



Vol. XXXIII No. 1
August, 2017

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

www.lwvpaloalto.org

Please join us for the LWVPA

Summer Social

at the spectacular

Foster Gallery



Tuesday, August 29, 6:30 pm

With guest speaker:

Jane Woodward, Founder and Director of the Foster Gallery and Founder and CEO of MAP <http://web.stanford.edu/~woodward/>

If you'd like to sign up for a docent-led tour of the collection, please indicate your time preference, 6:30 or 7:00 pm. Self-guided tours are also available. Light refreshments will be served.

The Foster, 940 Commercial St. Palo Alto

RSVP

by August 22 at

lwvpaoffice@gmail.com

or call the office at:

650-903-0600



Artist Tony Foster painting.



Inside the Foster Gallery

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*The League is a broadly based organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voter service and influences public policy through education and advocacy.
The League does not support or oppose political candidates or parties.*

Message from our President



On July Fourth, we once again celebrated the signing of the Declaration of Independence as the birth of our nation. We celebrate with words such as Liberty and Freedom. Although the revolutionaries declared “that all men are created equal,” the Declaration did not address the right to vote and, in fact, the 1789 Constitution did not define who was eligible to vote – and left that to the states. In those days it was mostly adult white male property owners who could vote. Since then, the right to vote has been expanded,



contracted, expanded and contracted again. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voting_rights_in_the_United_States.

July Fourth reminds us of the critical importance of the League’s work. While the National League is in the forefront to protect voting rights (<http://lwv.org/issues/protecting-voters>), our Palo Alto League is focusing on expanding our voter registration and civic education efforts in our schools and to underserved populations (See p. 4). We also support the efforts of the nascent National Voter Corps inspired by one of our passionate League members.

On June 24, your board and off-board members gathered for their annual retreat. We discussed ways to organize our work and committees into overarching teams: making democracy work; environment; social justice (inequalities) and building our League. We will continue to work on the exact names of these teams and to prioritize our efforts so that we can ensure that work of the Palo Alto League remains focused. Committees are encouraged to establish goals, regular meeting times and to work with the other committees which support their efforts.



The League’s strength as a grassroots organization is in its members, i.e., you. You can help the important work of the League by joining one or more of our committees. Our goal is to make it easier for you to become involved by updating our website and other communication efforts with more committee information.

The League’s strength lies also in its collaborations with neighboring Leagues and other like-minded organizations. Another goal is to work more closely with the Leagues in both San Mateo and Santa Clara County to coordinate our educational events, and to collaborate on regional issues such as housing, transportation, the environment, voter registration efforts, civic savvy, immigration and more.

I am excited by the energy and devotion of our board and off-board members and look forward to an exciting year for LWVPA.

Bonnie Packer

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

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Ellen Forbes
2nd Vice President, Communications, Webmaster

Karen Kalinsky
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Steve Levy
Treasurer, Housing and Transportation Chair

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Voter’s Edge

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Advocacy Report by Lisa Ratner

National League Opposes Voter Suppression Efforts

League of Women Voters of the United States president Chris Carson issued a statement in response to the White House openly admitting the Election ‘Integrity’ Commission is seeking to find potential fraudulent registrations on the voter rolls:

“...the so-called Election ‘Integrity’ Commission was created to justify President Trump’s false claims of widespread voter fraud in the 2016 elections. Mr. Kobach’s request for voter records is consistent with his tactics of voter suppression and today the White House openly admitted the Commission intends to find fraudulent voters, even where there are none. . .”

The League also joined a letter on behalf of a coalition of more than 200 national organizations sent to all 50 Secretaries of State opposing the data request by President Trump’s advisory commission, standing with the election officials who have rejected the request for sensitive information. The letter stated in part:

“...the commission’s request is an unprecedented overreach and a brazen assault on the founding principles of our democracy. We have three overarching concerns. First, we are concerned that this commission is laying the groundwork for potential voter suppression by the wrongful removal of eligible voters, including Black, Hispanic, Native American, older, and student voters, from the rolls through the problematic process known as Crosscheck. Second, the creation of a national database of voters’ detailed information raises serious privacy concerns. And finally, at a time when the focus should be addressing the possibility of past and continued Russian interference, including cyberattacks in the 2016 elections, the creation of a national database raises significant national security concerns.

