



League of Women Voters
of Sonoma County



Volume 29, issue 13
Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday June 8TH

Finley Community Center
2060 College Ave.
Santa Rosa

AGENDA:

9:30 a.m.: Check-in and coffee/tea
10:00 a.m.: Speaker
11:00 a.m.: Business Meeting
Potluck Lunch

GUEST SPEAKER:

Ann Hancock

Executive Director of the Center for Climate Protection

(see page 9 for details)

Please bring.....

Something for our potluck lunch....a salad, small bites, or a dessert and (if you remember) your own utensils and plate

LWVSC Calendar

Coming Events

See our [website](#) for other important election dates and information and links to videos of forums, or go to [Voters Edge](#).

Voter Registration and Education Training: Saturday May 18th. 9:45 - 11:30 a.m.
Online signup. Santa Rosa. [More information on page 8]

Forum on Affordable Housing. Monday, May 20. 2:30 p.m.
Spring Lake Village Auditorium, 5555 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

New Member Orientation: May 21. 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.
League Office Conference Room, 555 Fifth St., Suite 300 O, Santa Rosa.
[More information on page 9]

LWVCA Convention. Friday, May 31. Sunday, June 2, 2019
Pasadena.

Annual Meeting. Saturday, June 8. 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Registration at 9:30 a.m.
Finley Community Center, 2060 W. College Ave, Santa Rosa

Standing Meetings

Board Meeting: 1st Tuesday, 10-noon.

Advocacy Committee Meeting: 2nd Wednesday, 10:30-noon

Outreach Committee Meeting: 2nd Monday, 2:00-4:00.

Book Club: 3rd Thursday, 10:30-noon.

Voter Service Committee Meeting: 4th Thursday, 10-noon.

LWVSC meetings are held 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 all.

Visit our [website](#) for updated calendar information.



President's Message

Hopefully some of you had a chance to drop by our Earth Day booth on Santa Rosa's Courthouse Square on April 27th. Tabling events like this have increased our visibility in the community and provided educational material on voting and public policy issues. Debbie McKay is the organizer-in-chief of these events throughout the year. Many thanks to her and to all of the volunteers who set up and staff our eye-catching shaded booth. Make a note to self to join them at an event this summer.

If you've never attended a forum at Spring Lake Village, you have missed some good speakers. Susan Rouder, a Village resident and member of the League board, does an excellent job of choosing speakers on current public policy topics. There is always a Q & A session with good questions prepared by members of her committee followed by questions from the audience. League members are invited to attend these but because of limited parking space, we do not publicize these to a wider audience. The May forum will address Affordable Housing. (For more information, see Susan's write-up on page 6.)

In keeping with our choice of Climate Change as an issue for emphasis for 2019-2020, our Annual Meeting speaker on June 8th at 10 a.m. will be Ann Hancock, Executive Director of the Center for Climate Protection. Ann was a co-founder of this non-profit whose mission is "to inspire, align, and mobilize action in response to the climate crisis." Join us and learn about their new Clean Car Campaign as well as the progress being made in their community choice energy movement.

The business part of Annual Meeting will begin at 11a.m. Watch for a link to the meeting content (kit) in your e-mail box around the middle of the month. It will include the budget for our fiscal year beginning July 1st, our program priorities and the list of nominees for Board positions. It's an opportunity for you to catch up on what we've been doing and to give your input. We'll end the morning with our traditional member potluck and social.

- *Susan Novak, President*

County Survey

The Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women has initiated a Voices of Sonoma County Women project that includes live "listening sessions" in which women throughout the county may voice their needs and concerns. They are also asking all Sonoma County women to complete a brief confidential survey. The collective outcome of the project will be presented to the Supervisors in 2020. I encourage all of you to "speak up" and share the CSW survey with your friends and family.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GSRP5V2> English

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/62QYNQF> Spanish

Board Briefs for April 2nd

The meeting was called to order at 10:11 with Susan Novak presiding and all Board members present.

Treasurer: The financial report was reviewed. Discussion centered on the need for fundraising in the coming year since we have been overspending our budget. Various ideas for increasing income were suggested. The Treasurer's report was accepted and filed for audit.

