

The Palo Alto VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto www.lwvpaloalto.org

Speaker MARY HUGHES,

Political Strategist "Why We Need Women"

Wednesday
AUGUST 17

7PM - Social **7:30PM** - Program At The Woman's Club 475 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PALO ALTO & THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF PALO ALTO

Invite You To Our

SUMMER SOCIAL

CELEBRATING LOCAL WOMEN IN ELECTED OFFICE: PAST AND PRESENT

Please join us for desserts elegantly catered by Douce France.

\$10 per person paid in advance; \$15 paid at the door. Registration required at Eventbrite:

http://paloaltosummersocial.eventbrite.com Please mail your check made out to LWVPA to: 3921 E. Bayshore Road, #209, Palo Alto, CA 94303





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Don't miss this screening of the important documentary:

The Raising of America
Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation

Sunday, August 21, 3 pm Moldaw Residences, Palo Alto Details on page 6

Message from our President

We are back from LWVUS National Convention with the theme: MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK FOR ALL. With the key words "for all" in our collective minds, we voted to change the membership rules in the LWV bylaws to be more inclusive. Now all persons -whether or not a US citizen - aged 16 and above - can be voting League members. Think about what that means for our League: so many possibilities within our diverse community and so many opportunities for our youth.



What was particularly noticeable to me at my fourth national convention is that we did not vote to embark on any new studies. Instead, we adopted two positions: the one on behavioral health was a **concurrence** with a position from LWV Colorado; the other was on redistricting based on a proposal from a task force appointed at the 2014 National Convention. This nimble and responsive process of adopting new or changed positions without embarking on time-consuming studies allows local Leagues to spend more time on other activities. To me, this is a significant and empowering change.

And so the theme of many of the speeches from the LWVUS leadership was one of change. We were urged to find new ways to engage with the community, to diversify our membership, to take more actions, to be more relevant to all voters and, particularly, to the younger generation and to our very diverse communities. They urged us to have an impact, to be relevant and to be visible. In short, they urged us to re-invent ourselves.

With that as our inspiration, your board and off-board members will participate in a retreat on July 23 – working on ways we all relate to each other in doing the League's work and exploring how we can re-invent ourselves. I invite each of you to be a part of this process by being an active member in your re-charged Palo Alto League. You can start by volunteering to register voters - see page 6 - and helping out with our important Voter Service work - see page 3.

Bonnie Packer

Membership Changes Effective for all Leagues.

There are two momentous bylaws amendments adopted at the LWVUS Convention:

- one that removes the citizenship requirement and
- one that reduces the age requirement from 18 years old to 16

These changes are required to be echoed in the bylaws of all local Leagues. This means we do not need to wait for a vote of our membership to adopt them. We will make these changes at our next board meeting on July 26. So start recruiting new members now!

Stop using "nonpartisan" to describe the League!!

At the LWVUS Convention this June we were told to stop using the word "nonpartisan" when speaking about the League. "Nonpartisan" is often a misunderstood concept. Instead, say: "The League does not support or oppose political candidates or parties."

LWV of Palo Alto: Officers, Directors, Off-Board Roster (650) 903-0600, www.lwvpaloalto.org

OFFICERS Bonnie Packer President president@lwvpaloalto.org **Mary Alice Thornton** 1st Vice Pres., Fundraising Ellen Forbes 2nd Vice Pres.. Communications, Webmaster **Marlene Prendergast** Secretary **Steve Levy**

Treasurer

DIREC	CTORS	OFF-BOA	ARD
Jeannie Lythcott	Liza Taft	Nancy Olson	Jeff Rensch
Voter Services	Voter Registration,	Action Tree	Housing and
Megan Swezey	VOTER Distribution	Diane Rolfe	Transportation
Fogarty &	Distribution, Health Care	Community Relations	Karen Pauls
Lynne Russell	Healin Care	Ciquid Dingles 6	LAT support
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Lisa Ratner	VOTER Editor	PreK-12 Education	Speakers Bureau
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Julie Cardillo	Maureen O'Kicki	Administrator	Lynn Drake
Voter's Edge	Duogram/Evants		Ellen Springer

Veronica Tincher

New Voices for Youth

Program/Events

Organizer

Board Summary Meeting of June 8, 2016



Life Membership. The Board was informed of the life membership status for Lanie Wheeler and Phyllis Cassel for their 50 years in the League.

