



Vol. XXXIII No. VII
March, 2018

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

www.lwvpaloalto.org

Upcoming Events:

LWVC Climate Change Task Force and LWV Palo Alto Presents:



Food Production and Greenhouse Gases: Counting Carb Emissions

RSVP info and
more on p. 6

Featured Speaker: Chris Field, Director of Stanford Woods Institute
Tuesday, March 6, Noon - 1 pm

Attend via webinar or by joining the live audience at the Peninsula Conservation Center, 3921 E. Bayshore Rd., Palo Alto

Be sure to mark your calendars for this very special California League event.

Defining the Limits of Free Speech: Hate Speech and its Impact on Civic Engagement

Tuesday, March 27, Noon - 1 pm
MidPen Media Center, 900 San Antonio Rd., Palo Alto

Join us for a timely discussion about our First Amendment rights with

Berkeley Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky, author of *Free Speech on Campus* and co-chair of the board of the new National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement in Washington, D.C.



RSVP info and
more on p. 5

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Voter Services Planning Session

All members welcome!

Have you been a part of Voter Services in the past? Are you currently involved? Are you thinking of getting involved and want to find out more? Join us!

Saturday, February 24, 9 - 11 am

Peninsula Conservation Center, 3921 E. Bayshore Rd., Palo Alto

More details on p. 4



Join us for a special event with author

Julie Lythcott-Haims: What It Means to Be Black and American

Tuesday, February 20, 7 - 9 pm,
Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd., Palo Alto

Stay after Julie's talk for a champagne toast as we celebrate community engagement and our 80th anniversary.

Please RSVP by February 18 at lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or 650-903-0600



*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

President's Message (by Aisha Piracha-Zakariya, on behalf of Bonnie Packer this month).

Get ready!

We are focused on an exciting, informative and action-filled election year, thanks to all the energy and support we have from our active League members! Read on to learn how you can have greater civic engagement and make a difference on local, state and national policy issues and continue to help make democracy work.



An important year ahead:

The [LWVPA](#) continues its mission to encourage informed and active participation of citizens to advocate on public policies through our action and educational activities. Equally essential and important, the League actively informs and presents unbiased nonpartisan information about election choices the voting process, ballot measures and registering our citizens to vote through our Voter Services. **We are proud and pleased to move forward on all these activities and services as we gear up for 2018, an important election year.**

Program Planning Recap:

On January 27, many of you attended our well-received, informative and consensus-building **2018 Program Planning Meeting & Brunch**, an important annual grassroots event where everyone had a chance to share ideas and be heard. Thank you to all who attended, engaged in our discussions and filled out the feedback forms. We discussed the [League's national agenda and priorities](#), and reviewed [LWVPA's work on the past year's areas of emphasis](#) in education, advocacy and voter services. This year, local Leagues were asked to tell LWVUS how their work has impacted the [Campaign for Making Democracy Work® \(CMDW\)](#). LWVUS asked all Leagues to endorse continuing the current Campaign for Making Democracy Work®, prioritizing: 1. Voting Rights, 2. Election Reform, 3. Campaign Finance and 4. Redistricting. Through a consensus process, LWVPA agreed to endorse the national priorities and add three others—Climate Change, Immigration and Gun Safety—as well as requesting more frequent 'calls-to-action' to membership. Members also reached consensus on areas for local focus in the coming year. [A full report will be given at the next Board Meeting on February 27](#). Dominant priority areas included our already strong focus on voter rights and voter registration, particularly registering unhoused citizens, local veterans and ALL eligible high school students in public and private schools. Proposed local priority issue-areas included a focus on climate change, housing, transportation, and the Make It Fair campaign. There was deep concern about election and information integrity and Congressional dysfunction, especially as this is an important election year. Members also discussed organizational areas for increased attention which included member engagement and LWVPA communication, plus a reactivation of our Observer Corps.