President's Report: Susan reported her conversation with Janice Blalock of the Commission on the Status of Women and their activities. We will be putting their survey in The Voter.

Two members have registered for the California Convention: Iris Levitis and Marie Wardell.

Information from the League US Office on census work will be forwarded to our member Jim Masters who is actively involved with census work.

Outreach: Debbie McKay has created another member survey directed toward volunteer interest. **A motion was made, seconded and approved for Debbie and Gayle Peterson to distribute the survey by Mailchimp or Survey Monkey.**

The selling of t-shirts for fundraising was discussed. **A motion was made, seconded and approved that Debbie will take the project to the Outreach Committee and come back to the Board in May with information on costs and a suggested design.**

Debbie presented a postcard design for distributing at Earth Day which will result in the collection of information to be forwarded to the Santa Rosa City Council. **A motion was made, seconded and approved to move ahead with the project pending investigation of the cost.**

Voter Service: Leona Judson is writing articles encouraging people to apply for working on Boards and Commissions. She would like to get the articles translated into Spanish for publication. **A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize an expenditure of up to \$200 for translation if needed.**

Program: Finley Center has been booked for the Annual Meeting (June 8 at 10:00 a.m.). Susan Rouser is working on booking a speaker.

A subcommittee is considering activities to recognize the Women's Suffrage Centennial.

Membership: Gayle Peterson discussed the advantages of putting the Member Directory online. **Juanita Roland and Gayle will work on whether to move ahead with that suggestion.**

Advocacy: Jim Masters will take the lead on working on the census. Discussion centered on how to utilize the expertise of those speakers who bring issues to Advocacy for larger presentation to our members.

At Large: The next presentation at Spring Lake Village will be on Monday May 20th at 2:30. Speakers include Oscar Chavez (Asst. Dir., Sonoma County Dept. of Human Services) and David Guhim (Santa Rosa Asst. City Manager) addressing the topic of affordable housing.

- Nancy Burrington, Secretary



Voter Service-Civic Engagement

Last month we described our Commissions & Boards project whereby we wrote about the many county commissions that citizens can become involved in to help guide county policy and priorities. These articles have now been published in the Gazette and the bilingual newspaper La Voz as well as in a letter to the editor in the Press Democrat.

One of these commissions, the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is taking civic engagement a step further. They are putting on a series of events about women's empowerment through government. Each event will feature local female elected officials, women serving on city and county commissions and committees, as well as other prominent women in the area. They will talk about the 2018 election and what that looked like for women who ran, and some of the ins and outs of how these systems work! The goal is to encourage women to run for public office or serve on the many commissions and boards at all levels of government.

The events will take place in each of the Supervisorial districts. The dates are as follows:

- May 4th in Sonoma at the library, focusing on the First District,
- May 18th in Petaluma at Mentor Me, focusing on the Second District,
- June 8th in Healdsburg at the Healdsburg Museum, focusing on the Fourth District.

Events for the Third and Fifth District will be scheduled later. Check out the CSW Facebook page:

: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/SonomaCountyCommissionontheStatusofWomen/events/> We encourage League members to attend one of these events.

- *Leona Judson, Voter Service*

Advocacy Committee Report

At our April 10 meeting we covered, as usual, several topics. The head of the state-wide organization California Homemakers Association presented its local work with Home Health Care Aides and the poor of our area. One of our members who is also with the North Bay Jobs with Justice has made a contact with them. Another report was on the difficulty of getting the SMART train administration to set up a crossing at Jennings Ave. in Santa Rosa. The league has written one letter to the Santa Rosa City Council, with a positive result, and may be writing another to the Public Utilities Commission for further action. We also got a report on the local league's new Outreach Committee which does "tabling" at events and has a good relationship with the Latinx group Los Cien.

- *Gene Zingarelli, VP Advocacy*

Local Issues Forum Affordable Housing: Who Can Afford to live and work in Sonoma County?

The next SLV forum featuring local issues of public importance will be Monday, May 20th, 2:30 in the Spring Lake Village Auditorium. The focus is the affordability of housing. The Forum is planned and presented in cooperation with the Sonoma County League of Women Voters.

