



Vol. XXXIII No. II

September, 2016

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

www.lwvpaloalto.org

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
is pleased to announce



**Stanford Law
Professor
John J. Donohue**

**will kick-off our 2016-2017
Lecture Series**

This November, Californians will vote on two propositions regarding

The Death Penalty

Join us to hear Professor Donohue speak on these propositions.

Proposition 62 calls for repealing the death penalty in the State of California.

Proposition 66 calls for changing the procedures that govern state court appeals as well as petitions challenging death penalty convictions and sentences.

Wednesday

September 14

7:00 pm

Stanford Law School, 559 Nathan Abbot Way, Stanford
Parking at Structure 6 (Under Wilbur Field)

RSVP: lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or (650) 903-0600

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Upcoming Pros & Cons of Ballot Measures

Sunday, September 25, 3 pm
Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills

Saturday, October 8, 2 pm
Rinconada Library

Friday, October 14, 4 pm
Avenidas, Palo Alto

Thursday, October 20, 7 pm
Channing House

Upcoming Candidates Forums

Thursday, September 22, 7 - 9 pm
Palo Alto School Board
25 Churchill, Palo Alto

Wednesday, October 5, 7 - 9:30 pm
Palo Alto City Council
Mitchell Park Community Center

*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

As I enter the third month of being your president, I am being constantly amazed by the breadth and depth of the League of Women Voters – at all levels.



National: We are thankful for the hard work of LWVUS and others in ensuring that the voting rights of **ALL** of our citizens are upheld despite the U.S. Supreme Court’s devastating decision in *Shelby County vs. Holder* that gutted critical provisions of the Voting Rights Act. But as LWVUS notes in a blog at <http://lww.org/blog/voting-rights-act-marks-51st-anniversary>, this can be remedied by the Voting Rights Advancement Act, co-sponsored by our Congresswoman, Anna Eshoo. Be sure to let her know you support it and tell your friends and family in other jurisdictions to urge their representatives to support it also.

State: We are proud of LWVC which is able to take a position on **11 out of the 17 state measures** on this November’s Ballot! (See page 4) This is possible due to many years of study and consensus building by California Leagues allowing us to develop positions on such a wide range of issues.

Local and County: We applaud our local and county Leagues which also **advocate tirelessly** on a wide range of issues from the environment to early childhood education, from transportation to housing, from gun control to juvenile justice.

Most of all, I am impressed by the individuals who serve on our board and off-board. The breadth and depth of each of you was exemplified in our fulfilling **retreat** on July 23, excellently facilitated by **Nancy Shepherd**. We explored our core values, with trust and integrity receiving top votes. We examined how we operate as teams to ensure we will continue to effectively communicate and cooperate with each other. We do all this to re-invent a more nimble and more responsive League for keeping Democracy alive and healthy.”



LWVPA board and off-board members enjoying a game exploring core values at the retreat on July 23.

Last, but certainly not least, a huge, huge thank you to the many super dedicated **Voter Services team members** who are busy organizing various Voter Registration events; working incredibly hard to prepare, schedule and coordinate Pros and Cons presentations on the 17 state and 2 county ballot measures; and arranging, moderating and video recording City Council and PAUSD board candidates forums.

I hope you are as proud as I am to be a part of the League.

Bonnie Packer

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

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Voter’s Edge

Nominating Committee
Mila Zelhka, Chair
Lynn Drake
Ellen Springer
Lynne Russell

Board Summary, July 26 , 2016

Your Board:

- Ratified the EAC action, approving a letter to the Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission on proposed changes to housing impact fees for affordable housing.
- Approved changes to the LWVPA bylaws to allow all persons 16 years of age and older to be voting members of the League. These new rules were approved at the LWVUS convention in June.
- Appointed Thornton, Taft and Levy to the Budget Committee to be chaired by Valerie Stinger.
- Appointed Russell to the Nominating Committee.



Heard that:

- County Council has endorsed two County measures on the November ballot: (a) a sales tax increase for various transit and transportation improvements and (b) a \$940M bond measure for affordable housing
- a committee has been formed to look into a possible Palo Alto gun control measure, perhaps modeled on the one in Sunnyvale.

Learned that the Communications Committee is:

- exploring different avenues of external communication: Facebook, Twitter, e-blasts, newsletters, etc., and
- developing ways to improve our internal communications.

Was updated by the activities of the Voter Service Team which is busily:

- setting up candidates forums for City Council and PAUSD;
- preparing and scheduling Pros and Cons presentations; and
- organizing three Voter Registration Activities: two at the naturalization ceremonies in Campbell and one at the VA Hospital. The latter will be on September 27, National Voter Registration Day.

