



# The Sacramento Voter

February 2016



## Presidents Message

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Happy New Year. 2016 is an election year and therefore the Sacramento League of Women Voters will be busy registering voters, getting the word out about online registration, educating voters on the pros and cons of what looks to be many ballot measures and providing voters the opportunity to meet and question the candidates for mayor and other contests at our forums during the primary and general elections. The State League will be taking positions on some of the ballot measures so we can also help advocate for those positions in the coming year. If you can help with any of these voter service activities, especially registering voters in low turnout areas of our city and county, please contact Voter Service Director Louise Einsphar. Members can participate in a number of ways all year.

### It is an interesting time to be a member of the LWV

- We have completed the LWVUS constitutional amendment study and units will finish the review of our LWVUS campaign finance position and complete the Money in Politics consensus this month.
- Our higher education study committee is planning a great public forum and general meeting on the topic of affordability and accessibility.
- Our work on ethics, transparency and redistricting reform continues with draft language coming to the City Council Law and Leg committee in January and February. You can join us in advocating for implementation of these reforms by speaking at a council meeting or contacting your councilmember, etc.

• In January and February “Program Planning” members plan our local focus for the upcoming LWV year June 2016-June 2017, and make recommendations for the LWVUS program that will be decided by delegates to the LWVUS June convention.

One of the very nice things about being a League member is that you can be involved in any number of issues and raise issues for study or action yourself OR you can be a member that supports our education and advocacy efforts at the national, state and local level by your continued membership. Thanks for your continued support of the many varied ways we are all helping "Make Democracy Work" better at all levels of government. Paula and Nancy

## EVENTS

Monday-Tuesday, February 8 &9, 2016. Unit meetings on Program Planning, Page 3-4

Monday, February 8, 2016. Board Meeting. Ginger Star Restaurant, Corner of Alhambra & Folsom Blvd.

Saturday, March 5, 2016, 10:00 a.m.-noon. New members and 50 year members get together at Wellspring.

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Saturday, March 19, 2016, 9:30 a.m.—noon. Forum on Higher Education. Page 5

2015-2016

**Board of Directors****League of Women Voters  
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**High School Voter Registration**

This spring LWVSC will join the Sacramento County Registrar of Voters' Mock Elections program. As in past years the League will handle the voter registration of students during the time that the mock elections are being held. Specific dates have yet to be set, but mock elections will take place in April and early May, 2016 at up to eight different high schools in the County. Mock elections use a simulated roster of voters, parts of the actual ballot, and the booths and voting scanners used by the County. Usually government and economics classes participate in the elections during class time. On occasion, the entire school is invited to vote.

The League's role is to be present to register students and sometimes teachers and staff. Usually one or two League volunteers are needed to be present throughout the school day. League members distribute registration forms, answer questions, and check to make sure the correct information is filled in. Essentially the tasks are the same as at any voter registration effort.

Join LWVSC in registering high school students at Mock Elections. **Please consider volunteering your time.** There is nothing more rewarding than encouraging students to become informed and active citizens and modeling the actual process. The younger they start the more they will realize the importance of voting. Contact Carol Moon Goldberg at [Moonberg@msn.com](mailto:Moonberg@msn.com) for more information or to be placed on a list of potential volunteers. More information will be conveyed as it becomes available. By Carol Moon Goldberg

**2016 Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) High School Senior Essay Scholarship Contest**

High school seniors are invited to participate in the 2016 High School Scholarship Essay Contest for students from Sacramento and surrounding counties.

March 13, 2016 is the deadline for entering the contest. Ten finalists will be contacted on April 10, 2016. The winners will be selected by a panel of judges and will receive up to \$15,000 in scholarships that will be presented at the Annual PSR Essay Scholarship Contest dinner on May 1.

League members are invited to save the date and plan to sit at the League tables at the May 1st dinner.

League members are also invited to share this information with interested high school seniors looking for scholarship opportunities.