Last year, The Press Democrat asked Sonoma County residents about the quality of their lives. While most were satisfied personally, they identified homelessness and affordable housing as the most serious issues facing the county. They know the issue of affordability affects our economy and the quality of our services, as employers struggle to find enough employees to fill jobs. It also affects traffic, as thousands of employees must drive to our county each day from areas where they can afford to live, and it even affects public health. Greater air pollution, stress and fatigue, greater consumption of fast foods from the hours spent on the road, all impact our health. Our county is no longer rated among the top five in the state as measured by a recent national community health and wellness survey.

Two local experts will be speaking to us on the subject. One is Oscar Chavez, Assistant Director of the Sonoma County Human Services Department and Chair of the Sonoma County Community Development Commission. The other is David Guhin, Assistant City Manager of Santa Rosa as well as Director of Planning and Economic Development. Both speakers have been focused on the subject of affordable housing for several years, but particularly since 2017 when the fires destroyed more than 5000 homes in our county. How are we meeting the challenges? How many affordable homes and apartments are being built? How are we paying for them? Are the homeless able to afford our “affordable” housing?

Mark your calendars, bring your questions, and join us.

- *Susan Rouder, Member at Large*

Advantages of Building more Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

This is the next installment of our ongoing series on affordable housing. This article focuses on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) more commonly known as “Granny” or “In-law” units.

With affordable housing vacancies nearly nonexistent, ADUs offer property owners a chance to supplement their income or provide housing on site for family members, such as parents or adult children, or for unrelated tenants.

There are many built-in advantages to ADUs because they:

- Use land already zoned residential and do not require environmental impact reports or zoning changes

- Are a form of in-fill development (building on “vacant” land within existing neighborhoods)
- Do not require additional infrastructure such as water and sewage services, roads, sidewalks, etc.
- Promote higher density
- Can be built affordable
- Can assist a senior with remaining in his/her own home, when used for an on-site caregiver, or to increase income
- Can provide low cost senior housing (The original Granny Unit idea.)
- Provide more student housing
- Are a good option for a formerly homeless person who may not want to live in a more communal setting
- have lower rental costs, which are typically lower than traditional multi-family units.

ADUs are not just a new structure in the backyard, although that is one option. An ADU can be built within an existing home, such as converting a master bedroom and bath to an ADU by adding a meal preparation area and an outside entrance. For example: I have a master bedroom with an attached master bath. The room has French Doors to the back yard. If I had my contractor install and a meal preparation area with sink, heating element and refrigeration, I would have an ADU to rent out. Since I am close to a bus stop, I would not need to add more parking. If I kept it under 750 sq. ft. my fees would be minimal.

Changes to the California law governing ADUs caused many local towns and cities to revise their regulations concerning ADUs. The new laws reduced the requirements for new ADUs, and create opportunities for the development of Junior ADUs. Cities and towns are making changes in response to these new laws. Below are some examples.

The Santa Rosa City Council provided direction in their Housing Action Plan to reduce obstacles to ADU construction such as reducing parking requirements and owner occupancy deed restriction requirement, which requires the owner of a property with an ADU to live on the property in one of the two units. The City also implemented a minimum 30-day rental period on all ADUs so that they would not become short term vacation rentals. Additionally, Santa Rosa waived parking requirements, setback requirements and associated fees for ADUs in certain cases. In Santa Rosa the maximum square footage of an ADU was increased to 1,200 sq. ft., and the limitation of only one bedroom was removed. The requirement for a permanent foundation was also removed. Regulations were revised to allow Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs).

In all cities high development impact fees for ADUs is barrier to some residents wanting to build an ADU. Cities, including Petaluma, are looking at reducing those fees. In 2010, Petaluma reduced its fees for granny units to approximately \$12,000. Previously, the fee schedule was the same as a single-family home, which costs more than \$41,000. However, fees may need to be reduced further or postponed until occupancy of the ADU. Petaluma is considering identifying tradeoffs for reducing or eliminating the fees, like providing deed restriction which would control rent levels for its affordability that would allow the city to include the unit in its regional housing goal counts, or for pursuing zero net energy projects.

