



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF VENTURA COUNTY

# VOTER

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members and Friends of LWVVC:

It was a great pleasure seeing so many of you at our February 11, Program Planning Meeting. We took time to discuss topics that we thought were important for the League to focus on for the next two years, both at the state level as well as right here in Ventura County. It is always so enlightening to hear what you all have to say and the depth of experience you bring to the discussion. Over coffee and treats we suggested, shared, debated, weighed and came up with some good

suggestions for the state league. Our suggestions will be used by LWV California in conjunction with suggestions from each of the other California based Leagues to determine LWVC's priorities for the next two years. At the upcoming LWVC Convention in Sacramento, June 1-4, delegates will be asked to approve LWVC's final priorities plan.

Speaking of the LWVC Convention, both co-presidents are scheduled to attend and a third voting member, yet to be named, will attend as well. The convention is an excellent opportunity to meet League members from all over the state and learn how they operate and issue on which we might collaborate. There will be interesting plenary speakers, League business (e.g. budget), breakout sessions where we can learn about topics relevant and helpful to our league, and caucuses on various topics of interest. All league members are invited to attend the Convention so if you have an interest, check out our **website** for convention details.

We have learned that several of you have attempted to volunteer to fill some of the jobs listed in recent Voters and your emails were returned as undeliverable. We have checked and the problem appears to be fixed. Try again! Our League could use your help. Please consider joining one of the committees; Budget Committee, the Advocacy Committee, Nominating Committee, Voter Services Committee/Registering Voters, Legislative Interviews, HOA or Public Housing Elections Committee or the Program Committee. You can find a just right job for you and the time, energy and interest you have.

Yours in League,

Betsy Patterson & Pat Essick  
Co-Presidents

### Inside This Issue...

- President's Message
- Special Events
- Program Planning Results
- California Energy Primer
- 4 Committee Updates
- Board Meeting Notes
- Membership News
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Calendar of Events

# ➤ SPECIAL EVENTS ◀

**Saturday, May 6, Public Forum on Climate Change.** Location: TBD. LWVVC Program Committee is planning a public forum on Climate Change. We have lined up 3 excellent speakers each of whom will address a unique aspect of climate change.



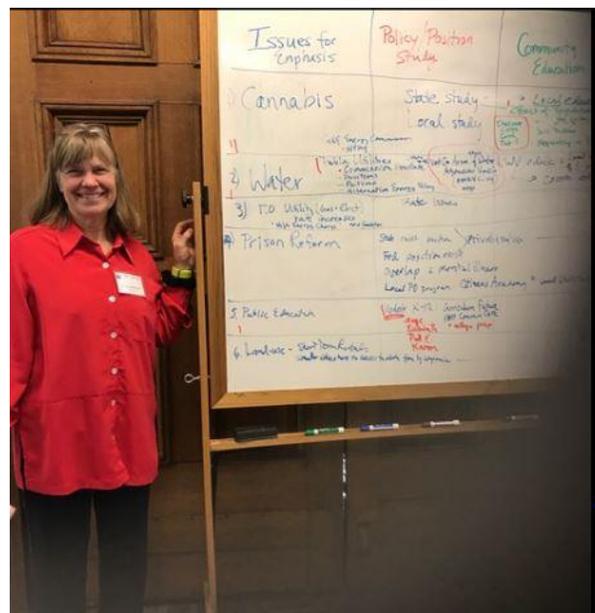
- Dr. Lea, professor of climate change and an environmental geologist from UCSB will speak on the realities of climate change.
- Dr. Suh, professor at the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at UCSB will address the economic implications of climate change.
- Jim Hines, President of the Los Padres chapter of the Sierra Club and Sierra Club Washington lobbyist will speak about local and state climate change issues and the work the Sierra Club is doing.

## Program Planning Meeting Yields Results

### Recommendations for the 2017-2019 Program to LWVC

LWVVC Members gathered last month for our annual Program Planning meeting at which we were charged with, among other things, making recommendations to LWV California regarding where we would like it to spend its time and resources over the next two years. After much discussion, often robust, the following was the consensus of meeting participants. Our recommendations are sent to LWV California to be tallied with other leagues around the state.

