportation projects, including the Dumbarton Corridor; funding restoration for courts; disclosing information on sources of political campaign funding; security of voting systems; reform of Prop 13 to separate commercial and residential property tax rates; pre-kindergarten education; autonomous buses and freight on the roads of the future; streamlining and providing certainty for housing permits and financing; fairness and support for low income families as gas tax and vehicle registration fees are raised. ~ *Evan Hughes*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Do you have experience using **an on-line survey tool**, such as Survey Monkey? We could use your **advice**, as well as an eventual **survey administrator**. Please contact Shirley Des Marais, 650-322-0778, or sdesmarais@pacbell.net.

Our **Program Director** needs volunteers to help with refreshments and set-up at our Kickoff on **September 23**, at Lida Urbanek's house 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton. Contact Suzanne Fouché, 650-868-0320, or safouche@comcast.net.

Volunteer to be part of **an observer corps**. Absolutely no experience is needed. You will receive training and guidelines on how to be a League observer. The goal is to have a League member at the County Board of Supervisors, and the City Councils within our region. You would alert our Board of Directors of any information that might be of interest to our League members. We want to increase our knowledge of actions of our local governments and we need you to help. Interested? Contact Ann Draper, adtp@comcast.net.

We need volunteers to participate in **National Voter Registration Day**. Contact Shirley Des Marais, 650-322-0778, or sdesmarais@pacbell.net.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership Renewal

League membership runs from July 1 to June 30 each year. Your dues go to further the work of your local, Bay Area, State and National Leagues. **Please** consider renewing your membership now, if you have not yet done so. The universe (of informed voters) will thank you!

New(er) Mailing Address

PLEASE NOTE: The Post Office will no longer forward mail with our old Santa Cruz Avenue address, so please do remember to use our new mailing address, if you are a snail-mail user (and you might have some of our older reply envelopes hanging around, since of course we hate to waste an envelope, or anything else!)

P.O. Box 2244
Menlo Park, CA 94026-2244

Coffee with Assemblymember Marc Berman

Join us for a cup of coffee (provided at no taxpayer expense) and share your thoughts on community and legislative matters important to you.

Special guest San Mateo Board of Supervisors President **Don Horsley!** Thursday, **August 10**, 3 - 4:30 pm at the **Pescadero Farmers' Market**, 350 Stage Road, Pescadero.

Special guest Menlo Park Mayor **Kirsten Keith!** Tuesday, **August 15**, 8 - 9:30 am at **Woodside Bakery and Café**, 325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park.

Cap and Trade Legislation Succeeds

California lawmakers extended cap and trade to 2030 with the passage of AB 398 in a 2/3 bipartisan vote on July 17. Cap and trade had been otherwise set to expire in 2020. The League of Women Voters of California worked hard for the passage of AB 398 and for its companion legislation, AB 617 (improve air quality).

LWVSSMC Elevator Pitch:

Imagine what it would be like if everyone voted!
The League of Women Voters works to safeguard democracy by:

- Fighting voter suppression
 - Engaging new voters
- Empowering voters with information

If you want to make a difference in our democracy, join the League.

We would love to have you with us!

Review of SLR Vulnerability Assessment

By Ann Draper

The two Leagues of Women Voters in San Mateo County reviewed the County of San Mateo's Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment. Thanks to all who helped review the document and provided comments. Our input was submitted to County staff and they are updating the Assessment to respond to the public comments. It is anticipated that the Assessment will go to the Board of Supervisors in September or October, where the League will support further action. Both Leagues consider sea level rise as a joint high priority because our county is the most vulnerable in California to sea level rise, as well as one of the most vulnerable locations in the United States. The League comments centered on three topics:

1. STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND LEADERSHIP

We encourage all governing bodies to create a five-year sea level rise work plan and identify how sea level rise can be incorporated into decisions such as land use, transportation and public works plans.

