

# The Palo Alto VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

May 2011

Vol. XXV  
No. IX



## 2011 Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 7, 2011 from 9am to noon

First Presbyterian Church

1140 Cowper Street, Palo Alto

*free parking available*

Featured Speaker:

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo

Featuring a Continental Breakfast Buffet

Coffee service provided by Peet's Coffee & Tea



9am: Sign-in & continental breakfast

9:20am: Welcome

9:30am: Speaker U. S. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo

10:10am: Honor Life Member

10:15am: Annual Meeting

12 noon: Adjourn

### Annual Meeting Reservations: Deadline is NOON, THURSDAY, MAY 5

There is no charge for members to attend the Annual Meeting.

Reservations are requested to help us determine the amount of food to purchase, and the room arrangement.

Please call the League office (327-9148) no later than May 5 leaving your name to reserve a spot.

If you prefer, mail this form to the office.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Palo Alto  
953 Industrial Ave. Suite 113  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

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*The League is a broadly based, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voters service, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

*The League welcomes articles. Please submit them to: [lwvpaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:lwvpaoffice@gmail.com). Deadline is the first Monday after the first Tuesday of each month.*

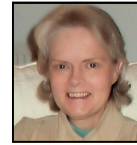


## President's Message

*It's the economy stupid*, is Clinton's message, which means the budget, which means money, which determines staffing. Nothing happens without staffing. And that is where we are with the Santa Clara County Redistricting Commission. Work to support the eleven volunteer commissioners is being absorbed by the appropriate departments, county manager, planning and attorney offices. There is no dedicated budget for the commission. The LWV Santa Clara Council thought we had a transparency issue. The staff report prior to meetings two and three were not on-line. They were not available for the public. We sent a letter expressing our concern. But the issue was not purely transparency. Prior to the meeting there was no staff report for anyone, including the Commissioners. The staff was so busy with other tasks that they did not have time to construct, in a timely manner, the maps that the commission needed. The commissioners were working unprepared. While the draft maps were available at the meeting, it takes no more time to prepare the maps three business days before the meeting than it does to make them the day of the meeting. There are, however, many demands with limited staffing. Money is more than tight. Is the redistricting process more important than housing people, or feeding people, or representing them in court? These are painful decisions we are making. When you receive this *VOTER*, the draft maps should be on the County website (<http://www.sccgov.org>) under *Hot item, NEW! Citizens Redistricting Commission*. I assure you that your League is watching to see that the draft maps and reports are available to all in a timely fashion.

Speaking of timely, call the office immediately to tell us that you are coming to the annual meeting. WE NEED YOU! And we need to have seats and continental breakfast ready for you.

See you Saturday, May 7, if not before! Phyllis Cassel ■



## April 2011 Board Summary

At its April meeting, your

board:

- approved the housing statement that Phyllis presented to the Planning and Transportation Commission on March 30
- discussed a variety of matters regarding the May 7 annual meeting, including
  - \* the nominating committee report
  - \* production of the meeting kit, including the treasurer's report, bylaws update, and recommended LWVPA Program items
  - \* food arrangements
  - \* a life membership
  - \* technical details
- agreed to make it possible to join LWVPA on the web site using PayPal
- considered several options and decided not to purchase a projector at this time.

The board also learned that:

- total LAT first-quarter donations received from members and non-members were \$7,248
- Betty Gerard did a great publicity job for both the March 22 Baylands meeting and the April 4 health care forum.

*Submitted by Ellen Forbes* ■

<b>LWV of Palo Alto: Officers, Directors, Chairpersons, (650) 327-9148</b>
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### OFFICERS

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[president@lwvpaloalto.org](mailto:president@lwvpaloalto.org)

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Vacant

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*The VOTER is online at [www.lwvpaloalto.org](http://www.lwvpaloalto.org)*

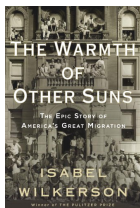


## World Affairs Council

Wednesday, May 4  
from 7-9pm

Los Altos Youth Center  
1 South San Antonio Rd.  
Los Altos

Jonathan Greenberg, Lecturer at Stanford Law School and Public Policy Program, will speak on *Geopolitics, Resources, Climate, and Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic*, a lecture sponsored by the Peninsula Branch of the World Affairs Council. Refreshments: 7pm; Program: 7:30 - 9pm. Free admission. For information, call Carol Stevens [\(650\) 404-0757](tel:6504040757). ■



## LWVPA Book Club

Friday, May 20  
from 10am to noon

Doris Petersen's home

Welcome to the LWVPA Book Club.