First choice: **Study Cannabis: Regulate or Ban?** Since the public has approved the use of cannabis for medical purposes in 1996, and again in November 2016, for adult recreational use, it is time for a League study to compare “Regulate” vs. “Ban” approaches to legalization. The focus should be on effects on crime, health, employment, tax resources and uses, environmental factors as well as what effective regulations would look like. While some jurisdictions have opted to regulate this industry, many cities and counties continue to ban any distribution or commercial cultivation, creating broad based community interest in this topic. The following LWVVC members have volunteered to work on this topic: Chelsea Sutula, Carol Lindberg, Karen Savitt, Pat Essick. They would love other volunteers so if anyone is interested, send an email to [info@lwvventuracounty.org](mailto:info@lwvventuracounty.org).



**Betsy Patterson, LWVVC co-President, guides meeting participants through the process...with good humor.**

Second choice: **Advocate** on Public Higher Education, using the League’s new position, to push for action on priority parts of the position, in particular preparedness for

college level work, improvement in matriculation to state colleges, increased enrollment capacity at 4 year universities for transfer students and additional revenues and revenue sources for state colleges. Locally we have hit limits to the number of transfer students to CSUCI and Northridge. CSUCI is terribly disadvantaged by requirements to self-fund infrastructure and new construction, unlike other state colleges. Betsy Patterson, Pat Essick, Barbara Doyle, Sage Intner, Helen LaMonte have volunteered to work on this and they too would welcome any other members who would like to participate.

Third choice: **Update study** on K-12 education, if necessary. It is possible the existing position can be used to advocate on key issues. For example, we would like to see the curriculum program Section J. of the position used to assess and address the continuing changes in skills students require to participate in a productive career, adjusting curriculum offerings to reflect such changes. Secondly, Section I. of the position on curriculum should be developed further or used to advocate for assisting students' transition into post-secondary education, vocational or university, or into the workforce. Finally, since this study and position were completed, the debate on curriculum and development of 'common core' has developed. It is unclear if the new federal administration will change funding rules to affect these debates, but if so, what's next? What are best practices? It is critically important that students have adequate preparation for college level studies. Sage Intner, Elizabeth Moore, Karen Savitt, Pat Essick have volunteered to take this on and they also would welcome other volunteers.

LWV California also asked that local Leagues give it some feedback on their view of "The League Study Process? At our Program Planning meeting the question was asked, what actually changes once a study is completed? Our members also pointed out that studies have to be more timely and less detailed. The world is moving too fast to take two years to study an issue and develop a position that can be used. The Public Higher Education study and resulting position is an example. Our League participated and spent considerable energy to do so, including hosting a community education event on the topic. The result is a position with no priority setting included. The level of detail is excruciating, causing the main points to be lost. We can use it to target our representatives on the specific local problems we are having but we aren't aware of pending legislation we should be pushing or opposing. That is where we need help. In addition, why didn't the state league distribute the new public higher education position to all local leagues? We did not find it in any of the periodic reports



No small task, Program Planning meeting participants suggest ideas on where LWVC should spend its time in the next two years.

after Board meetings. We did not find it in the LWVC Positions Summary for 2015-2017. This oversight is really not fair to the local leagues that extend the effort to participate in a statewide study. [We did find it in the updated "Action Policies and Positions"].

We want the state league to help us use established positions to advocate and lobby our representatives for important change. To take effective action we need more than bill numbers and pages and pages of spread sheets detailing all the bills in which the league has an interest. Targeted communications with local leagues, clarity about the thrust of the issue, the points to make and the right timing— that is what we need from LWV California. The League can't really be a grass roots organization without that kind of help from state league.

After addressing a few other program questions from state league, the meeting was adjourned and participants went home, ideas spent.