The County of Sonoma also made changes in their regulations governing ADUs in May 2018. The changes increase maximum size of ADUs to 1,200 sq. ft., reduce the minimum parcel size and reduce development fees on graduated scale, with units under 750 sq. ft. having fees waived. And delayed the collection of affordable housing fees until near occupancy. The County went so far as to ask its residents to let the County know about sites appropriate for ADUs.

The City of Sonoma updated its regulations to facilitate construction of new ADUs, including modifications to requirements for parking, fire sprinkler systems, and water and sewer connection fees. Short term rental (less than 30 days) of ADUs is prohibited.

The Town of Windsor has worked to reduce impact fees. As of the beginning of 2017 landowners interested in converting part of their existing dwelling into an ADU are exempt from impact fees. However, new, freestanding buildings, such as tiny homes, can still be charged impact fees.

This spring Healdsburg is considering changes to its ADU ordinance, including, increasing the maximum ADU square footage from 850 to 1,200 sq. ft., altering the ADU to house size ratio, adding ADUs to the Multi-Family Residential Zoning District (RM), adding required parking for garage conversions and reorganizing ADU information to make it more user friendly.

- *Debbie McKay, Outreach*



Upcoming Events

Voter Registration Training: May 18th

There is an important training opportunity coming up you may want to explore or pass on to a friend-- come learn more about our local League of Women Voters and how to register people to vote. In about 90 minutes you will learn about the issues we are working on this year, the history of the League, how to register voters and our voter education program.

Location: Debbie Mc Kay's home (specific address will be provided to those who sign up.)

9:45 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Sign-up online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0945a4ae2aa3f49-voter3>.

Or you can send an email to tabling@lwvsonoma.org with your name and phone number.

New Member Orientation: May 21st

This orientation is open to ALL League members who want to learn more about the League and its history as we start our Centennial celebrations.

We will also explain National, State, and Local League structure and what each does. Then and most importantly introduce our local committees, the amazing things they do, and how League members can participate, whether it be a little or a lot. Light refreshments will be served.

10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

League Office Conference Room, 555 Fifth St., Suite 300 O, Santa Rosa.

The Annual Meeting: June 8th

Our speaker, Ann Hancock is the Executive director of the Center for Climate Protection. We have asked her to speak about how Sonoma County is responding to the challenges of climate change. More specifically we suggested she talk about the goals of the Center for Climate Protection. The Center has been actively supporting community energy in the state and expanding the community choice network. Their clean car campaign seems to connect with our belief that affordable housing should be developed near transportation corridors and centers to reduce the need for cars and encourage bikes or walking.

Wednesday Night Market: Summer

Last year we had great interactions with folks at the Santa Rosa Wednesday Night market, so we are going to have a booth there again this summer for three nights – June 26th, July 31st and August 21st. We will be doing voter registration and education. And this year we hope to sell T-shirts celebrating 100 years of Women Voting!

There will be two shifts each evening: **Early shift 3:45 – 6:15 p.m. Later shift 6:15 – 8:45 p.m.** Either shift gives you time to check out the market too. To sign-up go to the links below or just send an email to tabling@lwvsonoma.org with the date(s) and shift(s) you want. Feel free to sign up for more than one date.

June 26th <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0945a4ae2aa3f49-june>

July 31st <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0945a4ae2aa3f49-may29th>

August 21st <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0945a4ae2aa3f49-august>

Membership News

WOW! That was the Board's response, when hit with a fact we hadn't considered recently. Namely, the amount of money, out of each annual membership we send to the National, California, and Bay Area Leagues. At the local level, our League keeps just \$3.50 of a \$65.00 individual membership and just \$7.75 of a \$100.00 household membership. That's right, we pay a set fee of \$32.00 or 49% to the National

League, \$28.00 or 43% to the California League and a negligible \$1.50 to the Bay Area chapter. Households pay 1 1/2 times.

Needless to say, that leaves us working on a shoestring as we try to create opportunities to engage our members, like educational meetings and programs, outreach to the community and organizing and promoting our main goal of voter education through Forums and Pros and Con Presentations at election time.

It is important to contribute to the work of all levels of the League, so we do not begrudge our fees. After all, their budgets fund the really important work to be done within our state, like lobbying for campaign finance reform, bail reform, climate change and water policy to name a few. At the national level we support the fights to end gerrymandering, voter suppression and money in politics.

