



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF VENTURA COUNTY

VOTER

December, 2015 Volume 58 No.5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members and Friends of LWVVC:

Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year to you all. May you have a warm, joyful holiday season.

What could be more fun and enjoyable than visiting and dining with your League friends? Spending time with friends is one way to make the season special and memorable. Come join us for our lovely holiday luncheon with

good food, stimulating conversation, and a great view of the Pacific Ocean. This year's luncheon is this coming Saturday, December 12, beginning at noon at the panoramic Pierpont Inn and Restaurant in Ventura (see Calendar below for the address). It is not too late to join us even if you haven't already reserved a space - you can just show up and pay at the door when you arrive. We hope to see all of you!

2016 will be a busy year for the League with the Money in Politics Forum and Consensus Meeting, Public Higher Education Forum and Consensus Meeting, the Presidential election and nomination polling, pros and cons forums, and more.

Enjoy the rest of 2015 and we hope to see you this Saturday!

Yours in League,
Pat Essick - President

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MAKE IT FAIR/PROP 13 REFORM

• lwvc takes a pass on ballot initiative •

LWVC Pursues Different Strategy

(League of Women Voters of California's) Make It Fair coalition has decided not to pursue an initiative for the November 2016 ballot (see September 2015 issue of VOTER for background on Make It Fair). The League's statement is on the [website](#) and is pasted here:

The Make It Fair Coalition was formed to work for reform of Proposition 13 by changing the unfair way in which commercial property is taxed in California. The League of Women Voters of California joined the Make It Fair campaign because school districts and local governments in California desperately need more revenue to rebuild services and restore educational opportunities for the state's children.

Together, over the past several months, the Make it Fair Coalition has made huge progress in bringing real reform to Proposition 13 to the forefront of public debate. A few major accomplishments include:

- Securing nearly 300 organizational endorsements, speaking directly with over 100,000 voters, generating significant press coverage, and training activists across California
- Working with a cutting-edge team of experts to develop a policy package and securing the introduction of a proposed constitutional amendment in the state Senate
- Changing public attitudes: a September 2015 survey by the Public Policy Institute of California shows that 55 percent of likely voters support commercial property tax reform, an increase of five percentage points from the previous survey in May

Board of Directors:

President:

Patricia Essick

Vice President:

Barbara Doyle

Secretary:

Judith Murphy

Treasurer:

Pamela Pecarich

Directors at Large:

Pat Butler

Suzanne Harvey

Helen LaMonte

Steve Lattimore

Carol Lindberg

Jennifer Matos

Pat Murray

Even with this significant and encouraging progress, the Make It Fair coalition has decided not to pursue an initiative for the November 2016 ballot. Instead, Make It Fair will work to build an even more powerful coalition, expand public education, make the electorate reflective of California's diverse population, and raise funds to ensure the success of any future initiative.

Make It Fair is serious about reform and will continue to be in touch as plans for the coming months take shape.

League members embraced the Make It Fair campaign strongly; we anticipate that that support will continue and grow, as the whole coalition works to keep this issue vibrant and expand public support.

The coalition is definitely still together, and will be working on two fronts: public education about the state budget, and especially about Prop 13; and engaging more Californians as active voters. The more that we can make the voting population look like California, the more likely we are to be able to pass significant reforms.

Source: LWV California

Forum on Transportation Infrastructure

• lwvvc committee plans spring program •

Transportation Infrastructure Committee at Work

Members interested in planning a forum on Transportation Infrastructure issues met early in November to begin to define the scope, key issues, potential speakers, timing and location options for a public forum in 2016. The Board had agreed to defer this topic to next April to provide more time to work on plans, given the importance and breadth of the issues. The committee agreed that the key questions are:

- Determining what the critical needs are for the state, region, and our county
- What the costs are estimated to be
- What options are available for funding
- What are the impacts of doing nothing

The goal is to provide a picture of the future with action or without – the status quo continues, or positive action is taken. Our challenge is to find speakers to address these issues within a manageable time frame. We've determined a tentative date and location, subject to speaker availability.

The Committee met again on December 1st and will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, January 5 at 11:00 am in Santa Paula at the Parish Hall of the Universalist Church on Main Street. Please feel free to join us if you are interested in helping to plan this forum. For more information contact any committee member: Pat Essick, Steve Lattimore, Carol Lindberg, Suzanne Harvey, or Pam Pecarich.

Submitted by Pam Pecarich, Transportation Infrastructure Committee

LWVVC Scholarship

• scholarship committee status report •

Committee Wrapping Up Work with Oxnard College

Members of the Scholarship Committee received confirmation of the scholarship agreement we made with Connie Owens at Oxnard College and it has been approved by the Scholarship Committee.

At our November 12th meeting we asked the LWVVC Board to approve the \$1,000 scholarship and to send a check with the donation form to Ms. Owens.

Our \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a transferring student, and Oxnard College's matching \$1,000 will be awarded to a continuing or returning student that meets the following criterion:

- **Continuing Student** - Student must be currently enrolled in a minimum of 12 units and enrolled in 12 or more units at the time the award is disbursed.
- **Returning/Re-entry Student** - Student must be returning to higher education after a break in education for 2 or more years and planning to enroll at Oxnard College or already enrolled at Oxnard College after a 2 year break this current school year.