At the LWVPA 2018 Program Planning Meeting and Brunch

*The input from the 2018 Program Planning event will be the basis for the recommended Local Program and Issues for Emphasis that you will vote on at our **Annual Meeting on May 12, 2018. (Save the date!)**. Program Planning ideas will also be reported to the LWVUS to endorse the recommended National Program for 2018-20, to be voted on at the LWVUS National Convention in Chicago in June.*

How YOU can engage in greater civic involvement and help 'Make Democracy Work':

Our **education, advocacy and voter services** continue to help members engage and participate in making our democracy work. Through the dedicated efforts of our **Voter Services** members, led by **Jeannie Lythcott and Kathy Miller, we have registered over 300 students** at Paly and Gunn high schools, 80+ students at local independent schools and about 15 unhoused citizens! The Voter Services team would like to **train and grow more members** to help register even more voters this election year and will host a **Planning Session on February 24, from 9 - 11 am** at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto. See page 4 of this *VOTER* for more information about this event.

continued on page 3

President's Message by Aisha Piracha-Zakariya - Continued from page 2

You can also support the League's advocacy efforts:

Sign up for action alerts at national: <http://www.lwv.org> and at state: lwvc.org/take-action. And locally, respond to our e-blasts calling for local, county or regional action on issues as they arise.



Upcoming Event: Not to be missed!

FEB 20

Julie Lythcott-Haims: What It Means to Be Black and American

Tue, 7 pm · Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Stay on after Julie's talk as we will have a champagne toast to celebrate community engagement and our 80th anniversary!

Call for Input - Nominating Committee:

Consider serving either on our board or in an off-board position so that you may follow your passion in a particular area of League interest. Contact Chris Logan, Nominating Committee Chair, or Ellen Smith, Board Development Committee Chair, if you would like to get more information or serve.

Thank you for your continued commitment to and involvement with the League! We look forward to seeing you at our many upcoming events. Please follow us on [Facebook](#) and visit our [website](#) to stay connected and informed of our efforts, activities and events.

Aisha Piracha-Zakariya
1st Vice President

Membership News

Special thanks to those who, beyond their membership dues, also donated to our general and education funds. Please let Megan Swezey Fogarty (meganfogarty@gmail.com or 650-619-6143) know via return email if, beyond your canceled check or credit card bill, you need a record of this much-appreciated support for tax purposes. Only donations to the education fund are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2018 (there are about 20 of you!), this will be your last VOTER. We value your membership and don't want to lose you! Not sure if you've renewed? Email lynnerussell1@gmail.com

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

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president@lwvpaloalto.org
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Ellen Forbes
2nd Vice President,
Communications,
Webmaster
Karen Kalinsky
Secretary, Collaborations
Co-chair
Steve Levy
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Transportation Chair

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Voter Services
Megan Swezey
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Membership
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Advocacy
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Lynne Russell
Ellen Smith

Board Meeting Highlights - January, 2018



Your Board

- Ratified an email vote to approve publicity co-sponsorship of AAUW/LWV LA-MV Roe vs. Wade event on Jan. 22
- Ratified an email vote on a community land trust study to be proposed to the County Council Housing Committee
- Ratified an email vote to approve co-sponsorship with the LWVC Climate Change Task Force's educational webinar event with Chris Field, Director of the Stanford Woods Institute, on March 6 at the Peninsula Conservation Center
- Ratified an email vote to approve the Art Center Auditorium location for Feb. 20 event with Julie Lythcott-Haims
- Approved an event with Berkeley Law School Dean Chemerinsky on Free Speech, to be held at the Midpeninsula Media Center on March 27
- Decided to adopt a policy allowing the LWVPA president to approve "publicity only" co-sponsorship of events held by other Santa Clara County local Leagues
- Decided to hold educational forums with speakers for and against the Prop 13 reform initiative (Make it Fair Campaign) if/when the proposition qualifies for the ballot
- Decided that the annual meeting will be held on Saturday, May 12

Discussed

- The upcoming LWVPA fundraising campaign that needs the participation of all board members in adding personal notes on letters to donors, and making follow-up phone calls
- The upcoming League interviews with our State Senator and Assemblymember, Jerry Hill and Marc Berman

Learned

- About the agenda and plans for the Program Planning meeting on January 27
- The Budget Committee's need for cost projections for sending delegates to the League's national convention in Chicago, and election year events and publicity
- That our Voter Services team has registered over 300 public school teens, and 80 independent school students

Karen Kalinsky, Secretary

Don't Miss the Voter Services Planning Session on February 24!

All members welcome!



The League of Women Voters exists to spread democracy. Our Palo Alto Voter Services team serves that mission by registering, educating, and inspiring voters. If you have been involved with Voter Services before, are currently on our volunteer list and/or would like to become involved in this work, please join us February 24, from 9 - 11 am at the Peninsula Conservation Center, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto. Please RSVP to Kathy Miller (kmiller@nasw.org) if you plan to attend.