Advocacy. The Board congratulated Lisa Ratner on activities regarding early childhood education, affordable rental housing, the Stanford Use Permit, a proposed transportation tax and inclusionary zoning.

Fundraising. Our effective outreach to the community and the publication of Voters Guides in the spring raised \$12,500. New Voices for Youth received \$5,000 through the Silicon Valley Gives fundraising effort.

Pros and Cons Activities. Mary Jo Levy reported that the League handled eight engagements and tapings, five speakers and 200 in attendance before the June Primary election. The fall election season will require more speakers.

Program Events. The Board discussed opportunities for speakers and candidate forums. There were many good suggestions.

Marlene Prendergast, Secretary

ALL HANDS ON DECK FOR PROS AND CONS PRESENTATIONS!

The California ballot contains 17 propositions for voters to consider this fall. The challenge for our league: staffing all the community requests for presentations so voters can sort out the issues. Won't you consider joining a distinguished cadre of member speakers to learn about (a few of) the measures and present them through our Pros and Cons service? Contact Mary Jo Levy (mjlevy612@gmail.com) and say "Yes I will!"

BLUE HIGHLIGHTS in the VOTER are linked to pertinent websites. To access the VOTER in PDF format, go to our website at www.lwvpaloalto.org/VOTER.html or email lwvpaoffice@gmail.com to start receiving the VOTER as a PDF via email.

County Council Endorses County Ballot Measures



At our meeting on July 13, the presidents (or their delegates) of the five Leagues of Santa Clara County voted unanimously, based on League

positions, to endorse the following two County measures which will be on the November ballot. (Ballot letters have not yet been assigned.)

Endorsement by County Council means that the chair of the County Council will sign ballot arguments and may write letters to the editor in support of these measures. Local Leagues are free to publicize the County position of support to any extent they wish, but only the County Council chair can sign the ballot arguments and public letters.

[The following wording is from the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters site – and may not be the exact wording that will appear on the final ballot.]

Transportation Sales Tax

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority 2/3 Vote

To relieve traffic, repair potholes; shall VTA enact a 30-year half-cent sales tax to:

- * Repair streets, fix potholes in all 15 cities;
- * Finish BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara;
- * Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools;
- * Increase Caltrain capacity, easing highway congestion, improving safety at crossings;
- * Relieve traffic on all 9 expressways, key highway interchanges;
- * Enhance transit for seniors, students, disabled; Mandating annual audits by independent citizens watchdog committee to ensure accountability.

Affordable Housing Bond

County of Santa Clara 2/3 Vote

To provide affordable local housing for vulnerable populations including veterans, seniors, the disabled, low and moderate income individuals or families, foster youth, victims of abuse, the homeless and individuals suffering from mental health or substance abuse illnesses, which housing may include supportive mental health and substance abuse services, shall the County of Santa Clara issue up to \$950 million in general obligation bonds to acquire or improve real property subject to independent citizen oversight and regular audits?

Bonnie Packer

Notes from LWVUS Convention in Washington, D. C.

The awareness of this being a Presidential Election year was very evident from this year's theme of *Making Democracy Work for All*; by looking at the list of

outstanding speakers; the many workshops offered daily beginning at 7:15 am and 8:45 pm, and four Plenary Sessions. I had many takeaways from the intense three days but what keeps coming back to mind is the issue of low voter turnout, both nationally and in California. How can we make democracy work for all if so few participate?

Did you know that California is in the bottom 10% of voter participation nationally? Some of the reasons are the diversity of our population, the high number of English language learners, people with disabilities, and the homeless population.

Other factors include varying rules and regulations that voters encounter as they move from county to county, and many who believe voting is not relevant to daily life.

These are a lot of issues to overcome to improve California's voter turnout, but I came home from the convention renewed and energized in my determination to help improve California's voter turnout in November. Please join me along with the LWVPA Board and our Voter Service team of volunteers this fall. There is much to do!

Mary Alice Thornton



"Today, we'll change tomorrow"

Three days before the convention, LWV Executive Director Wylecia Wiggs Harris and outgoing President Elisabeth MacNamara joined hundreds of other women at the White House for an historic **United State of Women Summit**. The ethos of the summit is clear in the fast-paced

two-minute video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFyd0H0tpes. The message? "Today, we'll change tomorrow." See www.theunitedstateofwomen.org for much more information.