Our next selection is *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson—available in paperback. In this epic, beautifully written book, Wilkerson chronicles one of the great untold stories of the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities. From 1915 to 1970 this exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America. Wilkerson interviewed more than a thousand people, and gained access to previously untapped data and official records, to write this vividly dramatic account of how these American journeys unfolded, altering our cities, our country, and ourselves. The story is told through the lives of three individuals.

The author won the Pulitzer Prize in Journalism as Chicago Bureau chief at the New York Times.

JOIN US!

Submitted by Doris Petersen ■



## Call to Council

LWVBA Council

Saturday, May 21, 2011, 10am to noon pm  
San Francisco Main Library  
(at BART Civic Center station)

The Council shall be composed of the directors of the LWVBA and two delegates from each local League, other non-voting members may also attend at the per League cost.

The Council shall give guidance to the board on program, methods of operation and budget as submitted by the board. The Council will adopt a budget for the fiscal year.

Registration: \$10 per League (no extra charge for additional attendees.)

Payment MUST be made in advance: please send a \$10 check per League payable to LWVBA to: Christine Wise, 148 Best Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577. Please make reservations by Friday, May 13, 2011. ■



## Action

**Palo Alto Housing Element:** A representative of the LWV Palo Alto spoke at the Housing and Transportation Commission meeting on March 23. We thanked the Commission for making improvements that we had recommended previously, urged the inclusion of other items that we recommended and asked them to move more rapidly to conclude this long overdue housing element.

**Santa Clara County Redistricting Commission:** The commission determines the five new district boundaries for the Board of Supervisors. The County grew 5.9% from 2000 to 2010, proportionately more in south and west county than elsewhere. The median size of the new districts will be 356,328 persons. There can be no more than a 10% deviation from the smallest district to the largest. A 1% difference is only 3,563 persons. The current districts meet the population requirements. Other requirements are to keep communities of interest together and no gerrymandering. In Santa Clara County all cities are in one district except Sunnyvale at 140,000 persons and San Jose at 946,000. Sunnyvale, currently split between districts 5 and 3, is requesting to be placed in just one district. Two draft maps have been developed to comply with this request. Such a change will require major shifts in district boundary lines. A letter requesting more transparency in the process was sent by the LWVs Santa Clara County Council.

Submitted by Phyllis Cassel ■

# Highlights of the March 22, 2011 meeting

## Issues that determine Palo Alto Baylands' future

### Flood Control Issues in the Baylands Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer with the City of Palo Alto

Floodplains in the City of Palo Alto were first mapped by FEMA in 1980. The maps designate Special Flood Hazard Areas, which are subject to flooding in a 1% (100-year) flood event. There are currently 2100 Palo Alto properties subject to creek flooding, 1500 properties subject to tidal flooding, and 1200 subject to both flood risks.

One primary flooding source is our local creeks. Matadero, Barron, and Adobe Creeks have been channelized and improved by the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and they now have the capacity to contain the 100-year flood flows without overtopping. San Francisquito Creek, however, still remains a flood risk. The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (JPA), US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Water District are currently studying flood control alternatives for the creek. Construction of the first phase of flood control improvements downstream of Highway 101 is scheduled to commence in 2012.

San Francisco Bay is another flooding source affecting Palo Alto. Many of the eastern neighborhoods of Palo Alto are lower than the high tide level. A system of Bayfront levees keeps the Bay from inundating low-lying areas of the city during high tide, but it does not meet FEMA standards for height or stability. The risk of tidal flooding will increase in the future due to expected sea level rise. Experts predict sea level rise increases of 23-27 inches by 2070, and 40-55 inches by 2100. Currently, both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Water District are studying the tidal flooding issue. No specific levee improvement projects have been identified or scheduled at this time.