Our agenda will include:

- * Planning for the sustainability and expansion of our ambitious high school voter registration program
- * Planning for upcoming voter education events in advance of the June primary and November general elections
- * Identifying volunteers to take on important roles in all of the work we are doing including (but not limited to!) :
 - * organizing visits to independent schools
 - * organizing possible get-out-the vote activities
 - * organizing candidate forums
 - * making voter registration presentations in high school classrooms
 - * helping to expand our high school VR effort beyond Palo Alto
 - * helping with budgeting for Voter Services activities

We look forward to seeing you there. Bring your inspiration and ideas!

*Jeannie Lythcott & Kathy Miller
Co-Chairs of Voter Services*



Gerrymandering

As part of LWVUS' "Campaign for Making Democracy Work", the League or its state affiliates are plaintiffs in cases before the U.S. Supreme Court involving the extreme partisan drawing of congressional districts, or "gerrymandering".

The Pennsylvania League of Women Voters filed suit against the congressional map drawn in 2011 by the Republican-controlled Pennsylvania legislature on the basis that it contorted the map to favor Republicans, violating the state constitution's guarantee of "fair and free elections" and the right to "free speech and association". These rights have greater protection under the Pennsylvania Constitution than under the federal constitution. The district lines were drawn "because we don't like the way you vote," said the League's lawyer.



On January 28, 2018, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the congressional map "clearly and palpably" violated Pennsylvania's constitution. The resulting gerrymander, which experts view as one of the worst in the country, resulted in Republicans winning in 13 out of 18 congressional races, even though the numbers of Democrats and Republicans are fairly equal in the state. The state's 7th congressional district has been described as "Goofy kicking Donald Duck". The Court ordered the legislature to draw districts that are compact and contiguous, nearly equal in population and that do not needlessly split up communities.

The Court ordered the legislature to submit the map for approval to the court by February 15. If the state failed to meet this deadline, the Court would draw the map itself based on the record in the case, so that the new map could be used in Pennsylvania's May 12 primary election.

The Republicans appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court for a stay of the order, arguing that the state court's ruling interfered with the "Elections" clause of the U.S. Constitution, under which the state legislature was given the power to fix the "time, place and manner" of congressional elections without interference from the state courts. That argument has been rejected by a 2015 Supreme Court ruling upholding the independent redistricting commission created by the Arizona legislature to avoid gerrymandering. The LWV was also a party to that Arizona case, as part of its "Campaign for Making Democracy Work".

On Feb. 5, the U.S. Supreme Court refused the Republicans' stay request and allowed the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling to stand. This could have a large effect on the 2018 midterm elections, giving the Democrats a fair chance of winning congressional seats. But both parties benefit from getting rid of partisan gerrymandering, and Republicans as well as Democrats have opposed gerrymandering when they are the party out of power.

The Court has never articulated a standard for judging partisan congressional maps, but the League in a recent Wisconsin case has urged the Court to use the "efficiency gap" standard, a measure developed in recent years to identify extremely partisan political maps.

Defining the Limits of Free Speech: Hate Speech and its Impact on Civic Engagement - with Berkeley Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky

Tuesday, March 27, Noon - 1 pm, at the MidPen Media Ctr. - *Continued from front page.*

Our special guest, Dean Erwin Chemerinsky, was named the most influential person in legal education in the United States by the National Jurist magazine. Please read his full bio on page 6.

Seating is limited so if you would like to attend, please RSVP early at lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or 650-903-0600. Reservations for in-person attendance will be taken no later than March 25.

This event is free and open to the public and there is plenty of parking in the lot or on the street.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto.

Erwin Chemerinsky - Berkeley Law School Dean

Erwin Chemerinsky became the 13th Dean of Berkeley Law on July 1, 2017, when he joined the faculty as the Jesse H. Choper Distinguished Professor of Law.

Prior to assuming this position, from 2008-2017, he was the founding Dean and Distinguished Professor of Law, and Raymond Pryke Professor of First Amendment Law, at University of California, Irvine School of Law, with a joint appointment in Political Science. Before that he was the Alston and Bird Professor of Law and Political Science at Duke University from 2004-2008, and from 1983-2004 was a professor at the University of Southern California Law School, including as the Sydney

M. Irmas Professor of Public Interest Law, Legal Ethics, and Political Science. He also has taught at DePaul College of Law and UCLA Law School. He teaches Constitutional Law, First Amendment Law, Federal Courts, Criminal Procedure, and Appellate Litigation.