Submitted by Carol Lindberg & Jennifer Matos, Scholarship Committee

VENTURA HOUSING AUTHORITY ELECTION

• lwvvc efforts in 2015 yield great results •

Ventura Housing Authority Election – A Success

Thanks to the assistance of several League members, we raised significant funds for our League by providing election services to the Ventura Housing Authority which oversees four large residential areas for senior and disabled



LWVVC members gear up for Ventura Housing Authority ballot count...

individuals and families. Each of these areas needed to elect members to a five member board to represent residents' interests. Elections had not been held in several years so the election process was new to everyone,

residents and staff. In mid- September, Pat Essick, Judy Murphy, Suzanne Harvey and Pam Pecarich met with staff to discuss arrangements, and we were able to describe a mail ballot procedure that would save them money as well as promote participation. It would also be a more manageable election for us.

The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules require third party oversight of all their election procedures, including so-called "interest meetings" with the residents in advance to describe the process and kick off the nominations period. We attended each of those four meetings and later reviewed their ballot instructions to the residents, requiring several revisions. On November 10, we were joined by additional League members to open and count the ballots for each of the four areas. Thanks go to Jeri Andrews, Melanie Ashen, Pat Butler, Pat Essick, Suzanne Harvey, Helen LaMonte, Carol Lindberg, Nell McCombs, Judy Murphy and Pam Pecarich for their help on election day. All went smoothly despite continuing issues with how some ballots were submitted. And as a result of this effort over 2 months, we've raised \$1,775. The staff was pleased with our service and has recommended us to additional housing authorities in the area. If you'd be willing to help in the future with such elections, please let Pam know or send an email to info@lwvventuracounty.org



...while residents wait patiently for final tally

Submitted by Pam Pecarich, Board Member

250 NEWLY REGISTERED HS SENIORS

• great response to lwvvc annual initiative •

Student Voter Registration Program Wraps Up Successful Year

Our second high-school-seniors voter registration effort this year was held at Channel Islands High School in Oxnard on November 19th. This is a school we have been coming to since 2012 and the staff and faculty are very supportive of our efforts. The School's Career Counselor Susan Yslas organized the schedule for us and

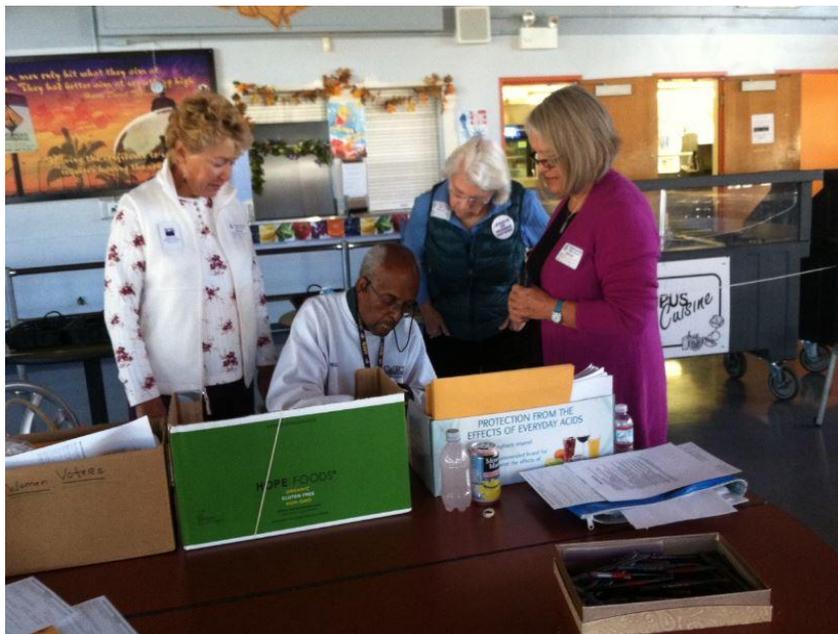


League members gear up for (hopefully) an onslaught of new voters

coordinated the program with relevant teachers to use their class periods to register seniors and answer student's questions. She also made arrangements so that we could hold a registration program in the school cafeteria which made it possible for us to process 14 classes in a single location. It was an ideal situation and definitely a wish list for all future high school voter registration programs.

Our morning schedule was hectic but gradually eased off. Sticking to our schedule, LWVVC members came in at staggered hours to cover the busiest part of the day. Students who forgot their IDs were permitted to take the forms home to fill in the necessary information and instructed to return them to their teachers the following day. The most commonly asked question involved what types of identification was acceptable.

Students also asked questions about what the term "party affiliation" meant. In addition, 26 students turned in their completed Selective Service forms.



But first, they needed to figure out what goes where on the form

And so, the total number of new voters registered by LWVVC members for 2015 at the two high schools (Hueneme and Channel Islands) is 250 new voters for Ventura County, a great success!