The same spirit was palpable in a plenary address by Jennifer Lawless, co-author of Running from Office: Why Young Americans Are Turned Off to Politics. Lawless noted that while members of the millennial generationour youngest voters, those born after 1980—do pursue public issues, they shy away from politics. Young people feel that "politics is for people who like to bang their heads against the wall. It will turn your hair gray." But her book makes five recommendations that could help chart a new course, and in her talk she focused on just one of them: tie young women's self-interest to the political process—access to birth control, help with education costs, etc. We have to make sure that high school and college women are able to see politics as an appealing option. Studies show that "when you are recruited to run for office and you realize you are being recruited ... you are likely to respond favorably." What potential leaders do vou know? How can we incentivize them and others in their peer community to consider running for office?

Ellen Forbes

If you are interested in learning more about what transpired at the LWVUS Convention, here are some links. At the LWVUS Convention, delegates:

- Adopted the <u>national program for 2016-2018</u>, Campaign for Making Democracy Work, as proposed
- Adopted two bylaws amendments [see box on page 2] that removed the citizenship requirement for League membership and reduced the age requirement to 16 years old
- Adopted the proposed <u>LWVUS budget</u>
- Elected a new president and board of directors
- Approved <u>six resolutions</u>: two on gun safety, one on statehood for the District of Columbia, and three on climate change
- Adopted New LWVUS Positions
 - One on Behavioral Health, by concurrence with the LWV Colorado. This new position is consistent with the LWVC position.
 - The second was a <u>concurrence on redistricting</u>. This position was proposed by the LWVUS Redistricting Task Force, appointed after the 2014 LWVUS Convention. The position does not supersede positions held by any state League, including California. It **does** provide a position for the ten state Leagues with no position on redistricting so that they can begin to advocate on redistricting immediately.

In addition to the work of the convention, we heard from some excellent speakers, including our new leaders, **Executive Director Wylecia Wiggs Harris and President Chris Carson.** You can see videos of these here.



Advocacy Report by Lisa Ratner

Here's a closer look at some of the positions adopted by LWVUS at the convention.

"Making Democracy Work", the LWVUS's focus this year, includes taking action on three issues: voting rights, money in politics, and redistricting. The LWVUS management site, forum.lwv.org, has a template to help local Leagues go from study to advocacy on these issues.

Voting Rights: We learned that only 36% of the electorate voted in the last election cycle! The 2016 election will be the first in 50 years where voters can't rely on the protections of the Voting Rights Act to ensure free and fair access to the polls. LWVUS has been lobbying for the Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA), which restores the power of the federal government to oversee changes in voting laws which suppress the vote. These laws include requiring photo ID, proof of citizenship, changing location of polling places, and elimination of early voting. LWVUS has sued to block purging of the voter rolls in Kansas, Alabama and Georgia of voters who haven't provided documentary proof of citizenship. Journalist Ari Berman spoke on the history of voter suppression before and after the adoption of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. His book "Give Us the Ballot" points out that the number of African American voters wrongly purged from the Florida voting rolls exceeded four times the number by which Bush votes exceeded Gore votes in Florida. Since African American voters would have voted overwhelmingly for Gore, voter suppression was the most important factor in Bush's 2000 election! We also met with Rep. Anna Eshoo in her DC office. As a cosponsor of the VRAA, she



Gloria Chun Hoo (LWVSJ), Hana Itani (LWVSWSCV), Rep. Eshoo, Lisa Ratner and Roma Dawson (LWVSJ) in Rep. Eshoo's DC office lobbying on restoring the Voting Rights Act

thanked us for our efforts and asked us to focus on the next important issue: Money In Politics.

Money in Politics. LWVUS supports enacting a Disclose Act (which eliminates anonymous campaign contributions) at the federal, state and local level; abolishing Individual Candidate Super PACs; overturning *Citizen's United*; and replacing the federal Fair Elections Commission, which is deadlocked and unable to perform any meaningful oversight of campaign contributions.

Highlights from convention workshops:

forum.lwv.org has a wealth of information on using social media. Facebook and Twitter can be used to share posts and "likes" with coalition partners; reach certain demographics; message candidates to obtain position statements; or reach journalists; Leagues can collaborate not just with other Leagues but with other organizations which have common interests, enabling Leagues to take advantage of technical experts, diversity, or social media reach; Leagues can form ILOs (Inter-League Organizations) to tackle regional issues such as water, carbon emissions, river cleanup; see LWV's priceoncarbon.org website for Climate Action Toolkit. Watch the video "Roll Call of States" on the forum.lwv.org website for a fascinating recap of what state Leagues have accomplished in the past two years.

