



League of Women Voters Eden Area

VOTER

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FORUMS, PROGRAMS AND HOT TOPICS FOR 2015-16

During our LWVEA Retreat on July 18, the Board discussed and tentatively set the calendar items listed in this page. So, mark your calendars in pencil because changes might be made to dates and/or venues depending on when our proposed speakers confirm.

It was agreed that we would try to include “education and advocacy” priorities established by the LWVC – Money in Politics, Climate Change Election Reform, Voting Rights and Reform of Prop 13.



Board members also reviewed each of the “teams” that will perform the work of the League for the coming year—Program, Voter Service, Finance, Communications,

Outreach, Action, Multimedia, Education Study, Nominating and Local Position teams. Each team leader was urged to “recruit” additional members utilizing the recent survey that was sent out with membership renewal invoices.

The Board agreed to keep its meetings on the fourth Monday from 5:45 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hayward Area Historical Society. League members are encouraged to attend. If you would like a copy of the agenda, email Nancy -- lwvea@aol.com.

LWVEA CALENDAR FOR 2015-16

(Tentative)

September – LWVC just announced a proposal called “Make it Fair” (MIF) to reform Prop 13. MIF seeks to make California’s tax code fair to all by phasing out loopholes in Prop 13 for large corporations. Legislation is now going through hearings for a constitutional amendment. Speakers from different levels of government have been invited but not confirmed as of this date. Stay tuned.

October 6 – Hayward Volunteer Dinner honoring representatives from many organizations who have contributed to the community. The LWVEA has selected Jewel Spalding as its nominee.

November 6 or 13 - Money in Politics - An update of the LWVUS position on campaign finance and the extent to which the League thinks that financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment relative to the Supreme Court’s recent decisions. We may also include the City of Hayward’s work on its local reform of campaign finance.

December 4 – Holiday Party and Auction. Venue not yet determined.

Updates of forums will be sent to members via email and our website—www.lwvea.org.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Nancy Van Huffel



KUDOS to all of the members who took the time to complete the survey that was included with your invoice this year. This really helps the Board in planning our events for the coming year.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Hate long-term commitments?
Can you spare 2 hours for 1 day?**

Every year, millions of Americans aren't able to vote because they missed a deadline or didn't know how to register. **National Voter Registration Day** is a huge coast-to-coast effort to ensure no one gets left out. This isn't about supporting candidates or political parties. It's about making sure every voice is heard!

On September 22, 2015, volunteers from all over the country will "hit the streets" for **National Voter Registration Day**. This single day of coordinated field and social and traditional media efforts will create pervasive awareness of voter registration opportunities—allowing us to reach thousands of voters who we could not otherwise reach. Our Eden Area League plans to be at BART stations, libraries, colleges, and other relevant places depending on the number of volunteers that are willing to help us for the day.

National Voter Registration Day will be an opportunity to put our differences aside and celebrate the rights that unite us as Americans - democracy.

If you are willing to volunteer for a few hours on **Tuesday, September 22** from **10am to 7pm**, please contact our Voter Service Coordinator, **Joanne Young** @ 510-538-5567 or email LWVEA@aol.com

IN MEMORY OF....

On behalf of our Board, I want to extend our heart-felt condolences to the Hayward Police Department and the City of Hayward for the awful killing of Police Sergeant Scott Lunger.

His death was so unnecessary and inexplicable. Our hearts go out to the Sergeant's family, particularly his two daughters. It is clear that Sergeant Lunger was the epitome of a professional officer as well as dedicated father, respected softball coach, and long-time contributor to his communities. We know he will be greatly missed by his family, the Hayward Police Department, and the Hayward community. May all his colleagues in law enforcement throughout the Bay Area be safe while protecting and serving their communities.

BOARD BRIEFS FROM RETREAT 7-12-15

Non-Partisan Policy - Discussed and approved policy.

Meeting Dates & Location – Approved continuing to meet on the 4th Monday at the Hayward Area Historical Society.

Teams - Reviewed responsibilities of old and new "teams" in order to assure that league work is spread among board and non-board members.
Program Team - Aiwa Zelinsky called the first Program Team meeting to discuss speakers for forums for upcoming programs.