To our dedicated League members who always respond without reservation, thank you - Carol Lindberg, Pat Essick, Frances Gagola, Melanie Ashen, Susan Hernandez, and Mike Hurd. Geri

Loe, get well, be safe and will see you next time.

Our next voter registration effort will be in Spring 2016 at Oxnard High School. Please watch the Calendar section of the VOTER for further information. If you can help and willing to spend time with the students in the classroom this is a project you will enjoy. Again, thank you to all the league members for helping our young people develop an early start in civic responsibility.

Submitted by Carmen Hurd, Port Hueneme

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Donors -

- Estate of Winnie Hirsch - LWVVC extends heartfelt thanks to Winnie's family for this very generous contribution to the Ventura League. We remember her with great fondness and shall put her funds to good use furthering the mission of the League of Women Voters.
- Suzanne Harvey in memory of Jeanne Harvey

LWVVC BOARD DOINGS

All members are encouraged to attend monthly LWVVC Board meetings. Come and see what your Board is doing and learn about projects that are in the works.

Notes from November Board Meeting

Topics Covered and "To Do" List:

- Treasurer's Report – Pam Pecarich reported on financial status of LWVVC and updated the Board on the filing of our Form 990N with the IRS and Form 199N with the California Franchise Board.
- President's Report - The Board approved the Constitutional Amendment consensus question results - Results will be filed with LWVC.
- Transportation Committee - Committee members defined the scope of our upcoming (next Spring) public forum and reviewed possible speakers and venue options.
- Plans were finalized for our upcoming Holiday Luncheon on December 12.
- Scholarship Committee – Carol Lindberg and Jennifer Matos reported their meeting with staff at Oxnard College Foundation to review LWVVC's criteria for the scholarship. The Board approved sending \$1000 to be awarded to a transfer student (to a baccalaureate program) with the College's matching \$1000 to be awarded to a continuing student.
- Membership Renewals - Barbara Doyle will send reminder emails to those members who have not yet renewed. She also reported on the progress of LWVUS' (loooooong awaited) membership database.

Submitted by Judy Murphy, Secretary

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, someone will contact you to follow-up.

▶ We would like to hear from League members who would be interested in **working on a committee to plan a public forum** dealing with the topic of infrastructure. If you have not previously worked on a forum, welcome!! Contact us at info@lwvventuracounty.org or feel free to just show up at our first planning meeting scheduled for this coming Monday, November 2 (see Calendar above for meeting details).

▶ We are searching for a few good people who would be interested in **serving on a committee that shares the load** of getting the jobs following jobs done:

- Voter Service
- Program
- Smart Voter

▶ **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.

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

2015



COME BREAK BREAD WITH LEAGUE FRIENDS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!!

▶ **Saturday, December 12 - LWVVC Holiday Luncheon** – Noon. Location: Pierpont Inn, 550 Sanjon Rd, Ventura 93001. Luncheon will include choice of 5 entrees. Cost is \$25 at the door and includes beverage and dessert.

▶ **December** - LWVVC Board will not meet.

2016

▶ **Thursday, January 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.). Open to all members.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- ▶ **Saturday, January 23** - LWVVC Forum on Money in Politics - 9:00 am. Location: E. P. Foster Library, Topping Room, 651 E. Main Street, Ventura, free parking in the back.
- ▶ **Thursday, February 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.). Open to all members.
- ▶ **Wednesday, February 24** - Thousand Oaks area LWVVC members will meet to prepare materials for the annual Teen Voter Outreach Program of the Thousand Oaks Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) - 9:00 am to Noon. Announcements, voter registration cards, and a congratulatory letter from Thousand Oak's mayor will be sent to graduating high school seniors in the area. Participants will meet at the CVUSD office at 1400 Janss Rd., Thousand Oaks.
- ▶ **Saturday, February 27** - Consensus Meeting on LWVC Higher Education Study. Location and time TBA. Study will be presented and consensus conducted. See link at end of VOTER for study materials.
- ▶ **Thursday, March 10** - 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.). Open to all members.
- ▶ **Thursday, April 29** - 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.). Open to all members.
- ▶ **Thursday, May 12** - 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.). Open to all members.
- ▶ **Thursday, June 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.). Open to all members.
- ▶ **June 16 - 19** - LWVUS National Convention. Location: Washington DC. The 2016 LWVUS Convention will be held June 16-19, 2016 at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, DC , 20008. Additional information can be found by clicking [National Convention](#).

CURRENT LEAGUE STUDIES

- ▶ LWVC study this term is *Public Higher Education: Access and Affordability*- study materials available [here](#). Consensus due April 1, 2016.
- ▶ LWVUS 2014-2016 program on Key Structures of Democracy includes two studies:
 1. *U.S. Constitution*: Committee studying process by which the U.S. Constitution can be amended, including the constitutional convention method, and identifying the gaps and challenges in those methods..
 2. *Money in Politics*: Committee is updating League's position on campaign finance in order to address the lack of member understanding and agreement as to whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment. Consensus due February 1, 2016.Information on LWVUS studies can be found [here](#).

