



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 22 Issue 1

Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org

January 2016

LOOKING AHEAD TO A BIG ELECTION YEAR 2016

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:

VOTER SERVICE

TV/Video Coordinator

Forum Assistants

Sign Updater

Candidates are declaring for the June election and we've already had a request to conduct a forum. We will be sponsoring at least 3 forums from late March to early May 2016.

We have a critical need for a member or two to help as TV/Video Coordinator a job Will Richards has been doing. It involves arranging with designated camera crews to record the forums and produce video files we share with community media stations and upload to our website.

You don't need to know anything about cameras and files but you do need to be good at scheduling, and follow up and like to communicate using e-mail. This job could be shared by several members.

We will also need volunteers to help at the forums. If you are not already on our e-mail list of voter service volunteers, join it to receive early notification of forum dates. We especially need to increase our participation from members who live outside of Santa Rosa.

We would also like to update the signs we take to forums and voter registration events. This is a one-time job easy for someone with desktop publishing skills.

Contact me if you're interested in helping. I love to talk about Voter Service!

Susan Novak, Voter Service Chair, elections@lwvsonoma.org

Media Outreach Turns to LWVSC Members

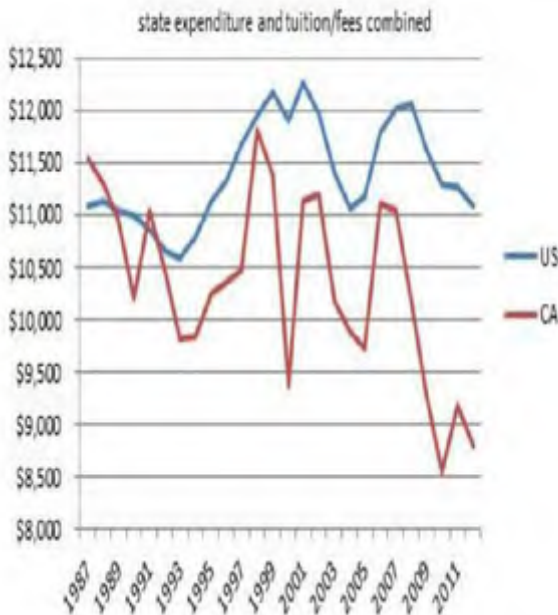
Media Outreach needs YOUR help spreading the word on events in 2016. This will be an exciting election year with a multitude of events being added regularly to our calendar. We need YOU to tell friends, neighbors, family and colleagues -- everyone YOU know in the community -- about what is coming up, when and where. Word of mouth is the best back up to radio, Facebook, websites, and print to get the word out! We are eager for your assistance. To find out what is happening, read each month's Voter, like us on Facebook and check in frequently, and read the email blasts you may be sent. Thank you!

Higher Education Study

The LWV of California staff includes a lobbyist, Trudy Schafer, who has been effective in influencing legislation passed in Sacramento. But the League can only take action to influence legislation after it has studied an issue and adopted a position. The LWVC has a position on Community Colleges in California, but has no position on higher education in general.

Higher education in California is undergoing a transition and League advocacy is needed, but first we have to do a study and hold consensus meetings to adopt a position. That study is now underway, and last month's edition of The VOTER discussed equitable access. This month the issue is funding.

The current problem with funding is highlighted by the graph below, which shows the expenditure per higher education student in California and the US from 1988 to 2013.



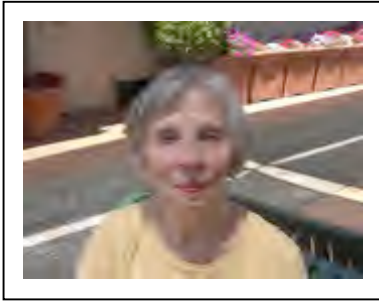
Source: Page 15 of the [Study Guide](#)

During this time spending per student has been below the national average and highly variable, and it decreased sharply during the recent recession. In 1960 when the Legislature adopted the Master Plan for Higher Education in California, close to 90% of the core operational finances for higher education were provided by the State general fund. The Master Plan envisioned a higher education system with no tuition and low fees. Now the State provides about 50% of the core operational finances for higher education. As a result, tuition and fees have increased sharply and course offerings have been cut. Also, part time teachers have replaced some tenure track faculty positions.

The LWC California has prepared a very interesting collection of information on higher education available at <https://lwvc.org/study/education-0> (the last symbol is a zero). Perhaps the best document to read first is the [Study Guide](#), which contains a synopsis of the information League members should understand before discussing the consensus questions. The consensus questions are at the end of the [Study Guide](#) and it is recommended they be read first because they provide focus while reading the other information.

All members are urged to attend the consensus meeting the afternoon of April 9 in the Rincon Valley Library. The information from this meeting and similar consensus meetings held by all Leagues in the State will be used to determine the new position on Higher Education. Interested League members are invited to participate in the Study. The next meeting of the committee will be Tuesday, January 26, in the League conference room. Contact Edith Mendez or Juanita Roland for more information.