Social Media - Penny Peck agreed to work on including more information about the League on social media—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
Holiday Party - Cossette Sun was tasked with finding a suitable venue to hold this annual fun event.

Local Position Review – Jewell Spalding agreed to lead a team to review local positions and submit updates if needed.

Voter Registration – Discussed registering voters on National Voter Registration Day, Sept 22 at BART stations with other Alameda County Leagues.

Calendar - Set possible dates, times and suggested speakers for education forums on priority issues: Money in Politics, Hayward Election Finance Guidelines, Prop 13 Reform, Campaign Finance Constitutional Amendment, Community Choice Aggregate (Energy) and the Higher Education Study (LWVC).

Board meetings are open to the public. Contact lwvea@aol.com to receive an agenda.

GAIL STEELE – 2015 WOMAN OF THE YEAR, DISTRICT 20



Gail Steele was honored in March as District 20 **Woman of the Year** by Assemblymember Bill Quirk for her significant contributions and

accomplishments.

Gail began her political career as a member of the Hayward City Council serving from 1974 to 1982. While on the Council she founded the Eden Youth Center which enhances the economic, social, educational and healthy well being of the community. She served as the Eden Youth Center's Board President and then as their Executive Director from 1979-1992 and continues to sit on the board to this day.

Elected to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in 1992 she represented District 2 for 18 years. During her nearly two decades on the Board of Supervisors she was both popular with residents and consistently labeled as one of the best public officials to work for.

While on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors Gail conceived the Children's Memorial Grove & Flag project, which honors children who have died victims of domestic violence. A special Children's Memorial Flag was designed to be flown at half-staff at county buildings, schools, and other participating agencies on the Friday after a child dies by violence.

The California Assembly in April 1997 formally declared the fourth Friday in April as a statewide annual observance day, where every year, the Children's Memorial Flag is lowered statewide in memory of all California children who died by violence in the previous year.

Gail also created the annual Hayward Volunteer Dinner to formally recognize individuals who volunteer in the region. While on the City Council she led efforts to encourage the responsible growth of the city's housing market. She is an advocate

for the libraries and helped raise over \$600,000 to expand the Hayward Weekes Branch Library.

Before starting her career as a public servant Gail helped lead the successful Friends of the Hayward Animal Shelter program.

She has been a member of the League of Women Voters Eden Area for 50 years as of 2015.

COSSETTE SUN RECEIVES API LEADERSHIP AWARD

Cossette Sun recently received the Asian Pacific Islander Leadership Award (APILA) for her more than thirty years of being an advocate of free Public Libraries and County Law Libraries in the state.



She also worked tirelessly with state legislators to secure state funding for the new library in Castro Valley. In addition, she succeeded in raising more than \$60,000 from eight major Taiwanese organizations for the library.

She has fund raised for 9/11 victim families and to promote the cultural history of the Taiwanese community. A long time member of the League, Cossette was elected to the Board in 2013.

The APILA was presented to Cossette by State Senator Bob Weickowski who recognized her for her outstanding years of service to the community.

WELCOME TO LATEST NEW LWVEA MEMBERS

Hon. Rob Bonta
Carolyn Darcey
Pam Fobèr
Hon. Rick Hatcher
John Maher
Margaret McCluckie
Liz Sanchez
Matt Turner
Hon. Richard Valle

THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL GENEROUS DONORS

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Michael & Nancy Pretto
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Nancy Schluntz
Tom Silva
Gail Steele
Cossette Sun
Joan Webber
Joanne Young
Shelia Young
Nancy Van Huffel

If we have overlooked anyone who sent in a donation with his or her membership renewal, please contact Gail Lundholm, Membership Team Leader at gala05@peoplepc.com.

If you are a “straggler” and have not already sent in your membership renewal, please do so as soon as possible. Otherwise, we will have to start calling and you wouldn’t want that!

Your Board is amazed at how generous our members have been with donations. That helps immensely in keeping our dues the lowest in the Bay Area. THANK YOU!

LWVC/LWVEA HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY

As you know, we announced that our League would be participating in the LWVC Higher Education Study. We presumed we would have the consensus questions by this time, but the state study committee has recently sent them to the LWVC board for final approval. So we should have them soon.



