



The Sacramento Voter

March 2016



A Conversation with Senator Diane Feinstein

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) held a conversation Friday, February 19th with Senator Diane Feinstein in front of a large audience who had just enjoyed a complimentary lunch, thanks to the sponsors.

Here are some highlights from my notes

As a ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, she said she spends 70% of her time as Senator reading intelligence reports and attending national security briefings which prompted her comment that it is a very dangerous world with an undeclared war going on with ISIS. ISIS has lots of money from oil and theft, and 36,000 fighters from all over the world. ISIS exists in 11 countries and its' goal is to wipe out the West and enact Sharia law. The Senator believes we fight them here or fight them there.

She believes Apple should cooperate with the government regarding the iPhone involved in the San Bernardino attack. The County owned the phone and has given permission to the government. She has taken an oath to protect the people and keeps horrific photos of this war on her desk or nightstand to remind her of this important role.

On the issue of a President Obama's nomination to replace Supreme Court Justice Scalia, Senator Feinstein said the president should nominate asap because he is in office for almost another year. Justice is denied with 4-4 decisions that leave lower court decisions in place.

She spoke about her \$1.3 billion water/drought relief bill (S2533) recalling that the last water infrastructure bill that passed in California was Pat Brown's 50 years ago when California's population was 16 million. We are living with the same system with a population at 40 million. California has 3,000 dry wells and 6,000 acres of fallowed land.

The Bill funds desalinization, includes over 100 recycling plants, loan programs and \$600 million for water storage. They worked with over 300 major state water agencies and federal agencies to cover all concerns and get agreement among all. It is supported by Ducks Unlimited and Reps. Garamendi and Costa. The Bill will be introduced in the House at the end of February.

When an audience member asked her about economic inequality she said 70% of the budget is predetermined and the recovery has put money in the pockets of the upper class but not the middle class so hence the economic inequality. She said the budget itself and congress would never find a way to provide free college education and single payer and that her goal is to get things done via legislation OR negotiation. Senator Feinstein concluded by saying that specifics matter, because that is what determines what actually gets done in Congress. She did not rule out another term.

I recommend interested League members get on the Public Policy Institute's email list and be notified about many interesting events related to California public policy. Often these events include lunch, last 90 minutes (maximum) and are held downtown near the Capitol with public transit access. Go to ppic.org By P. Lee

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EVENTS

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

Monday-Tuesday, March 7-8. Unit Meetings, pg. 3

Thursday, March 10, 2016, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. 29th annual Women's History Month luncheon, pg. 2

Saturday, March 19, 2016, 9:30 a.m.—noon. Forum on Higher Education, pg. 4

Wednesday, April 20, 2016, 6:30 p.m. Mayoral Forum at Pony Express Elementary School, 1250 56th Ave. pg.2

2015-2016

Board of Directors**League of Women Voters
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ordsVoter editor– Alice Ginosar
Voter publisher– Eileen Heaserwww.facebook.com/LWVSacramento**Voter Service**

Exciting things are happening with Voter Services. **The South Land Park Neighborhood Association will hold a mayoral forum on April 20th at 6:30 p.m. at Pony Express Elementary School, 1250 56th Ave.** We need volunteers to help. Several East Sacramento and Midtown/Downtown associations are still making decisions regarding dates, location, time and formats. I will get this information to you as soon as possible.

Another exciting opportunity to report is the Voter's Edge California (VEC) training that several board members attended, including our co-presidents, Suzi Bakker, Claudia Bonsignore and me. We were pleased that State Voter Service Director and fellow LWVSC member, Carol Moon Goldberg, joined us. Sharon Stone, LWVC's newly appointed State Membership and Technology Manager, provided a PowerPoint lesson on how our new Smart Voter/Voter's Edge California will look. County Coordinators are being trained right now.

Our County Coordinator (CoCo) is Claudia Bonsignore who has been working with me on Voter Services, and will now take over this new responsibility. I will have a more complete explanation of Voters Edge in another *Voter*, but it is a collaboration between the LWVC and MapLight. Quoting from an internal LWVC document written by Pamela Heisey, "Smart Voter and MapLight have teamed up to bring California a new comprehensive, nonpartisan online guide to elections called *Voter's Edge*. This partnership marries Smart Voter's powerful coverage of election contests and candidates with MapLight's deep expertise in public data and technology... MapLight is a nationally acclaimed 501 (C3) research organization that publishes *Voter's Edge*..." One of the most interesting aspects of this new partnership is that MapLight will provide factual information regarding the largest donors behind the candidates and ballot measures.