*Portions of Palo Alto are already below regular high tide levels, and the risk of tidal flooding will increase in the future due to global warming and associated sea level rise.*



Byxbee Park Pole Field

*The City plans to take control of the airport before the end of the lease in 2017 because the County has not been maintaining it, but has been milking it for revenue to pay for other airports.*

### Palo Alto Airport Ownership Steve Emslie, Deputy City Manager

In 1954, the airport moved to its present location in the Baylands. In 1962, the city entered into a 55-year contract with Santa Clara County, under which the county would operate the airport.

Presently, 500 airplanes are based in Palo Alto, a high number for its size.

A Citizens Task Force looked into the city operating the airport and decided that it was feasible and the Council concurred. The Business Plan was completed last year and found that the airport could be a money maker. Even though this is a highly desired area, the airport is aging and requires improvements.

There are incentives to take control of the airport before 2017. The County has not been maintaining the airport, but has been milking revenue from the airport to pay for other airports in the county. For example, the county charges a fuel tax of \$0.20 a gallon. Compare that to \$0.05 that the county taxes gasoline for your car.

The city has little choice in keeping the airport open. The city accepted a grant from the FAA to upgrade the airport under the condition that the airport remain for 20 years.

### Wastewater Long Range Facilities Planning Brad Eggleston, Manager, Environmental Control Programs

*The Plant, which was built in 1970, is the largest energy user in the city.*

The Master Plan is a two-year process to overhaul the Plant beginning September 2010. It has a 50-year time horizon. The end result will be a facilities plan of how and when to replace aging equipment and to minimize energy usage. Presently, the Plant, which was built in 1970, is the largest energy user in the city.

Baylands continued on page 5

Key Issues of Wastewater Master Plan Consideration

- **Biosolids**- The incinerator is close to the end of its useful life. The resulting ash from the incinerator is trucked to a landfill in the Central Valley. The best choice for replacement is a wet anaerobic digester. One future pathway to generate energy may be to combine food waste with biosolids.
- **Recycled water** – Leaky sewer lines increase the salinity of recycled water. This needs a solution. Presently recycled water is limited to the golf course and the Baylands in Mountain View, areas which are tolerant of salt.
- **Nutrient removal** - Nutrients are going to the Bay. Because of the problems this creates, such as algae growth, nitrogen may need to be removed.
- **Energy use** – This needs to be reduced.
- **Pharmaceuticals** are not completely removed by current treatment and pose a hazard to the environment.
- **Sea level rise** – This could impact the Plant’s out-fall. Could sea level rise cause effluent to flow back into the Treatment Plant?

**Dry Anaerobic Digestion**  
**Peter Drekmeier,**  
**former Mayor of the City of Palo Alto**

*The Final Analysis of this plan to compost yard trimming, food wastes, and biosolids is expected in June 2011.*

The present composting operation will cease in 2012 and compost will be sent 54 miles to Kettleman City. This amounts to 21,000 tons trucked a year. A Blue Ribbon Com-