We are currently entertaining ideas about how we can raise more money to fund our activities. This is where you can help! Do you have an idea for fundraising? Would you consider writing an extra check as an additional donation?

We'd like to hear from you.....membership@lwvsonoma.org

- *Gayle McKinney Peterson, Membership*

Reducing Global Warming One City at a Time

One of our local League's priorities, selected at our January Program Planning meeting, was climate change, including reducing the rate of global warming. An important part of reducing global warming is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The State of California requires each city and town and the County of Sonoma to have a climate action plan with specific goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels. Many of our local jurisdictions are currently exploring how they can do more to reduce emissions. For example the Town of Windsor is exploring using floating solar panels on their sewage treatment ponds to power their plant. The City of Sonoma signed up for the Sonoma Clean Power Evergreen Program which is 100% local renewable energy, from geothermal and solar.

Using 100% renewable energy reduces greenhouse gas emissions. This year the League will be asking the remaining city and town councils to consider signing up for 100% renewable energy to power their government operations. We are currently gathering signatures from local residents asking their council members to sign up for 100% renewable energy.

One of the typical challenges of using 100% renewable energy, which includes solar and wind generation, is that those methods do not generate power 24 hours/7 days per week (24/7). However, we have a unique resource in our county in that the geothermal electric plants at the Geysers produce 100% renewable energy 24/7. Using locally generated geothermal and solar power is a way to protect our natural resources, which is in alignment with our League's positions to preserve our non-renewable resources.



As a part of our climate change effort, League members, Suzy Marzale K, Anita Lytle, and Debbie McKay attended the Los Cien April 19th Luncheon on Environmental Stewardship. Suzy networked, while Anita and Debbie distributed 100% Renewable Energy cards for attendees to sign. Renewable Energy cards were collected at the luncheon and will be presented to city and town council members at a later date.



The League also gathered signed Renewable Energy cards at our booth at the Earth Day Celebration on April 26th. More signed cards will be collected when we have a booth at the Wednesday Night markets in Santa Rosa this summer.

If you would like to help with this effort, sign up to pass out cards at the Wednesday Night Market on June 26th, July 31st or Aug 21st. Send an email to tabling@lwvsonoma.org with the date(s) you would like to be at our booth at the Market and whether you want the early shift 4-6:30 p.m. or the later shift 6:15 – 8:45 p.m. Hope you can join us!

- *Debbie McKay, Outreach*

Book Club Reads

May 16--Moderated by Nancy Burrington

The Browns of California, by Miriam Pawel, 480 pages, 2018

Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist Pawel (*The Crusades of Cesar Chavez*) continues to explore the California political landscape with this well-written and deeply researched dual biography of the late Pat Brown, the state’s governor from 1959 to 1967, and his son Jerry Brown, who was governor from 1975 to 1983 and reelected in 2011. The backdrop for all of this is the rich history of California, illuminated with small historical details that are a testament to Pawel’s research.

June 20—Moderated by Lee Lipinsky and Anita Lytle

An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States, by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, 296 pages, 2014

With growing support for movements such as the campaign to abolish Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous Peoples’ Day and the Dakota Access Pipeline protest led by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States* is an essential resource providing historical threads that are crucial for understanding the present.

The 2019 Reading list is online at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/files/bookgroup2019.pdf>

Please join us.

LWVSC

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Susan Novak, **President**

Anita Lytle, **VP Administration**

Gene Zingarelli, **VP Advocacy**

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Susan Rouder, **Member at Large**

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>

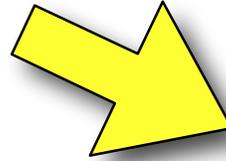
Voter's Edge <http://votersedge.org/en/ca>

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



or

Make a
DONATION

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	\$65
<i>Student/ Limited Income</i> Individual Membership	\$40
<i>Amelia Bloomer</i> Household Membership	\$100
<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**

Please circle any topics you are interested in knowing more about.

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Voter Registration | Candidate Forums | Transportation |
| Housing/Homelessness | Climate Change | Immigration |
| Newsletter | Website Management | Local Governance |

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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