THANK YOU to Donna Chipps and Cheryll Moore for all their hard work over so many years. Donna spent 15 years doing Smart Voter, and Cheryll was Voter Service Director for about 7 years. Cheryll and Donna helped train Claudia and me. Donna gave a group training on Smart Voter, and Cheryll trained Holly Smith who in turn trained me. I have many informative folders that Cheryll put together. I am more grateful than I can say. We wish them both well as they move on to other endeavors, but not away from the League we hope .

By. L. Einspahr

Cont. page 1.

Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, Chief Justice of California, will be the guest speaker at the 29th annual Women's History Month luncheon, Thursday, March 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Woodland Community & Senior Center, 2001 East St. in Woodland. The theme for the 2016 luncheon is "Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government" and honors women who have shaped America's history and its future through their public service and government leadership. The cost is \$25, money will be used to purchase women's history books for the Yolo County Public Libraries. Reservations must be received by March 4, 2016. For information call Katherine Mawdsley [530-758-5093](tel:530-758-5093), or Louisa R. Vessell [916-451-2113 orlvessell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:orlvessell@sbcglobal.net) or visit www.ycwhm.org

March Unit Meetings

Reducing Gun Violence

Every day about 32 Americans are murdered with guns, and about 140 are treated for a gun assault in emergency rooms. The United States has a death rate 12 times higher than that in the other “developed” countries. Each time we are confronted with another atrocity – Columbine, Sandy Hook, San Bernardino – we rededicate ourselves to the fact that we need to do something. The League tells us we are facing an epidemic of gun violence and we need to write and phone our representatives urging them to protect our children and citizens, and they need to pass sensible gun laws. What are the causes of gun violence? Liberals blame it on inadequate gun control, while conservatives focus mainly on the mentally ill and Hollywood. We can add alcohol abuse, domestic problems, a bad economy, public policy and practices, video games and movies, lack of fathers in homes, drugs, anti-depressants. etc. We also need to look hard at the domestic consequences of a militarized super power engaged in chronic wars around the world. The United States, the world’s policeman, is the greatest purveyor of violence today. We are said to have a militarized society which programs civilians for violence at home and abroad. Look at our police with all kinds of military regalia and equipment. The perpetrators of mass killings are seen decked out in their military gear supported by their collections of assault weaponry and deranged manifestos. B. Lee

Unit	Date & Time	Contact	Location
Mid-City	Monday March 7, 6:15 p.m.	Eileen Heaser 456-2154	449 San Miguel Way, Sacramento, 95819
Morning Suburban	Tuesday March 8, 9:15 a.m.	Anne Berner Helen Shryock 944-1042 & 944-2274	2426 Garfield Ave. Carmichael 95608
Greenhaven/ Land Park	Tuesday March 8, 10:00 a.m.	Mary Hopkins 422-6958	45 Sunlit Circle Sacramento 95831
Elk Grove	Tuesday March 8, 1:00 p.m.	Bill & Elaine Lee 688-5360	8622 Shasta Lily Drive Elk Grove 95624

[Contact Bill Lee](mailto:units@lwvsacramento.org), Unit coordinator, 916-688-5360, units@lwvsacramento.org OR oggie2lee@comcast.net if you are unable to attend the Unit meetings but would like to receive emails of the Unit discussion materials,

Some questions to initiate discussion

1. What role does the National Rifle Association play in reducing gun violence?
2. What is the League of Women Voters position on gun safety?
3. What is the Political Ritual after mass shootings? Is it effective?
4. Why is America prone to mass shootings?
5. What are some of the most effective ways to control gun violence?
6. Is there a correlation between guns and mass shootings?
7. For politicians is the issue gun rights or dollars?
8. For a population of 330 million why do we have over 300 million guns?
9. Why the fascination with assault weaponry?
What can we do to reduce gun violence?

We need YOU!

