



The Sacramento Voter

SEPTEMBER 2017



Co-Presidents' Corner

Amazing as it may seem, our summer is over, school is in session, and we are ready to gear up again for another busy League year. Though this is a non-election year, we have many challenges ahead that will keep us fully engaged in the civic process.

In reality, the summer was busy as well, as we moved with the state League to their new address at 921 11th Street, Suite 700, Sacramento, CA 95814. Our dedicated Moving Team, headed up by co-president Claudia Bonsignore, with Trish Uhrhammer, Lois Wright, and Suzanne Phinney, spent many hours reviewing records, uncovering boxes of long-forgotten supplies, and paring down, tossing, shredding, and reorganizing those items that needed to be kept. Their efforts are much appreciated.

Our Voter Services Team, headed by Voter Services Director Louise Einspahr, will be hard at work on the implementation of the **Voters Choice Act (SB450)** to ensure it is in place in Sacramento County for the 2018 elections. This law allows certain California counties to move from offering traditional precinct-site voting to an election system using a combination of vote-by-mail balloting, ballot drop-off location, and Voting Centers.

Implementation of this new law requires that each county draft and adopt a detailed plan through an open, public process that includes participation by members of language minorities and the disability community. Plans will consider a wide range of issues, including sites for the new Voting Centers, accessibility to transportation and parking, accessibility for the disabled, and plans for voter education and outreach. To join the **Voter Services Team**, you may contact Louise Einspahr at louise.einspahr@gmail.com.

Also needed are volunteers for the **Voters Edge Team**. Voters Edge replaced the Smart Voter site in 2016 with Votersedge.org, the purpose of which is to help make sense of the election by cutting through the campaign noise to get right to the facts. This critical component of our work is chaired by co-president Claudia Bonsignore, who is looking for team members to help facilitate this project. Please contact Claudia at morsignore@comcast.net. Cont. page 2

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EVENTS

Unit meetings, Tuesday 9/5/2017, page three

Sunday, 9/10/17, 3:00-6:00 p.m. New member reception, Amy Berry's home, 2280 Hurley Way, Sac. 916-613-3945

Thursday, 9/28/17, 4:30-7:00 p.m. Wellspring Women's Center celebrating 30 years of service, 3414 4th Ave, Oak Park contact - Jodi Mulligan-Pfile for information—916 454-9688 ext. 205 OR jodi@wellspringwomen.org

Thursday, 10/5/17, 8:15a.m.-5:00p.m. Envisioning California Conference. Crossroads—Homelessness in California. Conference is free. Tsakopoulos Library Galleria, 828 I St. Register by 9/25/17 csus.edu/calst/envisioning_california.html

Monday, 10/30/17. Housing Summit, contact Bob Erlanbush at bob@srceh.org

2017-2018

Board of Directors**League of Women Voters
of Sacramento County****921 11th Street Suite 700**

Sacramento, CA 95814

916-447-8683

lwvs@lwvsacramento.orgwww.lwvsacramento.org**Board of Directors:**Nancy Compton & Claudia Bonsignore
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Voter publisher– Eileen Heaser

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The year 2020 will mark the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote, and our League is planning to join with Leagues around the country in celebrating this significant centennial. Although 2 ½ years away, we need to begin the planning process by creating a team of energetic members to design this celebration, which could potentially include everything from a film festival to a community dinner, a high school essay contest, a scholarship or an art exhibit featuring local female artists. To join the **Centennial Celebration Team**, contact Nancy Compton at ncompton43@att.net.

Another significant project will be to develop a plan for determining how the Dr. Byers bequest will be used to expand and enhance the democratic process within our community.

In addition, we plan to host several issue-specific forums this year by working with other community partners to offer timely information on current topics. This is the year we will need all hands on deck to plan, manage, and launch multiple projects, so your voice, your participation, and your passion will be very much in demand and truly appreciated!

Thank you for joining together in a spirit of community togetherness. We have an important job ahead of us, and welcome all members to unite in the effort to participate, learn, and share information that is relevant, valuable, and crucial to the health of our democracy.

Nancy & Claudia

Mercy Pedalers

After 33 years of service at Loaves & Fishes, Sister Libby Fernandez will be moving along, actually pedaling along. Fortunately for Sacramento, she will continue to serve homeless individuals and families in the suburbs of our large county. As keynote speaker at our Annual Meeting on May 25, Sister Libby shared her own story of how she was spiritually called to serve our homeless population. She grew up in a military family, living in many different places in the U.S. and Europe, so it was natural that she joined the U.S. Air Force as a young woman. In her seven years of service, she recounted without details how difficult and abusive the military was to women. However, she remarked also that the Air Force instilled in her a sense of commitment, esprit de corps, and leadership. After she resigned from the military, she earned a Master's in Social Work at Sacramento State. In 1990, after much soul searching, she felt the call to become a Catholic nun to serve the poor and eventually, for 11 years, became the CEO of Loaves & Fishes.

