



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF VENTURA COUNTY

VOTER

July/August, 2017 Volume 60 No.1



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Dear Members and Friends of LWVVC:

I hope you are enjoying the summer with time to take a vacation from the routine things you usually do. Though it is summer, the League at the state and national level has been keeping busy standing up for voter’s rights and health care, especially. I know many of you have been busy writing, calling and emailing your representatives to encourage them to save guaranteed health coverage, threatened national monuments, and on and on.

Summer is usually a slow time for us but not this year! We will be having our annual In & Out Board Meeting and potluck lunch on August 12, where we will be introducing our new board members to our Bylaws and Policies and Procedures as well as planning for the 2018 year.

Our first planned event following the In & Out Meeting will be a forum on immigration entitled Good Allies, that we are co-sponsoring with the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula and CAUSE. It will be held at the UU Church of Santa Paula on August 30. Plan on attending to learn about the immigration situation politically, legally, socially and emotionally, and how we can become good allies to immigrants in our communities.

While you have your calendar out, save September 23, for our Membership meeting. Tom and Chris Carson (the Chris Carson who is President of the LWVUS) will be joining us to teach us how to advocate in the name of the League.

Speaking of membership, it is time to renew your membership. Pat Butler, Membership Chairperson, will be sending out written reminders with a form to return with your check for all of your contact information. Please be sure to return it promptly so that we can make sure our directory is accurate. The League is only as strong as its membership is large.

Yours in League,

Pat Essick
President

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Helen LaMonte reviewed this past election season's ten voter forums for city councils, school boards and the supervisory districts in six cities. LWVVC also held a ballot measure forum and distributed 2,000 Pros and Cons pamphlets and 500 Voter Guides.

Steve Lattimore thanked the Climate Change Forum committee for all their hard work putting together our most recent public forum. By all accounts the forum was a great success. Futurism and artificial intelligence are possible future forum topics.



Board Says Adios to 2016-2017 and Hola to 2017-2018

Membership: Pat Butler, Membership Chair, reported that we had a 6% increase in membership since September.

David Maron presented the 2017 Civic Alliance's State of the Region Report. Among other things he highlighted several charts showing county population statistics, voting trends, employment changes, housing affordability (or lack of). David distributed copies of the report to all the attendees. Thank you, David.

LWVC Convention Reports from our delegates: Suzanne Harvey discussed the "Future of the League" workshop and how League is trying to address issues of our impact, engagement and sustainability. A task force has been created to examine

improvements that may be needed in how to turn talk into action, burnish the reputation of the League, improve communications between the various levels of League, increase the ethnic and economic diversity of our membership, update and simplify League jargon and streamline our processes and make meetings more accessible and social.

Betsy Patterson and Pat Butler also reported on what they learned at state Convention. See below for their convention write-ups.

Pat Essick explained the direction LWV California's program will take for the next couple of years. The emphasis will be on education and advocacy in several areas including voting rights, environmental protection and money in politics. We will also be responding to policies such as health care and the Make It Fair ballot initiative on Proposition 13 (how property is taxed), immigration reform and education issues

Preview of 2017-2018: Chelsea Sutula, our new Advocacy Chair, reported on the advocacy subcommittees that are active.

- Pat Spence will lead a group working on the possibility of changing the electoral college system...one person one vote.
- Chelsea will lead a committee to study the different approaches to regulating medical cannabis in Ventura County.
- The Advocacy Committee is also looking for ways to work with coalition partners on the environment, such as CFROG, and tracking the Ventura Co. General Plan.

LWVVC Scholarship Report: Melanie Ashen, committee chair, announced that this year's \$1,000 award went to a student at Moorpark College. She read his thank you letter and gave us a brief biography.

Recognition of Current Board: Pat Essick presented a thank you gift to Bob Lowe who was Treasurer this year and got us through the transition to 501(c)3 status. Barbara Doyle recognized our two co-presidents Pat Essick and Betsy Patterson for their dedicated service to LWVVC and presented them each with a gift. Barbara then acknowledged Pam Pecarich for her 15 years of Board service to LWVVC in every capacity, sometimes holding down multiple positions at once. We are losing Pam to the State of Washington where we're certain she'll continue her good works. The Board presented her with a nursery gift certificate.

Discuss, Amend, Vote:

Participants voted unanimously to accept the 2017-2018 budget as amended.

Participants voted unanimously to approve the recommended Board slate.