Would you like to meet monthly with intelligent, lively folks interested in our community? And would you volunteer to use your energy and knowledge to help others better understand Sacramento, California, or the US government? There’s a place for you on the Board of Directors of the Sacramento County League of Women Voters, or on one of the committees. To learn more about this rare opportunity, call Kay Kneprath, 916-457-3793. You needn’t live in the City of Sacramento, the County will do. K. Kneprath

Welcome New Member

Mahnaz Khazari

Is California's Higher Education in Crisis?

Unlike so many contemporary scholars and think tanks, Janet Napolitano, president of the University of California, does not believe that higher education in California, or in this nation for that matter, is in crisis. Instead, she believes it is in motion, just as it should be. Higher Education evolves as knowledge expands, societies change, and new technologies are introduced. This does not mean that we should relax – we should never maintain the status quo – but continue evolving and asking questions. As our universities and colleges undergo an intense period of evolution driven by advances in technology, a better understanding of cognitive learning, concerns about cost, and job market demands, we should certainly be asking ourselves questions – but they need to be the right questions. Michael Crow, president of Arizona State University asks hard questions in his book, *Designing the New American University*, including “What is the purpose of higher education,” and “What was behind the decision to make four-year college education the standard?” What is magic about four years?

Glaringly absent from these discussions is one of the major hurdles facing aspiring college students today: the enormous cost of such an endeavor. League Women Voters Sacramento County has been studying these, and many other issues related to Higher Education in the State of California. A culmination of this study will be a forum, scheduled for Saturday, March 19, at the Aviator Restaurant located at the Executive Airport on Freeport Boulevard.

Our august list of panelists includes:

Dr. Robert Nelsen, President of California State University, Sacramento

Professor Kimberly Nalder, Project for an Informed Electorate, Department of Government, CSUS

Denise Hamilton, Coordinator, First Year Advising, CSUS

Members are invited and encouraged to attend and bring guests to what promises to be a lively discussion. Join us for a buffet breakfast at 9:30 a.m. (cost \$16), with the forum slated to begin at 10 a.m. This will be a fascinating morning that you will not want to miss. For questions or additional information, contact Nancy Compton (916) 600-1992 or via email ncompton43@att.net

Cost of Education Years Ago

Back when “burning the midnight oil” really meant oil

“If you were heading off to college in 1816, you wouldn’t have had to worry about buying extra-long sheets, renting a mini-fridge, or packing a spare iPhone charger. You would, however, need to load up on candles and oil—the electric light bulb still being some 60 years in the future. Plus, if you planned to hire a servant or bring one from home, as some 19th century collegians apparently did, you’d have to budget for his or her wages too. Such was the cost of college 200 years ago, based on published figures for [Harvard](#). The breakdown, as reported in Charles Franklin Thwing’s *History of Higher of Education in America* (1906), included...”

See the chart by clicking on the highlighted title at the top.

“A year at Harvard runs a lot more than \$8,371 these days, of course. The estimated cost of attendance for 2015-2016 is \$64,400 to \$69,600. On the other hand, because the university covers 100% of demonstrated need, it’s likely that a fair number of students and families pay considerably less than their fellow alumni of two centuries ago.”

By Greg Daugherty. *Money College Planner*. Retrieved 2/23/16. E. Heaser

The High Cost of Cheap Food

In 2006 a very pernicious strain of E. coli in California spinach made 199 people in 26 states ill. One hundred and two were hospitalized, and three died. In one day, Natural Selection Foods had put tainted spinach into a packing line and 1,000+ bags of salad mix were sold to Trader Joe's, Earthbound Farms, Natural Selection, and Dole Baby Spinach (which went to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Iceland, Canada, and Mexico). The same year, Taco Bell tomatoes made 71 people in five states ill. Chipotle has now joined the crowd. Multi state outbreaks of food poisoning have more than doubled in the last 10 years.

Super strains of E. coli, salmonella, and listeria are being found in mass produced products including: pork, beef, chicken, ice cream, cookie dough, cantaloupe, tomatoes, sprouts, cucumbers, lettuce, caramel apples, and of course, spinach. While the number of incidents is still small compared to the large amount of food involved, the multi area outbreaks are a problem for consumers and health officials. They represent only 3% of foodborne illness, but because of the nastier strains of bacteria involved, they result in 39% of hospitalizations and 56% of the deaths. One of the main causes of this problem is the increasing consolidation of global food production and distribution. Along with wide spread food contamination, it also results in such things as antibiotic resistance, monoculture agriculture, and lack of plant diversity.