Contest details and rules are available on the PSR website <http://www.sacpsr.org/essay-contest/> By B. Hopkins

## February Unit Meetings

The subject of the February League of Women Voters Sacramento County unit meetings is Program Planning at the National and Local levels. League members from the Board and others will attend the units in order to facilitate. Response forms should be returned to B. Lee promptly.

Unit	Date & Time	Contact	Location
Mid-City	Monday February 8, 6:15 p.m.	Eileen Heaser 456-2154	449 San Miguel Way, Sacramento, 95819
Morning Suburban	Tuesday February 9, 9:15 a.m.	Anne Berner Helen Shryock 944-1042 & 944-2274	2426 Garfield Ave. Carmichael 95608
Greenhaven/ Land Park	Tuesday February 9, 10:00 a.m.	Mary Hopkins 422-6958	45 Sunlit Circle Sacramento 95831
Elk Grove	Tuesday February 9, 1:00 p.m.	Bill & Elaine Lee 688-5360	8622 Shasta Lily Drive Elk Grove 95624

Contact [Bill Lee](mailto:Bill Lee), Unit coordinator, 916-688-5360, [units@lwvsacramento.org](mailto:units@lwvsacramento.org) OR [oogie2lee@comcast.net](mailto:oogie2lee@comcast.net) if you are unable to attend the Unit meetings but would like to receive emails of the Unit discussion materials,

National Program Planning documents and *Form*.

[\*Elisabeth MacNamara's Letter of December 2015\*](#)

[\*Planning LWVUS Program for 2016-2018\*](#)

[\*Guide to LWVUS Program Planning 2016-18\*](#)

[\*Article XII Principles and Program, LWVUS Bylaws\*](#)

[\*LWVUS Summary of Public Policy Positions\*](#)

[\*Response Form\*](#)

Review the LWVUS Public Policy Positions, see summary link above. You should consider whether a position should be retained, rejected, or subject to further study. The full public policy positions are available for review and download on the League's web site [www.LWV.org](http://www.LWV.org), title: *Impact on Issues*, 86 pages. The League uses its positions to advocate at the national, state, and local levels. The League is also placing a greater emphasis and concentration of resources on advocacy and is in fact recommending the members' acceptance of Making Democracy Work as the program for focus for the 2016-2018 biennium.

### Unit members should answer the questions on the League Response Form

1. Do you support the proposed program focus, Making Democracy Work, for the 2016-2018 biennium? (Yes/No)?
2. Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of Making Democracy Work? (Yes/No) If yes, please provide a statement of 300 words or less describing the scope of your proposal, including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission and resources that would be required.
3. What LWVUS positions does your League use to take action at the state and local level?

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Cont. from page 3

4. Do you support the proposed program focus, Making Democracy Work, for the 2016-2018 biennium? (Yes/No)?

**Local Program Planning for the League of Women Voters of Sacramento County**

Members should review these document.

[Positions of the Sacramento County League of Women Voters](#)

[Position on Homelessness](#)

**Looking forward to the Annual Meeting**

Please review our local positions and areas of emphasis and decide whether the membership should retain, update study, add or delete our current local positions and issues for emphasis. Anyone wishing to add or study a position should be willing to chair the study and support its presentation for membership consideration at the Annual meeting.

The following issues for Education and Emphasis and Advocacy were adopted for 2015-2016: 1-Sacramento, transparency and redistricting reform 2-Voter apathy 3-Homelessness 4- Climate Change

by B. Lee.

**Grantland Johnson Hunger and Homelessness Awards**

In December the first Grantland Johnson Hunger & Homelessness Awards were hosted by Assembly member Kevin McCarty in partnership with Congresswoman Doris Matsui, State Senator Richard Pan, Sacramento Hunger Coalition, Sacramento Housing Alliance, and Slow Food Sacramento. G. Johnson was born in Del Paso Heights and raised by his grandmother. He went on to become a Sacramento City Councilmember and County Supervisor, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, and Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency. Sadly he passed away too young in 2014.