The board also discussed:

- some different fundraising approaches to potential donors;
- various ideas for future programs for the public;
- possible Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities, and
- the creation of a board development or governance committee which would include the efforts of the nominating committee.



Housing and Transportation Committee

In July the LWVPA Housing/Transportation committee grappled with the issue of housing impact fees. The City is proposing raising these significantly as well as possibly applying them to some forms of housing development. With our advice, the Board sent a letter affirming the city's need for much more affordable housing, including not only for low income residents but also for those in the middle class who can no longer afford to live here. The fees should not (even unintentionally) discourage the building of middle class housing and probably should not all be used directly for units, since transferring the money to a fund can multiply the dollars by leveraging tax credit investment. This is a very complex topic, so stay tuned for updates as we all learn more.

Jeffrey Rensch

John J. Donohue to speak at LWVPA Fall Kickoff

LWVPA is pleased to have John J. Donohue as our speaker at the **Fall Kickoff on September 14**. John J. Donohue III has been one of the leading empirical researchers in the legal academy over the past 25 years. He is an economist as well as a lawyer and is well known for using empirical analysis to determine the impact of law and public policy in a wide range of areas, including civil rights and antidiscrimination law, employment discrimination, crime and criminal justice, and school funding. Professor Donohue previously was a member of the Stanford Law School faculty from 1995–2004. Before rejoining the faculty in 2010, Professor Donohue was the Leighton Homer Surbeck Professor of Law at Yale Law School. He recently co-authored *Employment Discrimination: Law and Theory* with George Rutherglen. <https://law.stanford.edu/directory/john-j-donohue-iii/>

Help Reform California Election Funding!



SB 1107 gives local governments the flexibility to fight big money in politics by publicly funding elections.

The LWVC asks you to tell your Assembly member to vote yes on SB 1107 to help restore public trust, and strengthen our representative democracy.

SB 1107 will remove a 28-year-old ban on public financing of campaigns, helping state and local governments level the playing field for those wishing to run for public office. This bill will support election innovation, including voluntary programs like those already in place in six California charter cities, but it does not require any government to offer public financing.

Act Now! Use the following LWVC link to contact your Assembly member. <https://www.congressweb.com/LWVofCA/2>



Advocacy Report by Lisa Ratner

Local

LWVPA commented on the **proposed Palo Alto housing impact fee** (\$60/sqft) for market level projects. We expressed concern that this high fee would discourage building in Palo Alto or cause builders to create a few below-market-rate (BMR) units instead of paying into the affordable housing fund, thus decreasing the money which would otherwise be available for affordable projects. http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/LWVPA_Advocacy.html The proposal was sent back to staff for further study. Our League, through the LWVSCC, also endorsed two measures on the Nov. ballot: the VTA transportation sales tax and the County Affordable Housing parcel tax.

State

Here in California, **LWVC is supporting AB 2466**, which would codify voting rights of those convicted of low-level nonviolent felonies serving time in county jails or living in communities under supervision. In 2011, the Secretary of State stripped these people of their voting rights, but in 2014, the LWVC won a court victory reaffirming their right to vote. AB 2466 would provide state-wide protection of the voting rights of this population.

National

Voting Rights Victories in North Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin.

The League of Women Voters North Carolina won an important victory when a federal appeals court found that the North Carolina legislature had deliberately targeted racial minorities when it passed laws which eliminated Sunday voting, preregistration, a week of early voting, same day registration, out-of-precinct voting, and imposed stringent voter ID requirements. A lower court had upheld the law in April, but the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, known to be conservative, disagreed and struck down the law on August 3. Federal appellate courts have also recently struck down voter suppression laws in Texas and Wisconsin.



VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 8!



The League of Women Voters of California has published recommendations on 11 of the propositions on the California ballot this November.

The League recommends:

YES on Prop 62 - abolishes the death penalty

NO on Prop 66 - shortens time to appeal death penalty

YES on Prop 63 - gun safety legislation which strengthens background checks; makes felons and domestic abusers give up guns after conviction; requires businesses and gun owners to report lost or stolen ammunition or guns; and bans people who have been convicted of gun theft from owning guns.

YES on Prop 51 - school bonds

YES on Prop 54 - legislative transparency

YES on Prop 55 - income tax on top 2%, to spend on education and other services

YES on Prop 57 - restores authority of judges, not prosecutors, to decide if juveniles as young as 14 should be tried in adult court

Yes on Prop 58 - repeals most restrictive parts of Prop. 227 which banned multilingual education 20 years ago

NO on Prop 59 - an advisory constitutional amendment which would overturn *Citizens United* (the LWVC position is that *Citizens United* should be repealed but not by a poorly worded constitutional amendment)

NO on Prop 65 - industry sponsored plastic bag legislation

YES on Prop 67 - retains state plastic bag ban

The League has no position on Prop 64 (legalization of marijuana).