2. ACCEPT SEA LEVEL RISE AS A PRESENT AND FUTURE RISK AND ACT TO REDUCE RISK

Identify where changes in state law would be appropriate to require the inclusion of sea level rise in local plans to lessen our risk exposure.

3. DEEPEN COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING ABOUT SEA LEVEL RISE RISK EXPOSURE

BOARD NOTES from the July 11th meeting:

- Shirley proposed studying improved outdoor signage for people to find our public meetings. Reviewed designs presented by Lucile. There was also consideration of different identifying pins to wear at our events, such as “Ask me about the League” and “League Observer” buttons.
- The membership committee is seeking methods to get feedback from members; the Survey Monkey tool has free and paid options. Board agreed we should assess the tool during a free trial period, with Board members responding to a test survey. ACT will tabulate initial results, but continued usage will require a regular survey administrator. **Potential volunteers please contact Shirley!**
- Pursue information about Volunteer Match as a new resource for finding volunteers for us; they also have a survey capability.
- Lisa stated that Silicon Valley Community Foundation wants communities to get together in November and have a “group” discussion on housing. The program will be presented at the next Santa Clara County Council LWV meeting; Ann will attend and report back to us. Shirley hopes we can interface with EPA.
- Ellen met with Margaret Marshall and Alisha MacAvoy to look at ways to strengthen links between our League and the active education community in Redwood City.
- National is looking for **volunteers to participate in National Voter Registration Day** on September 26th. Some new members have expressed interest in working on this topic, and we should engage them. We may need to have a trainer to train volunteers; Shirley will organize.
- Future Board meetings this year will be held every second Thursday, 7:00-9:00 at Lucile’s home, pending verification that this works for the absent Board members.

**League Office: LWVSSMC, 3723 Haven Avenue, Suite 112, Menlo Park, CA
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2244, Menlo Park, CA 94026-2244**

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KEPLER’S “COMMUNITY PARTNERS” INCLUDES OUR LEAGUE

Don’t forget when you are buying books, or anything, at Kepler’s 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.

**OFFICERS AND CONTACTS FOR OUR LEAGUE
(LWV OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY, 2017-18)**

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 Chair of the Education Fund: Sue Gould, susanbgould@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS		
AUGUST		
2 Weds	6:30- 8 pm	Legislative Update and Q&A: Assembly Member Kevin Mullin. Our AUGUST GENERAL MEETING. Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road (next to Town Hall), Woodside. Contact: Suzanne Fouché, safouche@comcast.net
10 Thurs	3-4:30 pm	COFFEE WITH ASSEMBLYMEMBER BERMAN and SMC President of Supervisors Don Horsley. Pescadero Farmers’ Market, 350 Stage Road.
15 Tues	8-9:30 am	COFFEE WITH ASSEMBLYMEMBER BERMAN and Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith. Horsley. Pescadero Woodside Bakery and Café, 325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park.
30 Weds	7:30 pm	“Political Geography and Minority Rule,” a talk by Stanford Professor Jonathan Rodden about important redistricting cases that are headed to the Supreme Court and may shape our elections for generations. Los Altos High School Theater, 201 Almond Avenue, Los Altos. For more info, see nationalvoter corps.org
SEPTEMBER		
14 Thurs	7-9 pm	LWVSSMC BOARD MEETING at Lucile’s house, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Contact: Shirley Des Marais, sdesmarais@pacbell.net or Lucile Spurlock, caspurlock@aol.com
23 Sat	9:15 to noon	FALL KICKOFF! 75 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton. Speaker Jim Irizarry, Assistant Chief Elections Officer, San Mateo County. Contact: Suzanne Fouché, safouche@comcast.net
26 Tues		NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY
28 Thurs	12 noon	Book Group Meeting to discuss <i>Broad Influence: How Women Are Changing the Way America Works</i> , by Jay Newton-Small. At Lucile Spurlock’s, 856 Creek Drive, Menlo Park. Contact: Judy Orttung, jorttung@comcast.net