The winners of these awards are:

- Rabbi David Wechsler-Azen for launching the Fresh Producers program.
- Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services for their long time of community service.
- Ron Javor for his financing and building-up many local organizations.
- Francis House for providing 45 years of resources and advocacy for homeless people.
- Bill Maynard for over 25 years of devotion to hunger relief through community gardening.
- The late Dan Delany, co-founder of Loaves and Fishes, with his wife Chris. By Rick Bettis

**Welcome New Members**

- Cynthia Bridges**
- Gail Fox**
- Michael Valle**

## **Higher Education in California: A Continuing Challenge**

Many of us can remember when California's public universities were the envy of the nation, in terms of both quality and affordability. Under the State Master Plan, signed into law in 1960 when many of us were still in high school, the top 12.5% of graduating high school students were guaranteed entry into the well-respected UC system, and the CSU system was open to the top third. Community colleges, at that time called junior colleges, accepted all applicants, including adults.

This plan was responsible for the enormous expansion of higher education in California, and led to the emergence of world-renowned institutions of higher learning, like Berkeley and UCLA.

That was then. Now, fifty-six years later, this plan is nearly unrecognizable. Declining state support has forced the UC system to slash costs and raise tuition by 50% in three years, and CSU fees have risen 47% during the same time frame. Tens of thousands of this year's UC applicants received rejection letters. Even CSU campuses routinely reject qualified applicants.

An in-depth report, "From Master Plan to Mediocrity," identified broad policy areas that have interacted to prevent California from keeping many of the commitments enshrined in the Master Plan. These include:

- Absence of any long-term strategic finance policies to address the needs for California in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- Lack of effective educational transitions for students from high school to post-secondary education, and from two-year to four-year institutions.

From a student perspective, the challenges are many- from financial distress to lack of preparedness. Graduating in four years is no longer the norm, and shouldering crushing student debt hinders financial stability, both during their college years and after graduation. Adding to this are changing demographics, lack of access due to insufficient information and guidance, our state's mounting skills gap, equity, and opportunities/barriers to success.

LWVSC has created a study team to further investigate this issue so critical to our future. As a component of our study, we have invited respected educators to participate on a forum panel.

**Date:** *Saturday, March 19, 2016*  
**Time:** *9:30 a.m. to approximately noon*  
**Location:** *Aviator's Restaurant located at Sacramento's Executive Airport on Freeport Boulevard in South Sacramento*

A buffet breakfast will be available for those who wish to enjoy this option.

One of our esteemed panelists will be Dr. Robert Nelsen, newly appointed President of California State University, Sacramento. Dr. Nelsen has a fascinating resume and his input is most welcome. He will be joined by three additional educators from our higher education system for what promises to be a lively and informative morning. Please join your LWVSC colleagues for this illuminating opportunity to learn more about the status of higher education in California and to be part of the conversation as we develop a position on this important resource for our future.

By. N. Compton

## **Children's Advocates Roundtable**

The November Children's Advocates Roundtable focused on bills signed into law by the Governor which impact California's children.

In the Foster Care field, several successful bills addressed the use of psychotropic medications for foster children. Of special significance to foster care is AB 403 (Stone) on Continuum of Care Reform, which will further the goal of minimizing the use of group homes for foster youth, while placing more such children in family settings.

It was a good year for children in terms of health. Health coverage will become available for over 170,000 undocumented children through Medi-Cal in 2016. The final step would be to provide universal children's health coverage. There are 160,000 children who are eligible for health care, but not enrolled.

Childhood poverty remains a concern. California has the highest child poverty rate in the nation. One in four children live in poverty and one in three black or Latino children live in poverty.

At the January 2016 meeting, Gov. Browns' new budget was reviewed. State revenues are up by \$5.9 billion. Education, at \$71.6 billion, is up 51% over the last 5 years and many schools are reducing class size. By Barbara Carr

## **Paris Climate Change Summit-COP 21**

Larry Greene, Executive Director of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District and attendee at the "Climate Change Summit", recently gave a debriefing to Sacramento advocates on the United Nations' Paris Climate Change Conference. He represented the California Air Pollution control Officers Association at the Summit.