“The right to vote is a sacred right. It is the right that protects all other rights and ensures that our elected leaders are accountable to the citizens they represent. Our country has made great strides to increase access to the ballot throughout its history, and you play a fundamental role in the free and fair administration of our electoral process.

“...Kansas Secretary of State Kobach sent you a letter last week requesting that you provide sensitive voter roll data, including the names, addresses, dates of birth, political party affiliation, past voter history, and even partial Social Security numbers of registered voters in your state. That letter is merely a request and given the fact there are no guarantees about how this data would be used or even secured, no one should feel compelled to cooperate.

“...this request rightly drew swift and bipartisan condemnation across the country ...because of serious questions about the legality of releasing this personal information. Member organizations of The Leadership Conference, and others, have filed multiple legal challenges to this request, alleging possible violations of numerous federal laws, and constitutional violations...Although disgraceful, the commission’s actions are ...not surprising, given the individuals leading the effort and their longstanding pursuits of voter suppression.... As Governor of Indiana, Vice President Pence supported voter suppression tactics, including undermining voter registration drives and pushing extreme voter ID laws. Secretary Kobach also has a long record of discriminatory and regressive actions on voting rights. His unrepentant attempts to suppress voting have led to thousands of voters being wrongly removed from the rolls and barred from exercising their democratic right...Many Secretaries of State and election administrators have rightly characterized the commission’s data request as ‘disingenuous,’ ‘repugnant,’ a ‘waste of taxpayer money,’ and ‘a tool to commit large-scale voter suppression’... we respectfully request that you join your colleagues in expressing collective opposition to the commission and its data request. **At a time when barely half of eligible voters exercise the franchise, we should instead be taking every possible step to remove barriers to voting in America.**

“...If the right to vote is denied, we will fail our democracy and it will not survive. ...All Secretaries of State and election administrators should stand united in protecting the voting rights of our nation’s citizens and rejecting the commission’s outrageous request.

Sincerely,

League of Women Voters of the United States and many others”

<http://lwv.org/content/league-joins-letter-secretaries-state-regarding-pence-kobach-commission-data-request>

VOTER SERVICES NEEDS YOU, AND NOW!

Our nation and our democracy urgently need every eligible voter to become registered and then actually to vote. LWV Palo Alto is gearing up for major work in these arenas for this year (2017-18) with ongoing work and two new big projects that are afoot.

- **NEW PROJECT 1** is an effort to reach all Palo Alto teenagers who are eligible to vote in the June 2018 election, and encourage them both to register and then to cast a ballot. This Project includes working much more closely with the students at Paly and Gunn, and reaching out to teens:

- ~ in other Palo Alto schools
- ~ in schools in other Peninsula cities,
- ~ doing Online schooling and home schooling,
- ~ who are homeless, drop-outs, in halfway houses, and in the juvenile justice system somewhere.

We want to find each teen eligible to vote, while fully respecting those who might not be eligible.

- **NEW PROJECT 2** is an effort to reach our houseless citizens to help them to register and to vote.
- **ONGOING EFFORTS**
 - ~ LWV Palo Alto will again have the honor to assist in the voter registration of brand-new citizens in Campbell on both August 24 and September 19.
 - ~ The important registration of veterans at the VA hospital is scheduled for September 26.

I am really looking forward to hearing from and meeting with League members, especially new members, to introduce you to the League and the work we do. If you already know that you are interested in volunteering for Voter Services work, please find me as soon as you can through my contact on our website www.lwvpaloalto.org, and also please watch for my e-mail invitation to meet over coffee soon.

Jeannie Lythcott
Voter Services Chair



Join Our Brand New Civic Savvy Committee!