By Willard Richards
December 14, 2015



President's Message:

**EYESTRAIN WARNING:
HERE COME THE BALLOT
INITIATIVES!**

Californians love their ballot initiatives. At least that's what we're told. This year there will be plenty to love or not love and they will be coming at us in droves.

At this point there are 3 initiatives qualified for the November 2016 ballot dealing with school bond and revenue bond issues and condom use in adult films. An interesting mix!

There are also 4 qualified statewide ballot measures: a constitutional amendment on suspension of legislative members, a referendum to overturn the ban on single-use plastic bags, an initiative statute and constitutional amendment on imposing fees on hospitals providing Medicaid services and a constitutional amendment dealing with English learner programs in the schools.

But this is only the beginning. There are 61 initiatives and referenda cleared for circulation. Some of the more interesting deal with the growth, access to and legalization of marijuana. I counted 16 different marijuana initiatives in circulation at present and YES, I may have miscounted and NO I didn't read them all.

Others of interest include:

- Taxes on bottled California water
- Residence permits for undocumented immigrants
- Parental notification and waiting period for females under 18 requesting abortions
- Cigarette taxes to fund healthcare
- Minimum wage increases and adjustments
- A referendum to overturn the Aid-In-Dying law

And also the legalization of ferrets as pets and declaring California a separate nation!

But the list goes on with many other issues of Importance and just to put this in perspective there are 36 more pending authorization in the Attorney General's office.

So for all of you who love your ballot initiatives (or not) there is plenty of fascinating fine print to read at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-and-referendum-status.

Nancy Burrington
President

SAVE THE DATES:

Bay Area League Day
Saturday, February 6, 2016
Topic: Transportation

**Higher Education
Consensus Meeting**
Saturday, April 9, 2016
Rincon Valley Library
(exact time to follow).

LWV Bay Area Convention
Saturday, May 7, 2016

Board Briefs--December 2, 2015 meeting

Some of the highlights of the December Board meeting:

Treasurer's report: The League's July-November income is \$13,922 and expenses are \$11,435 resulting in a net income of \$2487 for the first five months of the fiscal year. Income is primarily from member dues and contributions. Expenses are primarily fees to the State and National Leagues, and office expenses.

Voters Edge California: This is a program that provides voter guide information on election issues, candidates and their financing. Sally Patterson will be getting trained on their program in January or February. Our League may host a forum to introduce the program to the Leagues in our region. More to come on this after the first of the year.

Advocacy: A Living Wage letter from our League stating our position on the issue will be read by President, Nancy Burrington to the Board of Supervisors on December 8. An Action Alert process is being formulated so that our League can alert members on upcoming issues in our community that pertain to the League's positions. More to come soon.

The Women in Conversation speaker series next year will be attended by Carrie Anabo who will report back to the Board on the content.

Program: The League will co-sponsor a Catholic Charities Homeless event in January. It will be held at the Glaser Center. Future events will also include Lunch with the League in March, a Voter Edge meeting in the Spring, and the annual meeting in May possibly at the Canine Companion facility in Santa Rosa.

LWVSC Calendar

Board Meeting:

Wednesday, January 6th,
10:00 am to Noon.

Voter's Services Committee:

Thursday, January 7th, 10 am.

Advocacy Committee Meeting:

Wednesday, January 13th, 10:30 am.
See page 5 for committee report.

Book Club: Thursday, January 21st,
10:30 am. For additional information,
see page 5.

Bay Area League Day: Saturday,
February 6, 2016. Topic: Transportation

LWVSC Higher Education Consensus Meeting: Saturday, April 9, 2016 in the afternoon at the Rincon Valley Library
See page 3 for further information.

LWV Bay Area Convention: Saturday,
May 7, 2016

LWVSC meetings are in the third floor Conference Room at the LWVSC office,
555 5th Street, Santa Rosa.

LWVSC Board meetings are open to all LWVSC members, and to the public upon request. All other meetings are open to the public.

Board Briefs--December 2, 2015 meeting (cont'd)

Social Media: A committee has been formed to improve our Face Book presence. Also, members are working on updating our League website.

ADVOCACY NOTES

Advocacy Committee Report:

The new process of alerting the membership of actions it can take on local issues will be sent to the membership soon. On other subjects: The Santa Rosa Junior College District Board of Trustees will meet on 1/12/16 to again discuss splitting up Area 3,4,5 into three separate areas each with its own trustee. The league has decided that three separate areas instead of one area will allow better voter representation. The public transportation systems of Santa Rosa and the County are a problem for many disabled and low-income residents. An article is proposed on the subject for The Voter. On the homeless, the question has been raised to a Santa Rosa Council Member as to why the empty firehouse on Chanate Road cannot be used as a homeless shelter.