The scope of the study, “*A study examining access to quality public higher education in California including funding, affordability, preparedness, equity and opportunities and barriers to success.*”

In the meantime, the following members signed up at the Annual Meeting to participate in the study: [Norman Fobèrt](#), [Sonya Howes](#), [Amy Madsen](#), [Rene’ Besold](#), [Delmo Della Dora](#), [Susan Levitt](#), [Cossette Sun](#), [Aisha Knowles](#), [Evelyn Cormier](#), [Sally Morgan](#), [Penny Peck](#), [Suzanne Barba](#) and [Aiwa Zelinsky](#).

If there are others, who were not at the Annual Meeting and did not have a chance to sign up, please contact me at 510-538-9678 or email me about your interest at suzbarba@comcast.net.

We have received several packets containing background information on the topic which were prepared by the LWVC study committee in order to educate ourselves. I will also be sending those packets out to our local study committee shortly.

I will also send out an email to collect information about when the committee would like to get together to review the study elements. If you know of someone who might be interested in joining us, please forward this newsletter to them.

Suzanne Barba, Study Leader

MAKE IT FAIR--Prop 13

Close Corporation Loopholes and Rebuild California

A bill is now wending its way through the state legislature to “reform some unfair provisions” of Prop 13. A hearing on SCA 5 will be held in August.

The LWV state league has joined a coalition of 200 groups in support of this measure. [Our local league forum will be held in September to educate members on the pros and cons of making changes to Prop 13.](#)

As you may remember, Prop 13 was passed by voters in 1978 to protect homeowners. But, it also contained a series of loopholes that allowed giant companies and corporations who owned property to avoid reassessment and thereby pay less tax.

People who support reforming Prop 13 indicate that it will:

- only affect large commercial and industrial buildings and reassess them at fair market value.
- raise \$9 billion a year for schools and local services
- protect homeowners
- provide tax relief for small businesses
- include an accountability provision for how new funds are spent

The people who oppose reforming Prop 13 indicate that it is like “the camel that puts its nose in the tent” and eventually pulls down the tent. They also say that changing Prop 13 creates “a slippery slope” which will lead to further changes that homeowners won’t like. Those who oppose reforming Prop. 13 point out that it may make large corporations move their businesses out of the state.

For more information on the “pro” side of the Make it Fair campaign, you can go to the state league website, lwvc.org/lwvonly/action/makeitfair.

Suzanne Barba, VOTER Editor

LWVUS MONEY IN POLITICS REVIEW CAMPAIGN FINANCE POSITION & STUDY PROCESS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The LWVUS has asked local leagues to review its Campaign Finance Position for the purpose of addressing the lack of understanding and agreement as to whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment.

The position review will address (1) the rights of individuals and organizations, under the First Amendment, to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities; and (2) how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconcile with the interests set out in the current position.

A summary of the LWVUS position on Campaign Finance (adopted 1974, revised 1982) [“Methods of financing political campaigns should: • ensure the public’s right to know; • combat corruption and undue influence; • enable candidates to compete more equitably; • allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. *This position is applicable to all federal campaigns for public office—presidential and congressional, primaries as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns.*”](#)

Our local league is planning to hold a forum on “Money in Politics” so that members can education themselves about laws governing Campaign Finance and the Constitutional Amendment process.

If anyone is interested in participating in the Updating of the Campaign Finance position, and studying the Constitutional Amendment process, please contact Nancy Van Huffel at lwvea@aol.com.

We will be seeking “experts” on the subjects who do not have to be League members and someone to chair the update and the study.

BILL COULD CHANGE HOW VOTES ARE CAST.

This is a sampling from Bay Area News Group's Political Blotter blog by Josh Richmond in June.

California elections would be radically retooled, with neighborhood polling places replaced by "voting centers" serving much larger swaths and a vast expansion of early voting, under a bill announced Thursday by two lawmakers and California Secretary of State Alex Padilla. Padilla, along with state Sens. Ben Allen, D-Santa Monica, and Bob Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys, say a similar system adopted by Colorado a few years ago has brought much better turnout because voters are freer to cast their ballots when and how they please.