Facts Matter, Fake News, What's True?

What are we going to do about it?

Meeting: Wednesday, July 12, 7-9 pm

Broader Goal: Informed & Motivated Voters

Focus: Facts Matter, Fake News, What's the Truth?

This Committee is in formation. new members will be in at the start and are welcome.

Initial ideas include education, skills to gather and validate information, social media opportunities, civic engagement and education in schools, broader outreach to other LWVs, and improved civil discourse leading to shared understanding. This is an action-focused new team.

Join and bring your own ideas!

Contact: lisa_peschcke_koedt@hotmail.com if interested.

Hope you'll join !

New Voices for Youth Summer Program



New Voices is conducting a summer program in the Siena Youth Center, North Fair Oaks, Redwood City. The six-week program is headed up by our own New Voices alumna, Nimsi Garcia. You may remember Nimsi's face, introducing New Voices for Youth in our Indiegogo Campaign of 2014. Her quote, "Teenagers have a lot to say" was the theme of that campaign.

Nimsi and her friend, Erendira Para, were juniors at Menlo-Atherton High School when they joined the New Voices for Youth after-school program. They each produced a video on teenage parenting that went on to be shown to teachers and other students. Nimsi and Erendira graduated from M-A with honors and attended college, the first in their families. Erendira attended Cal State Fullerton and returned as New Voices instructor for our Puente program in Pescadero last summer. Nimsi continued as a NV program assistant while attending full-time at Cañada Community College. In her junior year, Nimsi transferred to Cal Berkeley where she graduated in

Economics this June. Erendira will also graduate at the end of fall semester. We are proud of Nimsi and Erendira's hard work to prepare for and graduate from college. They did it within four years, too!

This summer, Nimsi is working with middle school kids, whose families are undergoing housing stress due to unaffordable rent increases.

Meanwhile, the New Voices Steering Committee is seeking a Program Director after wishing Lalo Saavedra well on his new career steps. Let us know if you have any contacts with someone who has experience working with youth in the underserved communities and is looking for part-time work. Contact Veronica Tincher for more information.



NV4Y students collaborate on a film project.

*Veronica Tincher, LWV PA
Sheila Botein, LWV SSMC
Co-Chairs,*

New Voices for Youth Steering Committee

Countywide Committee on Juvenile Justice Seeks New Members

The Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County have an ongoing committee to support our countywide positions on Juvenile Justice. Our countywide positions are:

The Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County support measures to prevent delinquency and provide alternatives to detention of juveniles. We support services for dependent children and their care providers to focus on the best way to meet the needs of the children who are separated from their families. We continue to support the principle that juveniles who are status offenders should not be held in secure facilities. We support funding to meet the needs of the children, their care providers, and support services.

The committee meets monthly to discuss legislation and programs relating to juvenile justice, and also to plan forums relating to juvenile justice. The committee is actively seeking members from all five Leagues in Santa Clara County. Does your League have members who might be interested? If so, please have them contact committee chair Melody Grandell at melodyclimo@gmail.com. Please spread the word!

Take Action to Support the California Values Act, SB 54



Below is a letter from LWVC President Helen Hutchinson urging your action in supporting the California Values Act, SB 54. You can contact your Assembly representative at: <http://www.congressweb.com/lwvofca/13>.

Over 10 million immigrants live, work, and pay taxes in California. They are our family, our friends, and our coworkers. Recently federal agents have taken actions to detain and deport our law-abiding neighbors, tearing families apart. Undocumented residents are afraid to use community resources or cooperate with law enforcement efforts in their neighborhoods for fear of deportation. Take action to protect our immigrant families and values!

A bill to create landmark protections for immigrant families living in California has passed the state Senate and is now in the Assembly. Tell your Representative to vote YES on the California Values Act (SB 54)! This bill will make sure our schools, health facilities, and courthouses are safe and accessible to all Californians and prevent state and local law enforcement from acting as federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to detain and deport immigrants.