Submitted by Pam Pecarich, Board Member

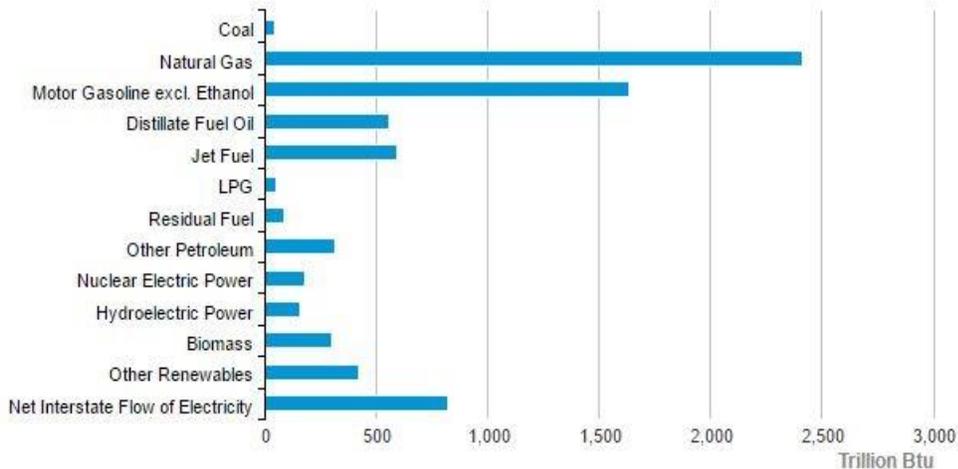
# California Energy 101

## A Short Background on Energy in California

This brief commentary is provided in response to a general conversation at the February 11th LWVVC Program Planning meeting concerning the costs, policy and resources associated with electricity and gas utilities. It is based on my ten years of work in public energy policy and utility energy efficiency programs, and presented in a very general fashion with intent that LWV members will be able to follow web links and undertake their own research and review. No doubt there is much more to cover in this very fascinating and complex field, consider these comments to be a first step.

A good place to start the discussion comes from the 2003 book *Empires of Light* by Jill Jonnes. The book is a wonderful history of the men who pioneered, engineered and financed the electric age. It is written with facts and humor to illuminate a topic that can be difficult to understand.

California Energy Consumption Estimates, 2014



eia Source: Energy Information Administration, State Energy Data System

In 20th century California, electricity generally was powered by fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas; in more recent decades, power has been derived from renewable resources such as water, solar and wind sources. Power is dispersed to a residential or commercial customer over a series of transmission poles and utilities lines that are woven into a 'power grid'. The grid is operated and managed by

California Independent Systems Operators in 15 minute increments so that all customers are reliably served and any power crisis can be avoided. The grid manages the power of the investor owned utilities as well as the municipal operators. It also is responsible for including and integrating renewable energy sources to the grid. And, in recent years, 'grid discussions' have included broad plans to access and leverage power sources outside of California and through the western states.

The State of California governs energy sites, standards, rates and policy primarily through two public agencies. The California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for the siting of new energy facilities, new technology standards (appliance and building codes) and policy. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is responsible for the regulation of investor owned utilities (rail, energy, transportation, telephone) and provides oversight for public benefit; it operates under an arcane regulatory process. The Governor appoints five commissioners to each commission for a six-year term. The CPUC is located in San Francisco and the CEC is headquartered in Sacramento.

The California legislature has a role to play in energy through the introduction and passage of legislation and by directing questions of policy and long term energy planning to both the CPUC and CEC. Both legislative houses

have sub-committees staffed by consulting experts to assist the legislative process. Additionally, the California Air Resources Board is playing a major role in the long- term effects of energy use through its management of SB 32 (Pavley - D) the Climate Action Plan, cap and trade market, etc.

Ventura County utility customers are served by Southern California Edison for electric service and Southern California Gas Company for natural gas. Both companies are for profit, investor owned' utilities. They are part, although separate from, their respective parent utility organizations, Edison International and Sempra Energy. Rates for customer services are based on the cost to transmit and provide services; the rates are presented by the utilities for review and final setting by the CPUC. Rate setting generally occurs every few years and includes a set rate of profit for the utility. Customers are notified of rate changes through monthly billing inserts.