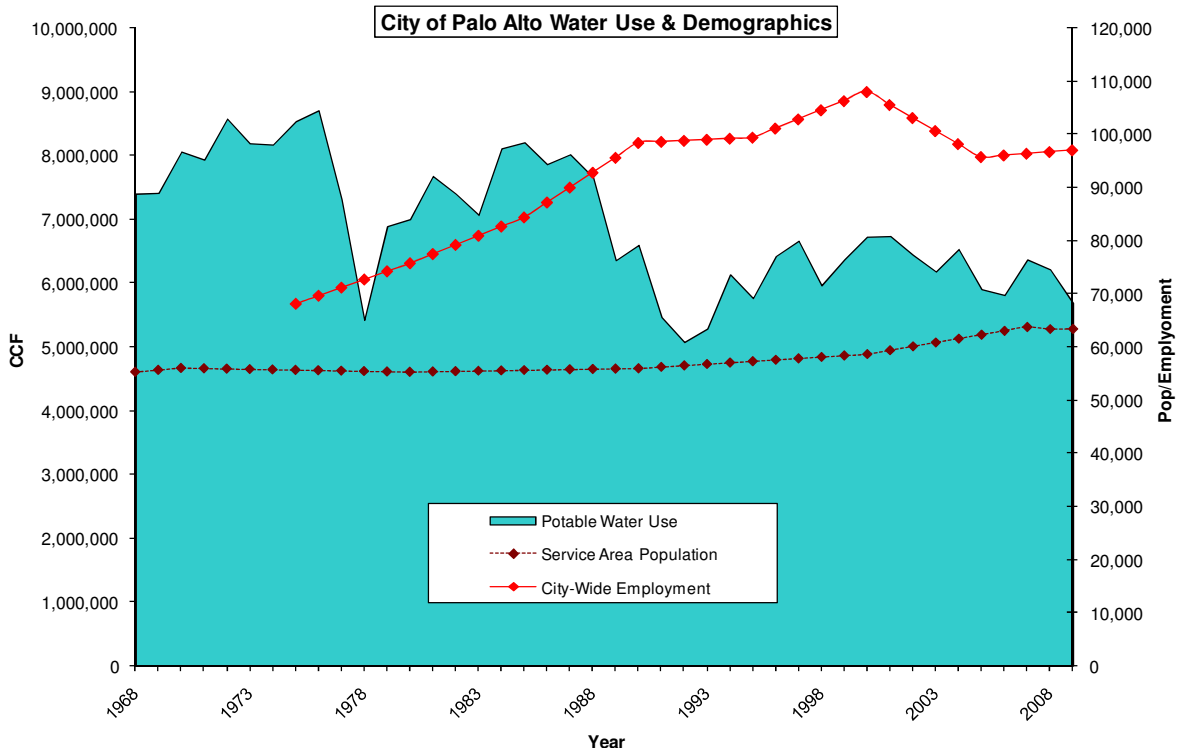
posting Task Force established by the City recommended a dry anaerobic digester as a more environmentally sound solution. The City commissioned a study and the Preliminary Analysis was released on March 21, 2011.

One plan is to generate energy from food wastes and biosolids with an anaerobic digester at the Water Treatment Plant, then send the treated wastes along with yard trimmings to the dry anaerobic digester. The Final Analysis is expected in June 2011.

## Palo Alto Water Management Plan

Water consumption has decreased in Palo Alto over the last 20 years, despite the increase in employment and population. Even though there’s no drought in the foreseeable future, water rates may go up to help for pay the \$4.6 billion Water System Improvement Program to *Hetch Hetchy's* aging infrastructure and other projects.

Water graph compiled by Catherine Elvert, City of Palo Alto



# Thank You for Your Help

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto gratefully acknowledges the contributions made this year by the greater community and by our members who gave help in many ways in addition to their dues. Without your support, we couldn't carry out our mission of voter education and position advocacy. Note that names are listed alphabetically according to last name.