He emphasized the scale of this conference that was attended by more than 15,000 from 195 nations at a huge complex outside Paris. Attendees included national heads of state and international organizations, diplomats, business leaders, technical experts, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, humanitarian and other nonprofit organizations. The advanced technology exhibits and translation headphones at all venues characterized the Summit.

The final agreement signed by all the nations on December 12, 2015 is a 32 page detailed document that includes:

- Limiting global temperature rise to 2 degrees Centigrade this century by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- A target of limiting the rises to 1.5 degrees C. This stronger goal was the result of advocacy from nations that are already experiencing dangerous impacts of climate change such as melting glaciers, sea level rise, ocean acidification, weather extremes (drought and flooding), and wildfires
- Technical and financial support for developing nations
- Transparency and a global accounting and reporting system for emissions and actions
- Strengthening nations' ability to adapt to climate impacts
- Stronger ability to recover from climate impacts.

All countries must submit national climate action plans that clearly demonstrate how they will meet the goals of the agreement.

Meeting the goals of this agreement will require much stronger actions than those currently planned. Currently planned mitigation actions will result in an estimated 2.7 to 3 degrees C temperature rise. For example the "Gap Analysis" for the City of Sacramento Climate Action Plan indicates approximately a sixty percent short fall in emissions reductions. We must emphasize rapid conversion to clean renewal energy and a zero emissions transportation system.

By Rick Bettis

## Membership

Thank you to all who have paid their dues. If you received a renewal notice and have not yet renewed, it is not too late to do so. Reminders have been sent to those who misplaced or lost their earlier notices or simply forgot to renew. If you have any questions about renewals please contact Catherine Troka at [ctroka@gmail.com](mailto:ctroka@gmail.com) or call 916-446-5933.

The New Member Welcome will be Saturday, March 5 from 10a.m.—12 noon at Wellspring Women's Center, 3414 4th Ave. Sacramento. We will welcome new and returning members and also honor our Fifty-Year Members. Board members will speak about their board duties and preparations for the 2016 elections. Prospective members are also encouraged to attend. Our speaker will be League's past president Suzanne Phinney, who has served as a consultant with the Energy Commission. Energy concerns continue to plague our world and Suzanne will get us thinking with the question "Is Rooftop Solar Enough?"

RSVP to Catherine Troka 916-446-5933 or [ctroka@gmail.com](mailto:ctroka@gmail.com).

### [U.S. Supreme Court Considers the Idea of Representation](#)

The U.S. Supreme Court [heard arguments](#) ... in a case that could forever change the way we view the political map. [Evenwel v. Abbott](#), a case out of Texas, has the potential to upset the criteria for drawing state and local legislative districts so that districts would be determined by the total number of voters instead of total population. The League submitted [an amicus brief in Evenwel](#) that supports the current practice of drawing district lines based on population counts. *LWW League of Women Voters. Making Democracy Work*, 12/11/15. by Jessica Jones. E. Heaser

### [Tax Checkoff System](#)

The League joined coalition partners in urging President Obama and democratic leaders in the House and Senate to reject any effort to kill the presidential tax checkoff system [i.e., [public financing](#) for presidential elections] or to take away the money currently in the presidential tax checkoff fund. *LWW League of Women Voters. Making Democracy Work*. Retrieved 12/14/15. E. Heaser

### [America's Rental Housing](#) *Expanding Options for Diverse and Growing Demand*. Release date: December 9, 2015

#### Introduction and Summary

“Rental housing is home to a growing share of the nation’s increasingly diverse households. But even with the strong rebound in multifamily construction, tight rental markets make it difficult for low- and moderate-income renters to find housing they can afford. As a result, the number of cost-burdened renters set another record last year. Addressing the challenge of affordability in a time of rising overall demand will require greater efforts from both the public and private sectors to expand the range of rental housing options.” From page 1 of the *Report*. E. Heaser





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### Ocean Conservancy

*Stemming the Tide: land-based strategies for a plastic-free ocean , 2015 Report on a way forward to eliminate ocean plastic. By the Ocean Conservancy winter 2015. Retrieved 1/26/2016. E. Heaser*

Google images retrieved 1/27/2016