- President - Pat Essick
- Vice-President – Betsy Patterson
- Secretary – Judy Murphy
- Treasurer – Karen Savitt
- Membership - Pat Butler
- Voter Service - Helen LaMonte
- At-Large Directors:
- Barbara Doyle
- Suzanne Harvey
- Steve Lattimore
- Carol Lindberg
- Chelsea Sutula
- Rita Neumeister

With that the meeting portion of the day was wrapped up and attendees settled in for lunch, conversation and finally, a passionate and informative presentation by Dr. Herb Gooch of California Lutheran University on "California v. the Nation".

Submitted by Judy Murphy, Secretary

LWV California Convention Briefings

Highlights from the LWV California State Convention, June 1-4, Sacramento

The workshops and caucuses, which formed the parentheses around the "business" part of the convention, were enlightening, energizing and effective. There were many topics covered, more than any one person could attend. My favorites were related to 1) Civil Discourse and the Loss of Civil Discussion in our political world and 2) Recruiting and Re-energizing our Membership.

The two topics had an overlap that I think would work for Ventura County. We need to recruit younger and more diverse members to keep the league current and relevant. To recruit younger members, we need to modernize and utilize social media, as well as begin to have get-togethers that are enticing to students and young working families. To recruit more diverse members, we need to go into the communities where they live, meet with community leaders who can connect us with people who can share their concerns and issues. We can offer to work together with other community groups for solutions. Get-together times that are better suited to the working singles and parents, such as 5:30-7:00 pm with free food and drinks as well as childcare, may help us connect with a younger generation of voters and activists. Asking the members of the community what they see as the issues that need solutions may garner cooperation and connections.

San Diego and other counties have begun holding social gatherings where people can get to know one another. To attract new members there must be a topic of interest - a speaker for 15-20 minutes followed by paired discussions or round table discussions of 4-5 people. San Diego calls their events "Sips & Civility." The venue is the top floor of the public library; they get beer and wine donated and bring snacks themselves, if not donated. They explain the rules of civility that will apply to the discussions and have a trained league member at each table to help maintain civility.

North San Diego County has several members who have gotten special training on facilitation and how to get people to the table listening, finding common ground, understanding the opposition's values to begin framing some solutions. They have partnered with the community colleges as well as UC San Diego for training and recruitment.

I see an opportunity to connect with younger, more diverse people by reaching out to the communities, perhaps the colleges and other active organizations, and offering a place to gather to discuss issues, including a training in civil discourse.

Submitted by Betsy Patterson, Co-President

Following Are Some Plenary Session Highlights

Cindy Lake of Lake Research Partners told us that 86% of the people who contact Congress are women, 13,000 women are running for office, Millennials often move and don't re-register to vote, Hispanics often have difficulty voting because they like to vote as a family activity which can sometimes mean coordinating three or more people around half dozen jobs or more.

Chris Hoener, Executive Director of the California Budget and Policy Center told us about the reasons the next California budget will be largely a placeholder. The California State Budget must be passed by June 15th and signed by June 30th. Because the U.S. Congress passed an extension this year, the Federal Budget cannot be signed until October 1st at the soonest. Therefore, California must pass its budget without knowing how much or where or even if, Federal funds will be withheld. As a result, California cannot respond to the funding cuts until next year.

The **Make It Fair Initiative** (Proposition 13 reform effort) seeks to balance California finances when Federal Funds are (almost certainly) withdrawn. The Initiative would affect commercial property taxes only, not residential property taxes.

Media Workshop, Elizabeth Leslie, LWV Communications Manager and Jessica Calefati of CALMatters:

How can you tell if do you know if what you are reading is real news? Real News has a person's name associated with it - look for the by-line - who are the statements attributed to? "Real News" lists sources and



L to R: Pat Essick, Betsy Patterson, Suzanne Harvey, Pat Butler. Taking a moment to ham it up a bit at LWVC Convention.

usually has more than one. Good journalists build a case using a variety of sources. Super inflammatory headlines (and content) are usually fake news.

Tips for interactions with reporters:

- Find the appropriate reporter for your information.
- Tie into news of the day.
- Provide an interested party for the reporter to contact for more information – make the job easy.
- Suggest photo locations.
- Explain the conflict, if there is one.
- Offer to provide information after the fact so they can fit your story into their schedule.
- Build a relationship with reporters and always tell the truth.
- Remember that conflict drives news.
- Keep press releases simple – use email when possible.
- Determine what you want – a simple announcement or a full story?
- Say something new.
- Thank the reporter.

Membership Workshop,

Start by listening: “What brought you to the League?” Give new members and prospective members ways to “try the League” such as contacting city officials, invite them to a board meeting, develop an Observer Corp where a new member and an experienced member report on the most important issues in your area. Hold social events monthly to encourage fellowship.