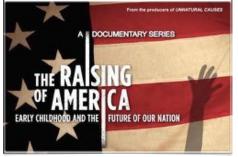
Mary Hughes, Summer Social Speaker

We are pleased to have political strategist Mary V. Hughes as our speaker at the Summer Social with the Palo Alto Woman's Club on August 17, 7 pm. Ms. Hughes is President of Hughes & Company, a political consulting firm in Palo Alto, California. She is the founder of close the gap CA, http://closethegapca.org, a campaign to recruit progressive women to run for the California Legislature. She also founded and served as Director of The 2012 Project, a national, non-partisan campaign to increase the number of women in Congress and state legislatures by taking advantage of newly created districts resulting from redistricting.

Ms. Hughes has advised candidates for President, Congress, state and legislative office contributing to a number of groundbreaking "firsts": first woman in US history to lead her party in the Congress; first woman Superintendent of Schools in California; and first open lesbian judge elected in the nation.

Hughes, a former Executive Director of the California Democratic Party, has published op-eds and book reviews related to American politics in the *Los Angeles Times, The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The Huffington Post*, among others. A graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law and Mt. Holyoke College, she lives with her husband in Palo Alto.

Why do we, as a nation, make it so hard for our children to thrive? How can we do better?



The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto invites you to the screening of a powerful film: "The Raising of America" to explore this question. Kim Kruckel, Executive Director of the Child Care Law Center based in San Francisco, a leader in early childhood education, will moderate the discussion and questions following the film. You can watch the 11-minute trailer at: http://www.raisingofamerica.org/

Sunday, August 21, 3 - 5 pm

Moldaw Residences, 2nd Floor, Mountain View Room 899 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto

Parking and Check-In: FREE Valet Parking is available for all at the Front Entrance on E. Charleston Rd. Check in at the Front Desk and take an elevator to the 2nd floor Mountain View Room.

Refreshments will be served from 3 - 3:30 pm.

Why We Need to Do Better for Our Children

The Early Childhood Education Committee is pleased to present this screening of Part One of the documentary film: "The Raising of America." Some of the facts propelling this film are the issues faced by our youngest citizens 0 to 5 years of age. They live in the richest nation in the world, but that nation is woefully behind other countries in social and economic support of families. We rank 26 out of 29 rich nations regarding quality child care and family support. In terms of affordability of child care, we rank 16th in the world. Here in Santa Clara County, the median child care costs are \$17,000 a year per child. Only the wealthiest of our families in Santa Clara County can afford that!

Today 70% of all families have both parents working, and we are woefully underinvesting in our children.

Research overwhelmingly shows that for every \$1 we invest in our children in quality early childhood education, we save \$8 in reducing the rate of expensive and destructive social problems. When we invest in our children we build lifelong improvements in mental and physical health, cognitive development, more resilient children and healthier, better functioning families.

The League of Women Voters believes strongly in universal, accessible, and affordable high quality early childhood education for all of our youngest, ages 0 to 5 years. We are truly fortunate to have as our speaker and facilitator, statewide authority **Kim Kruckel**, Executive Director of the Child Care Law Center, to lead the discussion surrounding the film, "The Raising of America."

Please join us.

Questions: Please contact,

Carole Stein at steingroup89@gmail.com, Sigrid Pinsky at sigridkp@yahoo.com, or Diane Rolfe at onedianerolfe@comcast.net

Diane Rolfe, Sigrid Pinsky, Ellen Forbes, & Carole Stein

Upcoming Voter Registration Activities

Three more volunteer opportunities coming up!



NEW CITIZENS CEREMONIES

Help the Registrar of Voters register the new citizens

Thursday, August 25 Thursday, September 15 10:30 to 11:30 am, and 1:30 to 2:30 pm

The Heritage Theater in Campbell, 1 West Campbell Avenue

There may be a third session from 3 pm to 4 pm, which means volunteers would be needed at 4 pm.