**Board of Directors:**

**Co-Presidents:**

Patricia Essick  
Betsy Patterson

**Secretary:**

Judith Murphy

**Treasurer:**

Robert Lowe

**Directors at Large:**

Pat Butler  
Barbara Doyle  
Suzanne Harvey  
Helen LaMonte  
Steve Lattimore  
Carol Lindberg  
Jennifer Matos  
Pam Pecarich  
Karen Savitt

In contrast, municipal utilities (LADWP, Glendale, Azusa, SMUD, among others) are operated by public boards and managed to recover the cost of operations but not additional profit. The rates are set by the local governing board which also adopts local plans and provides operational management. California Municipal Utilities Association ([www.cmua.org](http://www.cmua.org)) is a resource for cities, counties and special districts that operate their own utilities.

Reliable electric service is the backbone to any modern civilized society. Here are a few points to ponder for further discussions about energy:

Any weakness in the grid, including a natural disaster or breach in security, can compromise reliable delivery. Consider the consequences when delivery is interrupted to this brief list of common electricity uses: lights, heating and cooling, telephones, computers, security systems, appliances, manufacturing, hospitals, laboratories and research facilities.

Increased energy use has been managed through efficiency. California has maintained a nearly flat line on per capita energy consumption over the past approximately 25 years. This is a huge accomplishment considering the increase in equipment and appliances that consume power; and the general increase in the

total population (now 39 million) that rely on electrified systems, equipment, facilities, computers and the like.

One of the biggest consumers of electric power is water management. Consider the amount of power that can be used to pump water from dams and rivers, through long pipes, along regional and local lines and finally to waste water treatment facilities. The nexus between water and energy consumption is a major public policy discussion and drives rate increases even when actual water consumption may be lowered.

Solar energy is a rapidly expanding resource for distributed electricity as panels are placed on rooftops, in open parking lots, deserts and open lands across the state. All panels operate at a different level of efficiency, and must be interconnected to the existing transmission lines and the grid. Renewable energy resources like solar and wind require new battery and storage technologies. Consider how these new sources must be integrated with the existing approximately 50 power plants in the state.

Ratepayers (taxpayers) generally provide the financing for utility services, programs and operations. Consider the options for cost effective energy improvements or efficiencies that are financed by 'on bill' or 'property assessment' funds.

Energy is a complex topic and marketplace that requires a competent workforce to plan, develop, support, improve and connect electricity to our shared grid and ultimately the end user/ratepayer. The "green" energy-related job market is expanding in light of efficiency, climate change, limitations on natural resources, and concern for safety, security and reliability. Consider what educational and technical training could be offered locally and regionally to support these jobs.

For more in depth information on this topic or the agencies mentioned, go to [www.energy.ca.gov](http://www.energy.ca.gov), [www.casio.com](http://www.casio.com), [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

## Advocacy Committee Update

### Advocacy Committee Gearing Up for Action

The Advocacy Committee is a newly forming committee intended to provide members with a setting where they can discuss and plan how best to take positions already established by the League of Women Voters and use them as a framework to advocate locally. The committee will report to the Board for final approval before any action is taken in the name of LWVVC. The first meeting will be announced soon.

So far, Carol Lindberg, Chelsea Sutula and Pat Essick have expressed interest in participating. If you are interested in advocating for the positions the League has in place to improve or better our community, please consider joining this committee. Come with ideas you think should be pursued or actions you think we should take or, if you'd rather, come just to learn. A few examples of things we could advocate for are; affordable health care for all, women's right to choose and support of Planned Parenthood, the cleanup and stopping of oil drilling along the coast, standing up for LGBTQ rights in schools and public places, access for all eligible community college graduates to transfer to CSUCI and more public money for CSUCI so that they can absorb the students who have been guaranteed access.

If you are all about action, please join this committee. Call Pat Essick, 701-0109 or email us your interest.