**Community Donors-** Dr. Edwin & Mrs. Sylvia L. Alderman \* Dorothy & Ted Anderson \* Suzanne Antink \* Ed & Margaret Arnold \* Dr. & Mrs. William Aronson \* Ray & Carol Bacchetti \* Natalicia Basch \* Nancy & John Baum \* Eileen Baylor \* Leon & Margaret Beeler \* Rachel W. Bell \* Frank Benest \* Barbara Bennigson \* Edward Berkowitz \* Mark & Susan Bertelsen \* Ann Beyer \* Lissy Bland \* Mary Brayton \* Carolyn Brennan \* Richard & Marjorie Brody \* Janet Brown \* Jeannette Brown \* Marcie & Chet Brown \* Sallie Brown \* Phyllis Browning \* Arthur & Helen Bryson \* Marilyn & Kenneth Campbell \* Paul & Mary Carlson \* Susan Chamberlain \* Alice Chetkovich \* George & Ruth Chippendale \* N.A. & Ellen Christensen Jr. \* Katherine Clancy \* Nancy Clark \* Marybelle Cody \* Susan Cole & Mike Forster \* Yogen & Margaret Dalal \* Carolyn & Gordon Davidson \* John & Sandra Dhuey \* Cindy & Dennis Dillon \* Ken & Sue Dinwiddie \* Eugene & Mabel Dong \* Sandy Dornbusch \* Peter Drekmeier \* Rudy & Betty Dyck \* David Easton \* Shirley Ely \* Charlotte & David Epstein \* Gary Fazzino \* Don & Margaret Ann Fidler \* Gertrude Franklin \* Dr. Joel & Mrs. Carol Friedman \* Victor Fuchs \* Paul & Jean Garrett \* Mrs. Janet Germane \* Valerie & Peter Glassford \* Haskell Goodman \* Doug Graham \* Mrs. Alice Green \* Herb & Norma Grench \* Mary Ann Grilli \* Barbara & Michael Gross \* John & Cynthia Gunn \* Janet & Michael Gusman \* Anne B. Hambly \* Mary Louise Hanley \* Patricia Hanley \* Barbara Hastorf \* Susan E. Haviland \* Kathryn Dunlevie Hayes \* Walt & Kay Hays \* Clifton Herndon \* Linda Higgins \* Connie Hillis \* Leannah Hunt \* Catherine H. Johnson \* Judith Lin Kay \* Grace Kietzmann \* Patricia Kinney \* Robert & Edith Kirkwood \* Howard & Wendy Kleckner \* Larry Klein \* Naphtali Knox \* Debbie & Roger Kohler \* Iris Korol \* Margaret Kosek \* Norman & Nina Kulgein \* Keith & Mary Ann Kvenvolden \* Cecil & Anne Lamb \* Harvey & Rose Lash \* Dr. Herbert Leiderman \* Dr. P. Herbert Leiderman \* Stanley Lenox \* Rachel Levy \* Leland Levy & Judy Huey \* Winnie & Henry Lew \* Carol & Lee Lippert \* Suzanne Little \* Janet McClure Lyman \* Louise Lyman \* Mr. & Mrs. Richard G. Mansfield \* Andre & Linda Marion \* Leona McCabe \* Margaret McKee \* Carolyn Melena \* David & Carolyn Mitchell \* Dena Mossar & Paul Goldstein \* Patricia Mulvey \* Bryan & Jean Myers \* Sally Nordlund \* Judith Ousterhout \* Dr. Freya Owen \* Catherine Peck \* Ms. Mary-Jean Place \* Stephen Player \* Gail Price \* Annette & Frank Rahn \* Hope Raymond \* Mr. David Redfield \* Bill Reller \* Eleanor Rhoades \* Deborah Rosenberg \* Susan Rosenberg \* Harry & Carol Saal \* Ferrell & Page Sanders \* Barbara Sanner & David Moor \* Minako Sano \* Marjorie Saunders \* Arlene Schaupp \* Clarke & June Schiller \* Andrea & Harvey Schloss \* Peggy Shapera \* Nancy Shepherd \* Judy Shilstone \* Jeffrey Shore \* Joe Simitian \* Peggy Smith \* Josephine Spitzer \* St. Thomas Aquinas Parish \* Barbara Stark \* Bonnie Stein \* Heidi Stein \* Isaac & Madeline Stein \* Robert Steinberg & Alice Erber \* Philip & Cherie Stephens \* Barbara Stevens \* Suzan Stewart \* Jim & Valerie Stinger \* William & Marilyn Stocker \* Jean M. Thompson \* Paul Titterton \* Yoshiko Togashi \* Dana Tom \* Margaret K. & John W. Toor \* Dr. David & Lynn Torin \* Louise & Luis Valente \* Darlene Vian \* Annabelle Walker \* Mrs. Isabel M. Walker \* Sylvia & Donald Way \* Mimi Webb \* Susan & Lewis Wexler \* Jackie Wheeler \* Elizabeth Wolf \* Allen & Mary Lu Wood \* Gail C. Woolley \* Ellen & Thomas Wyman \* Mrs. Caroline Zlotnick \* Mary Lou & Mark David Zoback

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# THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following people for making the assembly and delivery of the April *VOTER* possible:

**Barbara Bowden, Janet Creelman, Jean Colby, Mary Ann Michel, Mary Cooper, Patty Peck, Georgina Bailie & Mitzi Henderson, organizer.**  
Thank you **Sally Probst** and **James G. Moore** for proofreading the *VOTER*. ■

## History of the Palo Alto Landfill Emily Renzel, Former City Councilmember

A few points covered by this interesting history include that land-filling in the Baylands formally started in the 1930s and the land-fill was dedicated as parkland in 1965. It was intended to be closed in 1968. The development of a Baylands Master Plan, the need for alternative solid waste disposal sites and successful diversion of solid waste resulted in a series of closure delays. To add more waste the height was increased, valleys filled. Phase I of Byxbee Park opened in 1991. The Sunnyvale Smart station opened in 1992 to receive curbside waste. Phase IIa and IIb of Byxbee park should open this year and Phase IIc the active land fill should close in 2012.

*Submitted by Karen Sundback & Phyllis Cassel* ■

## WELCOME

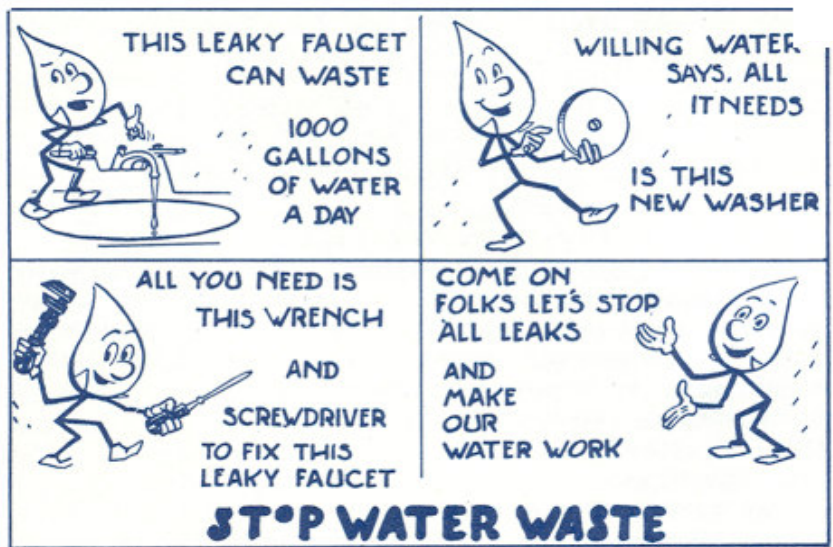
**Nancy Krop**

We are delighted to have you as a member. ■

## Take a Sneak Peek

Want to see the June/July *VOTER* before you receive it in the mail? The June/July *VOTER* will be posted online at <http://lwvpaloalto.org/VOTER.html> (click on "current issue") by **Monday, May 30.** ■

**Yes, we have had a lot of rain  
but we still need to SAVE WATER!**



The League of Women Voters, born out of suffrage, now educates and advocates. Anyone of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

It's easy to join the LWV —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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_ e:mail \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership: \$70.00 Additional membership, same address: \$35.00  
Mail check to LWV, 953 Industrial Ave., Suite 113, Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Membership dues to the LWV are not tax deductible.

Men are encouraged to join.  
Dues grants are available.  
For information, call  
Membership Chair  
(650) 327-9148

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**CALENDAR** is constantly updated at  
<http://lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html>

**May**

- 3 Tue** 7:15pm. Board Meeting, Phyllis Cassel
- 7 Sat** Annual meeting & brunch. See page 1.
- 9 Mon** Noon. VOTER deadline.
- 13 - 15** LWVC State Convention.
- 21 Sat** 10am-noon. Bay Area Council. See page 3.
- 27 Fri** 9am. VOTER mailing, Channing House

**June**

- 7 Tue** 7:15pm. Joint Board Meeting, Doris Petersen
- 13 Mon** Noon. VOTER deadline.
- 24 Fri** 9am. VOTER mailing, Channing House

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- Supervisor Liz Kniss** .....(650) 965-8737  
Send e-mail -[liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org)

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