The Advocacy Committee welcomes topics submitted by the membership for the committee's discussion. You may write to the committee at action@lwwsonoma.org or Suite 300 O, 555 Fifth Sr., Santa Rosa, 95401. Please include not only a topic but also information on it that the committee can use in its discussion, and whether you are willing to attend a committee meeting to present the topic.

The committee meets on Wednesday, January 13th, 10:30 am in the third floor Conference Room of 555 Fifth Street, Santa Rosa. All members are welcome!

Gene Zingarelli
Advocacy Committee Chair
action@lwwsonoma.org

BOOK CLUB READS

January 21: Moderated by Susan Novak.

Notorious RBG, The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsberg by Irin Carmon and Shana Knizhnik, 240 pages, 2015.

Notorious RBG may be a playful project, but it asks to be read seriously. It's an artisanal hagiography, a frank and admiring piece of fan nonfiction...Early on, we learn that Justice Ginsburg was a fan of Nancy Drew as a child, and *Notorious RBG*, with its earnest superhero framing, reads like a Nancy Drew novel itself...It's an Honest Abe tale for the 20-something set...There is much about Justice Ginsburg that remains enigmatic. The achievement of *Notorious RBG* is that the authors make this unassuming, most studious woman come pulsing to life.

Book Group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. The next meeting is January 21 at 10:30 am in the third floor Conference Room of 555 Fifth Street, Santa Rosa.

League of Women Voters of the Bay Area
Presents
Bay Area League Day 2016

Reinventing Bay Area Transportation for the 21st Century

Saturday, February 6, 2016
9:30 AM-2:30 PM

Registration and Refreshments 9:00 – 9:30 AM
Maple Hall, 13831 San Pablo Ave

Located at Alvarado Square inside the City Hall Complex
13831 San Pablo Avenue
San Pablo, CA 94806

Keynote Address – Senator Jim Beall,
Chair California Senate Transportation Committee

Panel 1: - Allowance? Passing the hat for funding

- Funding:** are self help taxes helpful or enough?
- Infrastructure:** how do you prioritize upkeep vs expansion?
- Social equity:** Is social equity overlooked in funding proposals?

Panel 2: - Innovation & Technology - Back to the Future

- Last Mile Problem:** What are some of the ideas for solving this problem?
- Social Equity:** How do we make tech serve the underserved?
- Technology:** What will the highway of the future look like?

Panel 2: - Who Moved My Cheese? How and Where do We Change the Culture?

- Crystal Ball:** Can agencies be agents of change or not?
- Social Equity:** How do we make access affordable for all?
- Drones vs Semis:** how do we change the way we deliver the goods?

REGISTRATION:

Send check payable to LWVBA by **Friday, January 29th**, to **LWVBA Attn: BALD**

NAME: _____ LOCAL LEAGUE _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL _____

REGISTRATION will be available online using PayPal after Dec. 1, 2015. The cost is \$35 prepaid (\$20 without lunch) and \$40 (\$25 without lunch) at the door. The deadline for prepaid registration will be Friday, January 29, 2016. Make check payable to LWVBA, attn.: BALD. Mail check to LWVBA, 436 14th St, suite 1213, Oakland, CA 94612. For more information call Alec MacDonald (510) 839-1608 or www.lwvbayarea.org.

LWVSC Board of Directors

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Marsha Taylor, **Editor**

Because of privacy concerns, we do not include email addresses for the Board in the Voter. Readers can find email addresses in the directory or they can send email to Board Members from the contact us page of the LWVSC website. www.lwvsonoma.org

Connect with the League



LWVSC

www.lwvsonoma.org

www.facebook.com/lwvsonomacounty

LWV of Bay Area

<http://www.lwvbayarea.org>

LWV of California

www.ca.lwv.org

LWV of the United States

www.lwv.org

<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters>

SmartVoter

www.smartvoter.org

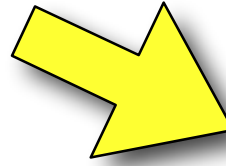
Addresses of Members Only websites are in the front of the LWVSC directory.

Remember to sign up for email alerts and newsletters when you visit these websites.

Tell us what you think!
Send in your comments,
questions, and
suggestions.
Email, snail-mail, or call!

We want to hear from you!

Become a Member of the LWV of Sonoma County



Make a DONATION

or

Fill out the form below and mail it to us at:

League of Women Voters Sonoma County
555 5th Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Memberships Levels

<i>Susan B. Anthony</i> Individual Membership	\$60
<i>Student/ Limited Income</i> Individual Membership	\$40
<i>Amelia Bloomer</i> Household Membership	\$90
<i>Elizabeth Cady Stanton</i> Membership	\$100
<i>Carrie Chapman Catt</i> Membership	\$200 or more

**Membership dues and donations
are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law**

I am interested in the following areas:

Program	Membership	Speakers Bureau
Social Policy	Natural Resources	Voter Service
Newsletter	Fundraising	Cable TV
Smart Voter	Community Outreach	Website

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We do not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.

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(707) 546-5943

The Voter is published nine times a year by the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County.