Submitted by Pat Butler, Membership Chair

Our New Treasurer Reports

Let me introduce myself. I am Karen Savitt and have assumed the position of Treasurer for the Ventura chapter of the League. It is an honor to be trusted with this position and to be involved with such a respected organization.

The budget for 2017-2018 fiscal year was approved at the June 13, 2017 annual meeting. Expenses were determined by the prior year’s annual expenditures and income. Next year, as part of the budget committee, I will be able to give a more detailed report on the rationale of budget preparation.

Our chapter has been classified as a 501c3 which will help us manage the education fund on our own. Thanks to Bob Lowe and Tom Carson for making this happen.

The June 30, 2016 report shows the following:

- General Fund
 - Checking Account: \$11,679.44
 - Savings Account: \$19,307.52
- Education Fund \$15,858.40
- Scholarship Fund \$3,280.00

Total \$50,125.36

The annual report will be published soon.

Submitted by Karen Savitt, Treasurer

Cannabis Regulatory Update

Supersize Edition!

The state is busy working on finalizing regulations for the cannabis industry after holding a series of public hearings. SB 94 passed on June 27, which essentially creates a unified Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act to streamline the processes of regulating both types at the same time.

Fillmore: The city held a “listening workshop” June 25, to allow local residents to express their hopes and concerns with the prospect of the city allowing medical marijuana cultivation. Last November, Fillmore residents approved two marijuana taxes: one on pot sales and another on commercial cultivation. However, city officials have yet to make a decision allowing cannabis businesses to exist in the first place. A consultant was hired by the city to facilitate a group discussion and report back the results to the council. Attendees were asked what their top three benefits and concerns were in regards to the issue, as well as where they would want the marijuana tax money allocated should cultivation be approved. Each group later submitted a notecard with their answers. An analysis of the responses will be presented at the August 8 City Council meeting, at which point the council will decide whether to move forward on the topic.

Ojai: On July 6, the city of Ojai awarded the very first medical cannabis permits to dispense and deliver in the entire county. This followed a seven-month application process, which included interviews and background checks. These are tentative permits pending final inspection by the city prior to opening. Shangri-La Care Coop, Sespe Creek Collective, and AgMD received permits to both dispense (by appointment) and deliver medical cannabis.

Oxnard: City council met on July 18 to discuss allowing medical cannabis deliveries as part of its “go slow” approach to regulating. The city attorney’s office is recommending the city permit the delivery of medicinal marijuana and continue prohibiting dispensaries, outdoor cultivation and delivery of recreational marijuana. An ordinance will be drafted for council consideration in the fall. If the council agrees to the proposal it can still decide to relax the prohibitions later next year.

Port Hueneme: Ordinance No. 727 went into effect and applications were open as of July 5, for medical cannabis operations. The ordinance allows commercial medical cannabis activity in areas zoned commercial, mixed-use residential and industrial with a use permit. It allows personal cultivation of cannabis for medicinal purposes in single-family zones only. As a separate but complementary effort, the City Council has already begun a process to sell one or more properties the city owns to generate near-and long-term revenues. It is very likely that any one of the sites will attract a bidder who would either grow, manufacture, sell and/or distribute cannabis products for medicinal purposes. Should that occur, the cannabis ordinance requires public outreach that, at a minimum, includes a noticed public hearing to consider the concerns of nearby residents and property owners.

Santa Paula: The City Council voted July 17, to establish a two-member ad hoc committee to explore potential regulations on marijuana operations in the city. It would make recommendations on sales, transportation, cultivation, on-site consumption, manufacturing, testing and distribution and dispensing of medical and recreational cannabis within the city. The committee would report its findings to the council on or before November 6, according to the resolution. Because Santa Paula's ad-hoc committee is proposed to be made up of a non-majority of the City Council, its meetings don't have to be publicly noticed under the state's open-meeting laws.

Thousand Oaks: The city council voted 5-0 on June 27, to direct city staff to draft an ordinance allowing one medical cannabis dispensary in the industrial zone of Thousand Oaks. It would be open by appointment-only and city staff will propose recommendations on how to choose the recipient of the sole permit to be issued.

Many cannabis advocates expressed concern that allowing only one dispensary would create a monopolistic situation. Councilmembers said they would be open to revisiting that policy if needed.

New Cannabis Regulation Policy Study Group! If you are interested in learning more about this issue check our web-site and/or keep an eye on our calendar below for notice regarding meetings.