He is the author of ten books, including *The Case Against the Supreme Court*, published by Viking in 2014, and two books published by Yale University Press in 2017, *Closing the Courthouse Doors: How Your Constitutional Rights Became Unenforceable* and *Free Speech on Campus* (with Howard Gillman). He also is the author of more than 200 law review articles. He writes a weekly column for the Sacramento Bee, monthly columns for the ABA Journal and the Daily Journal, and frequent op-eds in newspapers across the country. He frequently argues appellate cases, including in the United States Supreme Court.

In 2016, he was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In January 2017, National Jurist magazine again named Dean Chemerinsky the most influential person in legal education in the United States.

Education

B.S., Northwestern University (1975)

J.D., Harvard Law School (1978)



Food Production and Greenhouse Gases: Counting Carb Emissions

Featured Speaker, Chris Field, Tuesday, March 6, Noon - 1 pm, at the PCC

Continued from front page

Chris Field's presentation focuses on how food production impacts greenhouse gas emission levels with the resulting climate change consequences. This topic has increased significance to League members in California, now that part of Governor Brown's climate change initiative includes addressing the impact of food production.

For webinar attendance:

[Please RSVP and reserve your seat at the webinar.](#) Webinar spaces are limited, so please reserve early.

For in-person attendance:

Please RSVP at: lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or 650-903-0600.

Optional Lunch: In your rsvp please select from a vegetarian burrito or vegetarian bowl from Chipotle and indicate dairy or nondairy. Bring \$10 in cash or check, payable to the LWVPA. Submit questions in advance to: lwvpaoffice@gmail.com, Attn: Natural Resources Committee or come prepared to ask in person. Arrive early to check-in. Street and lot parking are available.

About Us: The [LWVC Climate Change Task Force](#) is dedicated to helping League members understand the consequences of Climate Change, how the State's new policies align with the League's State and National positions and climate change actions members can take at the individual, local, county and state level. We are pleased to be supported in this work by the [LWV Palo Alto Natural Resources Committee](#).

More About Chris Field: [See Director Field's full bio.](#) [Stanford Woods Institute](#) is world renowned and comprised of over 148 fellows and affiliated faculty members from Stanford's business, earth sciences, education, engineering, humanities and sciences, law and medicine schools.

Webinar spaces are limited, so please be sure to reserve early. **Webinar registration will be open to members only until February 20** and then it will be open to the public as well.

Welcome, New Members!

Sumbul Ali-Karamali,
Hilary Glann, Victoria Thorp,
Deborah Whitman



We are so glad you have joined
the League.

The LWVPA Book Group will meet



Friday, March 26, at 10 am
to discuss:

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

The meeting will be at the home of Ursula Moore.

Visitors are welcome.

LWV

League of Women Voters of the United States
53RD NATIONAL CONVENTION

CREATING A
**MORE
PERFECT
DEMOCRACY**



June 28 – July 1, 2018
at Hilton Chicago
720 S. Michigan Ave.

Find out more at:
<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/countdown-convention-2018>

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, and Lynne Russell.**

Sue Hermsen, VOTER Editor



The next Luncheon meeting of the
LWVPA Education Committee (ECE)
will be held on Friday, March 16 at Diane
Rolfe's home—1360 Emerson Street, Palo Alto.
11:45 am – 1:00 pm. Lunch will be served.



*Diane Rolfe and Sigrid Pinsky
ECE Co-chairs*



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Facebook



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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>

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 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>

Tue, Feb 20, 7-9 pm What It Means to Be Black and American Palo Alto Art Center	Fri, Mar 26, 10 am Book Group Moore
Sat, Feb 24, 9 - 11 am Voter Services Planning Mtg. PCC	Tue, Mar 27, Noon - 1 pm Defining the Limits of Free Speech MidPed Media Ctr.
Tues, Feb 27, 7 pm Board Mtg. PCC	Tues, Mar 27, 7 pm Board Mtg. PCC
Tue, Mar 6, Noon - 1 pm Counting Carb Emissions PCC	Sat, May 12 LWVPA Annual Mtg. TBA
	Thu, Jun 28 - Sun, Jul 1 National Convention Chicago