Submitted by Pat Essick, Scholarship Committee

## Program Committee Update

### Program Committee Hard at Work on Climate Change Meeting

The Program Committee is planning a forum on climate change to be held May 6. So far, we are pleased to announce that we have lined up three very qualified speakers. They are; Dr. Lea, a professor of climate change and an environmental geologist from UCSB. He will speak to the realities of climate change. Our second speaker, Dr. Suh, is a professor at the Bren School at UCSB. He will speak about the economics of climate change. Our third confirmed speaker is Jim Hines. Mr. Hines is President of the Los Padres chapter of the Sierra Club and Sierra Club Washington lobbyist. He will speak about the local and state issues that the Sierra Club is advocating for to help reduce or mitigate climate change. A meeting location has been tentatively selected. We are also checking to see if Ventura Community College will partner with us in which case we could hold the forum on campus. Watch our calendar on our website and we'll keep you posted via the VOTER. The Committee consists of Chairperson Steve Lattimore and members Karen Savitt, Carol Lindberg, and Pat Essick. We would welcome more members! Please call Pat Essick or send us an email if you would like to join.

Submitted by, Pat Essick, Program Committee

## Scholarship Committee Update

### Moorpark Student to Receive This Year's LWVVC Scholarship

A thank you to Melanie Ashen for her generous donation to the LWVVC Scholarship Fund. We now have approximately \$4000 to invest in our local students. This year we are offering a scholarship to a student at Moorpark College. The LWVVC Scholarship is awarded annually on a rotating basis covering each of the 3 Ventura Community Colleges. In April we will find out who was selected and meet that lucky recipient in April.

Submitted by Geri LeVine Loe, Scholarship Committee Chair

## Voter Registration Committee Update

### Early Start to Registering Students in Conejo Valley

Every February, LWVVC, in conjunction with the Thousand Oaks Mayor's Office, prepares packets that provide voter registration forms to all eligible students in the Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). This includes public and private high schools.

Twenty volunteers gathered on February 22, at the CVUSD headquarters to stuff 2,240 envelopes with the voter registration form and an explanation card including greetings from the mayor.

This year the effort was led by Melanie Ashen of LWVVC with representatives from the American Association of University Women and other residents of Ventura County. This is approximately the twentieth year this effort has been undertaken.

Submitted by Bob Lowe, Voter Registration Committee

## LWVVC BOARD DOINGS

All members are encouraged to attend monthly LWVVC Board meetings. See Calendar below for the when's and where's. Come and see what your Board is doing and learn about projects that are in the works.

### Notes from January Board Meeting

#### Topics Covered and "To Do" List:

- Treasurers Report - Bob Lowe gave an update on our accounts and noted a very nice contribution from one of our members to the LWVVC Scholarship Fund. So far there is no update on our 501(c)(3) application status.
- Co-Presidents Report - Pat Essick discussed call to LWVC Convention. Given our membership numbers we will have 3 voting spots.

- Legislative Interviews - The Board discussed plans for handling the interviews for which we are responsible. Board decided to focus our efforts on the newly elected as they are less well known. Pam Pecarich described the interview process e.g. 2 people should attend each interview, and noted that state league provides the questions.
- Program Committee Report - Pat Essick reported that the Committee is making good progress on plans for a public forum in the Spring on climate change. We have 2 confirmed speakers and are working on more. A tentative date has been picked in April and we are working on location and possible co-sponsors.
- LWVVC Upcoming Program Planning Meeting - Board discussed plans for the meeting including desired result, potential topics to consider and meeting dynamic. Where do LWVVC members want LWVC to spend its time and resources?

Submitted by Judy Murphy, Secretary

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### New Members

We are especially happy to have these members dispersed around the county.