Read about these positions online at:

<https://lwvc.org/sites/default/files/downloads/The%20League%20Recommends%20Flyer%202016.pdf>

More info at bit.ly/LWVCBallotRecs

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.

LWVC Announced New Position on Public Higher Education

After more than two years of preparation, study and consensus meetings, the League of Women Voters of California announced a broad position statement on public higher education in California. A 14-member statewide committee defined the scope, drew up an outline of the study, researched and wrote a 50-page Study Guide. Thirty-six local Leagues, after local study and research, held consensus meetings where they responded to 36 consensus questions and added many thoughtful comments. Our new position statement covers the six areas we studied and reflects more than 90% agreement among the participating members. It has been approved by the LWVC Board of Directors and is now ready for action!

Many thanks to our local study committee and members who participated in the consensus meeting.

Veronica Tincher,

*Chair, LWVPA Committee for Study of Public Higher Education in California
Member, LWVC Committee for Study of Public Higher Education in California*

Position in Brief: Public Higher Education in California

The League of Women Voters of California supports a comprehensive system of public higher education that serves the personal, professional, and occupational goals of all adult Californians and advances the social, economic, and civic needs of the state. To achieve these objectives, public higher education must prioritize access, affordability, equity, and excellence. These priorities require state funding, including student financial aid, that is stable, predictable, sustainable, and timely.

Details:

Purpose

1. Support a comprehensive system of public higher education that provides access to educational opportunities to advance both individual and public goals. Support measures that:
 - a. provide post-secondary opportunities for personal and professional growth;
 - b. sustain upward economic mobility across all population groups;
 - c. advance the economic and civic goals of local communities and the state;
 - d. provide and maintain a steady stream of educated Californians to ensure leadership from all sectors of society.

Equity

2. Support equitable access to public higher education and equitable rates of completion. Support measures that:
 - a. increase the diversity of enrollment and completion rates in the community colleges and public four-year universities to reflect the diversity of the state's population;
 - b. increase the initial freshman enrollment in public four-year universities of qualified California high school graduates from low income and underrepresented minority groups.
 - c. provide effective specialized services for those students (such as emancipated foster youth, veterans, disabled, homeless, incarcerated, first generation, and/or low income) who need additional

support to facilitate their successful certificate or degree completion.

Funding and Financial Aid

3. Support state funding for California public higher education and student financial aid. Support measures that:
 - a. ensure funding that meets the objectives of public higher education;
 - b. ensure funding that is stable, predictable, and timely;
 - c. ensure that the full cost of higher education attendance, including tuition, fees, food, housing, transportation, books or other educational materials, is affordable for all qualified students, regardless of their family's financial circumstances;
 - d. share the full cost of attendance in public higher education between government and students or their families based on ability to pay;
 - e. provide adequate funding for services for students with special circumstances, such as emancipated foster youth, veterans, disabled, homeless, incarcerated, first generation, and/or low-income students;
 - f. provide effective counseling to enable students and their families to plan and access financing for their college education;
 - g. develop additional revenue sources for public higher education as needed.

Preparedness

4. Support programs that foster coordination and articulation between pK-12 school districts and public higher education so that all high school graduates are prepared for college-level coursework and/or gainful employment. Support measures that:
 - a. expand opportunities for high school students to begin earning college credits in high school;
 - b. advise all students and their families about the wide range of career and college opportunities;
 - c. provide outreach to students from underrepresented communities, disadvantaged, low income, and first generation students while they are still in the pK-12 system to encourage and assist with college applications for admission and financial aid.

Continued on page 6

Position on Public Higher Education in California

Continued from page 5

Degree Completion

5. Support programs that increase attainment of certificates, and associate, baccalaureate, and professional degrees. Support measures that:
 - a. improve articulation among the three higher education sectors to construct curriculum pathways that enable students to transfer smoothly to four-year universities;
 - b. increase enrollment capacity at the four-year universities to serve more transfers and entering freshman;
 - c. utilize research-based models to increase baccalaureate degree attainment and coordination of the three higher education sectors;
 - d. support the implementation and evaluation of evidence-based improvements in curriculum, instruction and placement to enhance student success and degree attainment.

Workforce Development and Adult Education

6. Support access to credit, non-credit, and workforce training and development. Support measures that:
 - a. expand and increase completion of programs, including certificate programs, that fulfill labor

needs and enable people to be trained/retrained for meaningful jobs and careers ;

- b. provide credit and non-credit adult education courses with entry-level opportunities into post-secondary education, courses such as English as a Second Language, and/or support lifelong learning.