Deciding how to solve the current problem is difficult because there are at least two opposing views. One side believes centralized government should be in charge of regulation and enforcement, while others feel that local control would be closer to the problem and could act more quickly and efficiently. Big Ag favors the first, as the cost to producers would be high enough to squeeze out the little guy. Both arguments have merit. But the best solution would be to go back to smaller producers and more diversity. "A single contamination at a farm or industrial processing facility has the potential to make a lot more people sick than a localized food issue at a birthday or church supper." * In the meantime, it would be prudent to "eat locally" when possible and think twice before reaching for those packaged salad greens.

*Matthew Wise, CDC's Outbreak Response Team. *LETTUCE PRAY* by Anne Kim Jan/Feb 2016 issue of *The Washington Monthly*. Submitted by E. Lee

Membership & New Member Welcome

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 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.

Voter Articles

Have you ever thought you would like to write an article?

YOU CAN! It's easy, just let Alice Ginosar know of the topic you are passionate about and she will let you know if it is appropriate for the Sacramento Voter. Write the article, no more than 300 words and email to- aliceginosar@yahoo.com

AAUW Sacramento Branch

[A Community Forum on Human Trafficking in the Sacramento Region](#) Thursday, March 10, 2016, 7:00 p.m. St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 2391 St. Mark's Way, Sacramento, doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Climate Change and Funding Public Transit Improvements

Transportation is the largest cause of climate change in the Sacramento region. It has been estimated to be the source of over 40% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Sacramento County. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) and Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) have developed plans that would increase transit usage and reduce the private vehicle miles traveled in the area, such that greenhouse gas emissions would be lowered by 16% per capita by 2030.

Transit fares normally pay for about 20% of RT's operating costs. Higher fares would reduce ridership, especially for disadvantaged communities. Therefore, SACOG & RT hope to increase the funding for transit operations, by means of a tax increase. A half cent per dollar sales tax increase would be used for public transit operations, as well as the maintenance and restoration of existing roads.

In a recent discussion, RT General Manager, Mike Wiley, indicated that they have been conducting focus group interviews with a generally positive response. They have started a public information program to inform voters as to the benefits of improved public transit. They are also polling voters to determine the support for the sales tax increase. A tax increase needs at least two thirds approval by the voters, the amount required by California Proposition 218, passed in 1996. An [RT Survey](#) is in progress this February.

As demonstrated by the recent agreement in Paris by 195 of the world's nations, mitigating climate change is critically important. LWVSC hopes that Sacramento County voters will support the need to fund improvements in our public transportation system. By Rick Bettis, Natural Resources Director.

The Navigators

"When someone shuts the door on me" was Cody's response to my question of what is most rewarding about being a Navigator downtown. Shirl's answer helped explain: after working so hard with a homeless family or mentally ill person who had been sleeping on the street, or down by the river, and finally after a long process, seeing them get the key to their own apartment and taking them there. It was so satisfying to leave them settled and walk out the door.

The work can be challenging and sometimes it can "break your heart." The most difficult part of the job is the lack of resources, especially the lack of permanent housing. Sometimes the client's mental illness, especially extreme paranoia can keep them on the streets, even when resources are available. Cody had worked so hard to build trust with one paranoid client and was willing to walk with him to the free counseling center at Loaves and Fishes. Unfortunately at that time, the client was refusing to take needed medication, leaving him too paranoid to go with Cody.

Work begins at 8:00 am, when the Navigators (Nav) meet at their office at 980 9th Street close to downtown's Central Library and La Bou. After greetings (they are a close-knit group) and briefings, they start walking their "beats" on the streets and along the river. Often the Downtown Guides, identifiable by bright yellow jackets, will take them to a person in need. The Nav's day ends around 6 pm; their schedule consists of four ten-hour days a week.

Wearing bright blue T-shirts, the Nav's approach is kind and gentle, asking "What do you need?" (not telling them what they need). Sometimes it is warm clothing, a hot meal or a shower. Often Shirl (focusing on women age 18-24 with children) finds a weary single mom in need of a few days' respite. While her children are placed at the Nursery Crisis Center, the mom is able to take care of getting an identification card or signing up for Medi-Cal. On a good day, Shirl will be able to get a mom and her children into one of the large apartment complexes on Madison (100+ units), for example, where the children can go to school and the mom can prepare for a job interview. Sometimes the Nav will walk with a person, they have just met, to an office on J Street to do a formal intake assessment.