- Rita Neumeister - Camarillo.
- Anne Chezar-Garnett - Ventura
- Diane & Francis Sesquire - Ventura
- Devon Scheef & Gary Coon - Westlake Village

*If you would like to donate to the LWVVC Scholarship Fund, please make your checks payable to "LWVVC Education Fund" with a notation "Scholarship Fund" on the memo line of the check. Send checks to LWVVC, P.O. Box 6786 Ventura, CA 93006. Contributions are tax deductible.*

## VOLUNTEER A LITTLE TIME

• lwvvc needs you! •

*If you have some time and are interested in volunteering a bit of it for the good of the League, following is a list of projects that could use your help. If interested in getting involved, send an email to [info@lwvventuracounty.org](mailto:info@lwvventuracounty.org) and let us know what you would like to do, someone will follow-up.*

▶ **Advocacy, Voter Registration, Program Committee, Join a Committee and get active.** Send us an email and let us know if you'd like to get involved

▶ **In Search Of Someone to Take Over as LWVVC's Representative to the Ventura County Reproductive Rights Network.** We need someone who will keep our Board and members (via the VOTER) informed of the doings of the organization and serve as our liaison. For example, they hold one or two events each year where we typically have a presence.

▶ **Articles for the VOTER. We are always looking for articles** to include in the VOTER. Anyone who has a piece they think would be of interest to our members should send it to [info@lwvventuracounty.org](mailto:info@lwvventuracounty.org). **VOTER deadline is one week prior to ending of every month.**

*Working on a project for the LWVVC and need some help? Send an email to [info@lwvventuracounty.org](mailto:info@lwvventuracounty.org) and tell us what you need and we'll include it in the next VOTER. Please include dates, location, time of day.*

# THINGS ARE HAPPENING!

- all league meetings are open to the public •

## CALENDAR

▶ **Thursday, March 9** - Future of California Elections, 2017 Conference, Advancing Momentum: Moving our Democracy Forward - 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Location: The California Endowment, 1000 N. Alameda St., Los Angeles, 90012. The Future of California Elections program for the 2017 conference will include:

- A keynote address from California Secretary of State Alex Padilla
- Election administrators and voting rights advocates examining the 2016 election and what it means for the future
- An in-depth look at implementation of the California Voter's Choice Act (SB 450, 2016) and the California Voting Rights Act
- Panels discussing how to serve California's diverse electorate, including language, accessibility, and young voters
- New strategies for reaching voters effectively through online and community-based outreach

Join election experts, civil rights and community leaders from across the state at the Future of California Elections 2017 Conference. Register by March 6. Cost is \$100 per person. [Click](#) to register. [Click here for the conference program.](#)

▶ **Tuesday, March 14** - LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 am to 1 pm (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law, Classroom #1 located off the Courtyard, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear).

▶ **Sunday, March 19** - Voting Rights/Electoral College Action Group - 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Location: Topping Room of the Foster Library, 651 East Main Street, Ventura. The League has a position in support of election of the President by direct popular vote.

▶ **Wednesday, March 22** - LWVSB Community Forum: Behavioral Health - 12pm – 2pm. Location: Louise Lowry Davis Rec Center, 1232 De La Vina St, Santa Barbara. This Forum will address the issues around people with mental illness and the jail from several different viewpoints. The panel members represent both the relevant government agencies as well as community organizations that are active on these issues. We have representatives from the Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Health, the Sheriff's Office and the Public Defender's and the District Attorney's Offices. We have also invited key members of community watchdog organizations who illuminate problems and advocate for solutions.

▶ **Tuesday, April 11** - LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 am to 1 pm (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law, Classroom #1 located off the Courtyard, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear).

▶ **Tuesday, May 9** - LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 am to 1 pm (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law, Classroom #1 located off the Courtyard, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear).

▶ **Thursday, June 1 thru 4** - 2017 LWVC Convention - Location: Sacramento. For California Leaguers, attending the state convention in our capitol city is not to be missed. And, the 2017 LWVC Convention will continue that tradition. We will include more information as it becomes available.

▶ **Tuesday, June 13** - LWVVC Board Meeting – 11:00 am to 1 pm (please be prompt). Location: Ventura College of Law, Classroom #1 located off the Courtyard, 4475 Market Street, Ventura (parking in the rear).