Passing SB 54 in the Assembly is not guaranteed! Tell your Assembly member to vote YES on SB 54, the California Values Act!

Find out more about SB 54 in our recent [San Jose Mercury News op ed](#). Stand with the League! We won't stand for families being torn apart.

Sincerely,

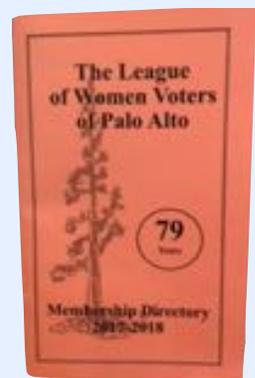
Helen Hutchinson
President, LWVC

Membership News

Watch your mailbox for your renewal packet in September!

Volunteers Needed: The Membership Team has a fun pop-up (short-term) activity looking for a volunteer. We are looking for members who have recently become or helped someone else become a United States citizen. The project entails helping plan a new member trivia evening that focuses on facts in the United States citizenship test. If you can help, please email meganfogarty@gmail.com.

The 2017-18 Membership Directory is available! If you would like a copy, please email Lynne Russell at lynnerussell1@gmail.com. Please note that the information in the directory is restricted to members of the League of Women Voters for League business only.



*Lynne Russell and Megan Swezey Fogarty
Membership Chairs*

Keeping Abreast of Federal Legislation and Understanding How You Can Impact It.

Saturday, September 23, 2017
3:00-4:30 pm
Saratoga Public Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue
Saratoga, CA 95070

Featured speakers are Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, the U. S. House Representative for the 19th District of California, and Jennifer Waggoner, former President of the League of Women Voters of California.

Admission is free, but you do need to reserve your seat at <http://bit.ly/ImpactLegislation>.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Southwest Santa Clara Valley; co-sponsored by the LWVs of Palo Alto, Cupertino/Sunnyvale and San Jose/Santa Clara.



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

*Sue Hermsen,
VOTER Editor*

The LWVPA Book Group

will meet

Friday, July 21, at 10 am

to discuss:

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

by Matthew Desmond



The meeting will be at the home of Ursula Moore.

Visitors are welcome.

Like Us on Facebook
[League-of-Women-Voters-of-Palo-Alto](#)



Follow Us on Twitter



[lwvpaloalto](#)

Donate Online



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. Voting membership is now open to non-citizens and to individuals 16 years of age or older. 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: \$85. Additional membership, same address: \$40. Student membership: \$40.

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>

Membership dues to the LWVPA are not tax deductible.

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

Address Services Requested

Dated Material

Please Expedite

How to contact your elected officials:

UNITED STATES

President Donald Trump (202) 456-1414
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/>

Senator Dianne Feinstein (415) 393-0707
<http://feinstein.senate.gov> - click "email me"

Senator Kamala Harris (415) 403-0100
<http://www.harris.senate.gov/>

Rep. Anna Eshoo (650) 323-2984
<http://eshoo.house.gov/>

CALIFORNIA

Governor Jerry Brown (916) 445-2841
<http://gov.ca.gov/home.php>

Senator Jerry Hill (650) 212-3313
<http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us>

Assemblymember Marc Berman (650) 691-2121
<http://asmdc.org/members/a24/>

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

<http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html>

Wed Jul 12, 7-9 pm Civic Savvy Committee Meeting Peschcke-Koedt	Tue, Aug 29, 6:30 pm Summer Social The Foster Gallery Palo Alto
Fri, Jul 21, 10 am Book Group Moore	Tue, Sep 19 Voter Registration for New Citizens Campbell
Tue, Jul 25, 7 pm Board Meeting PCC	Sat, Sep 23, 3-4:30 pm Keeping Abreast of Federal Legislation Saratoga Public Library 13650 Saratoga Ave. Saratoga
Thu, Aug 24 Voter Registration for New Citizens Campbell	Tue, Sep 26 Voter Registration at VA Palo Alto