There are special services for senior citizens, including housing at Park Place across from the State Capitol, Sunrise Meadows in Rancho Cordova or at a Senior Safe House off Watt Ave. where they can stay until stabilized, for up to 30 days.

Cont from pg. 6

Shirl, a warm-hearted and compassionate woman, feels deeply about the people and families under her care. Her best birthday gift ever was a call she received from a mom who had lived on the streets with her children for a year: “We are in housing!” moved Shirl to tears of joy. Originally from Florida, Shirl has worked with homeless people in downtown for the past 6 years. For a while, she and her son were homeless. Then, in 2011, she became one of the first Navigators employed in Sacramento. Now 17 Navigators are funded through Sacramento Steps Forward. Since this program, to find housing for homeless families and individuals, has been so successful, Navigators will soon be expanding into the suburbs and Roseville. [Read more](#), for a detailed report, in the last paragraph, click on the “report” link.

Both Shirl and Cody have worked with homeless people who were educated and once had economic means, then became victims of the economic recession, mental illness and/or addiction. The Navigators’ message to the public: “You might be there.” With the unexpected ups and downs of the American economy, a family who once felt secure, could suddenly lose a job, their house, their car and be in dire straits, and in need of help themselves. Compassion must direct public funding. By Alice Ginosar.



[The Sacramento Bee Gallery](#) “Street medicine team” delivers care and supplies to Sacramento’s homeless. Retrieved 2/23/2016

Donations as Commemorative Gifts

For the last two years, my daughter-in-law has donated \$100.00 to the League of Women Voters of Sacramento County in my name as a gift. It occurred to me that we should promote this idea among the friends and relatives in our respective circles as a way of building up our League’s reserves.

Anyone who makes a donation as a commemorative gift will receive a Thank You message from us, and the message will inform the donor that her generous gift is tax deductible. Please consider letting your friends and family know about this opportunity. By. S. Bakker

Voter Affidavits Delivered in 2015 by LWVSC

Thanks to the volunteers who delivered voter affidavits to Sacramento City & County post offices. Approximately **9,080** forms were delivered excluding some lost data. Thanks to S. Bakker, P. Cody, N. Compton, M. Futrill, P. Lee, C. Troka and me. **The last day to register to vote is Monday, May 23, 2016 for the June primary held on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, 8:00 a.m.—8:00 p.m.** [Key dates for the 2016 election](#). Please check post offices frequently as we go toward the June primaries. By E. Heaser



The League of Women Voters of
Sacramento County

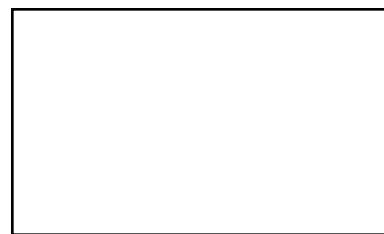
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Books of Interest

Broad Influence: How Women are Changing the Way America Works, authored by Jay Newton-Small, a *Time Magazine* Washington Correspondent discusses the issue of women’s influence in many spheres of life. She maintains that when 20-30 % of women belong to any group, e.g. legislative, military, private business, a “critical mass” occurs and women’s voices began to be heard and they can be influential. Newton-Small lists innate qualities that women have that make them most effective: preference for consensus, more collaborative, less competitive, less risk adverse... *Library Journal*, 1/16: 121; *Kirkus Reviews*, 11/1/15, 83:21, 211.

The F(R)ight to Vote by Michael Waldman traces the story from the founders’ debates to today’s challenges to the right to vote. Restrictive laws, gerrymandering, Citizens United all are restrictions to voting rights...“the right to vote has become the fight to vote.” Brennan Center for Justice, retrieved 2/19/2016.

The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War, by Robert J. Gordon. “...a sweeping history of technological changes in America [that argues] that the nation will most likely never again be able to generate growth at the pace that the economy depends on.” Robert Samuelson states ...”may well be 2016’s ‘most important book on economics.’” *This Week*, 2/12/2016 p.22. E. Heaser