If a volunteer wants to attend the Ceremony and there is room they may. They need to be there at least an hour before. It is a very moving experience.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

Tuesday, September 27 10 am - 2 pm

Palo Alto Veterans Hospital

This is an annual event held on the fourth Tuesday of September.

Sign up for the whole event or specific hours.

Help is especially needed from 11 am to 1 pm to cover lunches.

If you wish to help at any of these places, please contact me if you have not already done so.

Liza Taft Director, Voter Registration

Renew Your Membership

The **LWVPA** membership team will be mailing out membership renewal letters in August. When you receive yours, please return it at your earliest convenience.

We are also **looking for a volunteer** to assist us with membership processing and record keeping. This can be done on your own time at the League office. Let us know if you might be interested by emailing meganfogarty@gmail.com or lynnerussell1@gmail.com.

Thank you to the following members for donating their remuneration for being an election officer to the League:

Alice Smith, Joyce Tavrow, Pat Saffir, Phyllis Cassel, Richard Cassel





I wish to thank the following League members who live in Channing House for their wonderful help in preparing over 200 hundred VOTERS for mailing:

Barbara Bowden, Janet Creelman, Mitzi Henderson, Joy Sleizer, Jean Colby, Barbara Gordon, Geri Foley and Nancy Steege.

I couldn't have done it without your expert help.

Thank You, Liza Taft

Welcome, New Member!



Heidi Stein
We are so glad you have
joined the League.



Thank you to all the board and off-board members who reviewed this *VOTER*, and for the invaluable proofreading of **Ellen Forbes, Betty Gerard and Bonnie**Packer.

Sue Hermsen, VOTER Editor

The LWVPA Book Group

will meet

Friday, July 29, at 10 am

to discuss:



"Just Mercy" - a story of justice and redemption

by Bryan Stevenson

The meeting will be at the home of Betty Gerard. Visitors are welcome.

2016 Membership Directory

If you would like a copy of the LWVPA membership directory mailed to you, contact Lynne Russell at lynnerussell1@gmail.com or call 650-303-1505.



It's easy to join the LWVPA —Do it now! You will be glad you did.
Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: National, State,
Bay Area and Palo Alto. Men are encouraged to join. Dues grants are available.
For more information, call the League office (650) 903-0600.

Name			
Address			
City		Zip	
Phone (day)	(evening)	email	

Annual membership: \$70. Additional membership, same address: \$35. Student membership: \$35. Mail check with this form to LWVPA, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209, Palo Alto, CA 94303. You can also join or renew online via PayPal at http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/join.html

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209 Palo Alto, CA 94303 (650) 903-0600

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How to contact your elected officials:

UNITED STATES President Barack Obama http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT	(202) 456-1414
Senator Dianne Feinstein http://feinstein.senate.gov - click "email	(415) 393-0707 me"
Senator Barbara Boxer http://www.boxer.senate.gov/	(415) 403-0100
Rep. Anna Eshoo http://eshoo.house.gov/	(650) 323-2984
CALIFORNIA	
Governor Jerry Brown http://gov.ca.gov/home.php	(916) 445-2841
Senator Jerry Hill http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us	(650) 212-3313
Assemblymember Rich Gordon http://asmdc.org/members/a24/	(650) 691-2121
SANTA CLARA COUNTY Supervisor Joe Simitian	(650) 965-8737
joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org OTHER AREAS in CALIFORNIA	

Locate your elected officials with your street address http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov

CALENDAR

Tue, Jul 26, 7-9:30 pm Board Mtg PCC, Raptor Room	Tue, Aug 30, 7-9:30 pm Board Mtg PCC, Raptor Room
Fri, Jul 29, 10 am Book Club Gerard	Wed, Sep 7 <i>VOTER</i> Deadline
Wed, Aug 10 VOTER Deadline Wed, Aug 17, 7 pm Summer Social Woman's Club of Palo Alto	Thu, Sep 15, 10:30-11:30 am and 1:30-2:30 pm Naturalization Ceremonies Heritage Theater, Campbell
Sun, Aug 21, 3-5pm The Raising of America Moldaw Residences	Tue, Sep 27, 10 am-2 pm Nat'l Voter Reg. Day Veterans Hospital Palo Alto
Thu, Aug 25, 10:30-11;30 am and 1:30-2:30 pm Naturalization Ceremonies Heritage Theater, Campbell	Tue, Sep 27, 7-9:30 pm Board Mtg PCC, Raptor Room