Their SB450 not only would let a voter cast a ballot at any voting center in his or her county but also would require that all voters receive ballots by mail and that those voting centers be open at least eight hours a day for the 10 days before Election Day. Voters could mail in their ballot or drop it off at a vote center or a secure 24-hour ballot drop-off box.

"California ranked 43rd in voter turnout nationally for the 2014 general election. This problem cannot be ignored. Civic participation is the foundation of our democracy," Padilla said in a news release. "SB450 would provide citizens more options for when, where and how they vote."

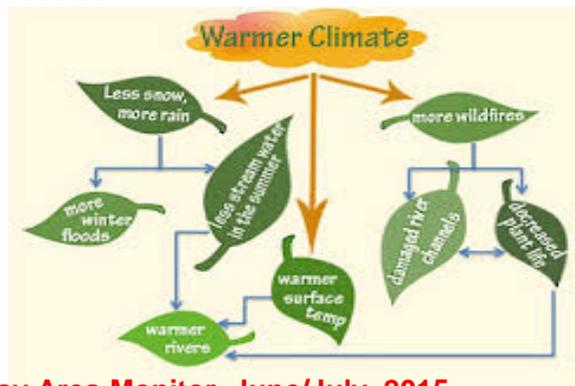
Padilla and the other lawmakers said that since implementing the vote center model, Colorado has been a national leader in voter turnout. For the November 2014 general election, voter turnout of eligible citizens in Colorado was 56.9 percent, compared with 30.9 percent in California.

From 2006 to 2010, Colorado's voter turnout was an average of 7 percentage points higher than in California; since implementation of the vote center model, voter turnout in Colorado has been an average of 20.7 percentage points higher than in California.

BAY AREA LEAGUE UPDATE

Climate Change Legislation and Convention Caucus

LWV Bay Area and LWV of Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville sponsored a very successful caucus at the LWVC Convention to "Advocate for Climate Change Legislation", attended by 50 delegates. We provided details of the two bills now in the California Legislature that are critical to our continued efforts to mitigate climate change. SB 32 and SB 350 will extend current greenhouse gas emission reductions and petroleum reduction targets to 2050 and 2030 respectively. LWV California supports SB 32 and supports in concept SB 350 (see www.lwvc.org Bill Status Report for information). LWVC will be sending Calls to Action to local Leagues, as this legislation proceeds.



Bay Area Monitor June/July, 2015

The latest edition of the *Bay Area Monitor* includes articles on water conservation, wood smoke from agriculture, the Plan Bay Area process, and open space preservation. It also features bios of the new "beat" reporters for the next year.

See www.bayareamonitor.org, and sign up for an on-line subscription.

Price on Carbon Website Launched

A growing amount of work tells us that climate change is a significant threat, caused principally by emissions from fossil fuels. But what can we do to decrease emissions and not hurt our economy? We can put a price on carbon and release the powerful forces of the marketplace. Let the market work to decrease demand, drive down emissions and grow innovations. That future is exciting – and profitable. With the collaboration of other advocates we have just launched a new website as a tool for education and advocacy – www.priceoncarbon.org. The website has been endorsed by the LWVUS Advocacy Committee. (Diz Swift, LWV BAE)

League of Women Voters of Eden Area

P. O. Box 2234 – Castro Valley, CA 94546 • 510/538-9678
 Representing cities of Hayward and San Leandro
 and unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley,
 Cherryland, Fairview, and San Lorenzo

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*The League of Women Voters, a
 nonpartisan political organization,
 encourages the informed and active
 participation of the public in
 government and influences public
 policy through education and advocacy.*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS—Eden Area League of Women Voters 2015-2016

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CALENDAR

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Aug. 31	5:45 p.m.	LWVEA Board Meeting, HAHS (see page 2)
Sept. 11	10 a.m.	Program Team Meeting
Sept. 22	All Day	National Voter Registration Day
Sept. 25	9:30 a.m.	Prop 13 Forum (tentative date and time)
Sept. 28	5:45 p.m.	LWVEA Board Meeting
Oct. 6	6 p.m.	Hayward Volunteer Dinner

**For up-to-date info and specific details on events,
 email: lwvea@aol.com or check out www.LWVEA.org**