Submitted by Chelsea Sutula, Chair, Advocacy Committee

National Popular Vote March

LWV United States & LWV California - March for Democracy

The National Popular Vote March was announced in the LWVUS Update in late May. The LWV California is and has been a supporter of the NPV movement in California. Leagues in California are welcome to participate in any local events.

**Saturday, October 7, 2017 (Columbus Day weekend)
Washington, D.C., and across the U.S.**

(UPDATE: Now part of the "March for Democracy" on the same day)

WANT TO REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE? Help make the 2020 presidential election the first in which the majority of citizens elect the U.S. President and every vote in every state is equal!

These sound like lofty goals, yet they are completely within reach with your assistance. As of spring 2017, the nationwide National Popular Vote bill already has been enacted into law in 10 states plus the District of Columbia for a combined total of 165 out of a needed 270 electoral votes, so we are more than halfway there!



The **National Popular Vote March for 2020**, which now will take place as part of the larger March for Democracy, on Saturday, October 7, 2017 (Columbus Day weekend), in Washington, D.C., and across the United States, supports the successful passing of the Constitutionally legal National Popular Vote bill in enough states for citizens to directly elect the U.S. President by way of an Interstate Compact in time for the next presidential election in 2020.

The National Popular Vote is fundamental; it's about the structure—the bones—of our democracy and impacts a vast array of common-good goals and priorities because they likely will find a much more conducive federal environment under a President elected by the majority of citizens.

NONPARTISAN: The current National Popular Vote effort began in 2005 and is not about the 2016 presidential election or partisan politics in general.

Instead, the National Popular Vote bill simply commits the Electoral College to cast its votes in accordance with the popular votes from throughout the country rather than by state.

In doing so, the National Popular Vote bill automatically eliminates the outdated and problematic "winner-take-all" election scheme, which divides the country into "battleground" and "spectator" states and makes the spectator states' votes (along with their concerns and financial interests) politically irrelevant.

As a result, the bill achieves three democracy-enhancing feats all at once:

1. **Creating a direct and undistorted correlation between popular vote outcome and election result.**
2. **Making every vote equal nationwide.**
3. **Increasing the probability of higher voter turnouts because all votes count.**

WHY NOW: If enough of us support the bill during the remaining states' 2017, 2018, and 2019 legislative sessions, it has a very real chance of being in place by 2020.

ASK YOURSELF: Am I ready to directly decide who leads the country? Am I ready to make every vote **equal** and make every vote **count**?

BACKGROUND: The Constitution (Article II, Section 1) gives the states exclusive control over awarding their electoral votes. In the case of the Interstate Compact that underlies the National Popular Vote bill, the states will award their electoral votes to the winner of the national popular vote.

So far, the following **10 states plus the District of Columbia** are participating in the Interstate Compact: California, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington State.

The bill itself was first proposed and developed in the early 2000s by Dr. John Koza, a retired consulting Stanford University faculty member who serves as the chair of the nonprofit [National Popular Vote](#) organization.

Electoral College - How Did We Get Here?

Electoral College - Past, Present, and Future

Consternation regarding our country's unique process for presidential selection has been ongoing almost since its introduction within the United States' constitutional framework. Debate gained renewed fervor in November 2016, when Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton received almost 3 million more popular votes than Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump who won 304 electoral votes against her 227 electoral votes. But did this outcome truly reflect the will of the American people? Do we believe this is really how a democracy should work?

The idea of electors came about as a compromise between the representation of states' qualified voters (at the time only white, male, landowners) and Congress. There are 538 electoral votes: 435 for each congressional house seat, 100 for each senate seat, and 3 for the District of Columbia. A majority of 270 electoral votes is needed for a candidate to win the presidential election. The number of electoral votes each state receives is based on its number of congressional seats of each state plus 2 for each senate seat. A state's number of congressional seats is determined by the Census. 2010 is the most recent Census and will remain in effect through the 2020 presidential election. Each state has the sole authority to determine the allocation of their electoral votes.

The Electoral College is actually the process by which “electors” are chosen; first by nomination of electors from each state’s political party or other group and then on election day. Voters cast their ballot for electors. Depending on each state’s election process, it may not be evident to voters that this is actually what they are doing. In 48 states and the District of Columbia, the presidential candidate receiving a majority of the popular vote results in the respective political party’s electors winning the state. The electors cast their votes for the president and vice president within 41 days after the popular election and generally vote for their state party’s candidate. This winner-take-all electoral process is said to be responsible for the loss of the presidential candidate “elected” by the people to the candidate “elected” through the Electoral College. This has happened four times in US presidential election history.