Improving California Public Higher Education

7. Support a comprehensive system of public higher education with viable access points for all adult Californians. Support measures that:
 - a. continue to prioritize the dual values of access and excellence that were embedded in the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education;
 - b. create a mechanism, such as an oversight body, to improve coordination and articulation among the three higher education sectors;
 - c. evaluate the functioning and efficacy of higher education as a system;
 - d. provide non-partisan analysis and recommendations for improvement;
 - e. develop a longitudinal student database to track enrollment, transfer and completion rates across all three higher education sectors and provide feedback to pK-12 schools;
 - f. expand the use of new technologies, such as online education, that increase student access and success.

Expanding Our Housing Toolkit

Sara Stephens + Cameron Rhudy
of the Sustainable Economies Law Center
(www.theselc.org)

**Wednesday,
September 7, 6-8 pm**

1001 Emerson Street (enter
on Addison)
Palo Alto, CA 94301



Soaring property values, displacement, and homelessness require new solutions to providing sustainable housing for every member of society. Join us for a presentation and conversation on how communities can expand their housing toolkit.

Alternatives to traditional affordable housing approaches can include community land trusts, real estate investment cooperatives and permanent real estate cooperatives, as well as creative ways to finance these projects. These alternatives can also ensure long-term affordability and empower residents by ensuring residents have democratic control over their land and housing. Examples of how cities can support these models of sustainable housing development will be provided.

RSVP: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/expanding-our-housing-toolkit-tickets-27040037480>

Co-sponsored by: Palo Alto Forward, League of Women Voters of Palo Alto, Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action (PICA), Transition Palo Alto

September Voter Registration Activities



Voter Registration at Mitchell Park
Saturday, Sep. 10 from 10 am to 2 pm
Sponsored by the City of Palo Alto and the Palo Alto Family YMCA

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY
Palo Alto Veterans Hospital
Tuesday, Sep. 27 from 10 am to 2 pm

Contact Liza Taft for more info.

Gladys "Laddie" Hughes Remembered

Gladys "Laddie" Hughes, a 40-year member of the LWVPA, died on July 17. Active in local and national politics, Laddie joined our League in 1975. Alice Smith remembers her as a thoughtful, conservative person. She came to many voter service events, particularly to the election events. In 1978, Laddie became the first female candidate for California's 10th State Senate district seat. She served as Palo Alto representative to the United Nations' Decade for Women in Copenhagen in 1981. A celebration of Laddie's life will be held in the University Room at the Vi at Palo Alto on Saturday, August 27 at 2:00 pm.

Welcome, New Members!

Coreen Collins, Lina Crane,
Ani Gnanalingam,
Isha Gupta,
Sally Ann Reiss,
Katie Russell



We are so glad you
have joined the
League.

Renew Your Membership

Watch for your **membership renewal letter** in the mail this month. When you receive yours, please return it at your earliest convenience.

Megan and Lynne



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

Visit us on Facebook!

[League-of-Women-Voters-of-Palo-Alto](https://www.facebook.com/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Palo-Alto) - "Like us" and share with your friends. Help spread the word. Thanks!



2016 Membership Directory

If you would like a copy of the LWVPA membership directory mailed to you, contact Lynne Russell at lynnerrussell1@gmail.com or call 650-303-1505.

The LWVPA Book Group
will meet

Friday, September 30, at 10 am

to discuss:

**Give Us the Ballot: The Modern
Struggle for Voting Rights
for America**

by Ari Berman



The meeting will be at the home of Ursula Moore.
Visitors are welcome.



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: \$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>

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

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How to contact your elected officials:

UNITED STATES

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

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

Senator Barbara Boxer (415) 403-0100
<http://www.boxer.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 Rich Gordon (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, 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 Theatre, Campbell
Thu, Aug 25, 10:30-11:30 am and 1:30-2:30 pm Naturalization Ceremonies Heritage Theatre, Campbell	Thu, Sep 22, 7 - 9 pm Candidates Forum Palo Alto School Board 25 Churchill, Palo Alto
Tue, Aug 30, 7-9:30 pm Board Mtg PCC, Raptor Room	Sun, Sep 25, 3 pm Ballot Measure Pros & Cons Cong. Beth Am, Los Altos Hills
Wed, Sep 7, 6 - 8 pm Housing Presentation 1001 Emerson, Palo Alto	Tue, Sep 27, 10 am-2 pm Nat'l Voter Reg. Day Veterans Hospital Palo Alto
Wed, Sep 7 VOTER Deadline	Tue, Sep 27, 7-9:30 pm Board Mtg PCC, Raptor Room
Sat, Sep 10, 10-2 pm Voter Registration Mitchell Park	Fri, Sep 30, 10 am Book Club Moore
Wed, Sep 14, 7 pm Fall Kick-off Stanford Law School	