Those in favor of preserving the Electoral College argue that it is a system that has worked quite well and the fact that only 4 of 57 presidential elections where the outcome between the popular vote and electoral vote differed is not significant. In addition, the system demands that presidential candidates focus their campaigns on meeting the needs and concerns of the entire country, including those of smaller, less populous states. The results of the election are more assured and contradictory outcomes are easily managed within each state’s electoral voting process as opposed to one huge, popular voting process where an election recount or run-off would be an almost insurmountable process.

The arguments against the Electoral College include the irrelevance of the conditions and reasoning on which the process was based, namely that the vote has expanded beyond the white, male, landowner prerequisites and the fact that American voters today have better access to information and are better educated about candidates and the issues they represent. Additionally, the power of “swing states” is disproportionate. Forcing campaigns to focus on these areas means elections are actually determined by the outcomes in battleground states. Most importantly, the Electoral College negates what Americans have come to believe a democracy is, namely the will of the people matters and this is best represented by the popular vote – one person, one vote.

Aside from a constitutional amendment to reform or abolish the Electoral College (the League of Women Voters does in fact support abolishment of the Electoral College), the American electorate has looked at various ways to make our current election process work better. One such proposition is adoption of the National Popular Vote. The National Popular Vote is an interstate compact guaranteeing the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

How would this work within the parameters of the Electoral College? The compact decrees that signatory states’ electors cast their votes for the national popular vote winner. A majority of electoral votes or 270 from the states would still be needed so the National Popular Vote would not be enacted until this threshold is met. Currently, 11 states representing 165 electoral votes have signed the compact. This is a more tenable solution to outright abolishment of the Electoral College and alternatively, is also supported by the League.

Sources:

<https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/>

<https://www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-the-united-states-get-rid-of-the-electoral-college>

<http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/>

<http://www.procon.org/headline.php?headlineID=005330>

<http://lww.org/content/selection-president>

<http://www.cnn.com/election/results/president>

Submitted by Maria Runyon, Ventura

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New Members

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

- Maria Teran - Ventura
- Jo Ann Miller - Oxnard
- Jane Bright - Newbury Park
- Sharon Shou - Camarillo

LWVVC Scholarship Fund Donors – We thank you

- Eunice Koch

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 and let us know what you would like to do, someone will follow-up.

- ▶ We're looking for volunteers to **hand out index cards and pencils/pens for questions, collect and collate questions** at our Immigration forum on August 30. Send an email to info@lwvventuracounty.org and we'll get in touch.
- ▶ We are looking for someone who would like to **handle public relations for LWVVC**. We have a good press list, we need someone who can write press releases and help us get the word out about our events and general doings. Send an email to info@lwvventuracounty.org and we can answer any questions.
- ▶ **Advocacy (Electoral College Reform etc.), 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
- ▶ Tired of the screaming heads, the insults without productive communications? **Join our Civil Discourse group** and learn how to participate in respectful communication to find solutions to contentious issues. Work with other members, reach out to college students, engage in small discussions and social LWV get-togethers. Training and active participation coming to LWVVC soon, watch this space.
- ▶ **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. **VOTER deadline is one week prior to ending of every month.**

▶ **LWV Nominations Committee has one opening for a general member.** The committee is composed of three general members and two board members. The committee meets in the spring for the purposes of putting together a slate of officers and board members to be adopted by the membership at the annual June meeting. Contact Cheryl Collart if you are interested or have questions about the committee.

Working on a project for the LWVVC and need some help? Send an email to 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

▶ **Saturday, August 12 - LWVVC In & Out Board Meeting and Potluck Luncheon.** Location: Suzanne Harvey's house in Ojai. Please RSVP by Monday, August 7, to info@lwvventuracounty.org if you plan on attending. Address and directions will be emailed to you.

▶ **Wednesday, August 30 - Public Forum on Immigration - How to be Good Allies** - 6:30-8:00 pm. Location: Universalist Unitarian Church, 740 E Main St., Santa Paula. This forum is being co-sponsored with the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula. The general focus of the event will be towards educating citizens on how they can help support undocumented immigrants in Ventura County. There will be a video of several individual testimonies, an update on what is currently going on in Ventura County, a presentation by an immigration attorney addressing "Know Your Rights" and "Truth Act", information on how documented citizens can help stand up for the undocumented, and a brief discussion on current legislation being considered (SB 54 "Sanctuary Bill" and SB 29 "Dignity Not Detention Act"). Presentations will be followed by a short Q & A period, then light refreshments.