On June first Sister Libby resigned from L&F and is planning to make a new ministry astride a tricycle, bringing comfort, compassion and counsel, and maybe a warm meal to Sacramento's homeless right where they are on the streets, especially in Sacramento County's suburbs. Her new "trike" has been fitted with a cabinet and is complete with a coffee pot. This endeavor, she said in an interview with the *Sacramento Bee*, will allow her to continue her mission as a Sister of Mercy to serve poor people directly, but without the administrative burdens of running a large nonprofit group.

Summarized by Alice Ginosar

Unit Meetings—September 2017
Making Democracy Work, voting and Voting Centers

Unit	Date & Time	Contact	Location
Mid-City	No Mid-City Unit meeting		
Suburban	Tuesday September 5, 2017, 9:15 a.m.	Anne Berner-944-1042 Helen Shryock 944-2274	2426 Garfield Ave. Carmichael 95608
Greenhaven/ Land Park	Tuesday September 5, 2017, 10:00 a.m.	Mary Hopkins 422-6958	45 Sunlit Circle Sacramento 95831
Elk Grove	No September Unit meeting	Bill & Elaine Lee 688-5360	8622 Shasta Lily Drive Elk Grove 95624

Contact Sheila Kamhi, Unit Coordinator, (916)-880-2213 grandmakamhi@gmail.com if you are unable to attend the Unit meetings, but would like to receive the Unit discussion materials.

Making Democracy Work

At the 2017 California State Convention, one of the Issues for Emphasis chosen was Making Democracy Work in California. The focus here is on expanding the electorate. In California, SB450, was recently passed, it is a plan to make voting more convenient. Fourteen of the 58 counties in California, including Sacramento, were chosen to use this process of replacing the usual neighborhood voting precincts with Voting Centers.. The Centers are to be located in places convenient for working people as well as residents. Special arrangements are made for disabled. Every registered voter will receive a mail-in ballot. At Centers, voters can vote by machine, mail their ballots, or drop off their ballots. Eligible voters may register to vote at a Center. The Centers would be open and operating 28 days including two weekends. In 2014, Colorado used this system and had the highest voter turnout in the U.S. with 55% of eligible voters participating.

Those objecting to the legislation fear that it can lead to fraud, with people breaking into mailboxes and stealing ballots. In a survey, the Public Policy Institute of California found that "... groups that are historically less likely to vote would do so in this scenario ... Latinos, Asian Americans, young people and those with incomes under \$40,000/year."

In order for the law to work, it will be necessary for advocates to explain the system and to reach out to those who are less likely to understand it or to be aware of changes. An organization has been formed called the Future of California Elections (FOCE) to educate voters. The LWVC is a member of this coalition. By Sheila Kamhi

Surge in Homeless

Sacramento Steps Forward reported over this past summer that there were 3,665 people living without permanent shelter in Sacramento County. According to the *Sacramento Bee*, homelessness rose by 30% from 2,822 people the last time the transient population was counted in 2015. "It is the highest number of people living without permanent housing Sacramento has ever recorded." Anita Chabria, *The Sacramento Bee*, July 11, 2017.

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Introducing New Board Members

By Alice Ginosar

Marina Perez is relatively new to Sacramento and works for the State Water Resources Control Board, a regulatory agency under the California Environmental Protection Agency. Her work involves outreach, engagement and education related to water quality and drought issues in primarily environmental justice communities. Prior to this, Marina worked in a similar capacity with the State Department of Toxic Substances Control working on high profile contaminated sites in Los Angeles. She has experience in a public relations firm where she worked on transportation, redevelopment, and environmental remediation projects. In addition, Marina worked for the Los Angeles Unified School District's New School Construction Program working with communities to build new schools in order to help relieve overcrowding. Marina has volunteered as a bilingual ballot clerk during several elections in both Los Angeles County and Sacramento County. She is currently participating in Hispanas Organized for Political Equality's (HOPE) Leadership Institute. Marina has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Master's in Public Administration from California State University, Northridge.

Kristine Rekdahl is a retired Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has held positions in management, clinical supervision, and direct services with Catholic Healthcare West Medical Foundation Children's Program, Turning Point Community Programs, Kaiser Permanente, Child and Family Institute, Travis Air Force Base Family Support Center, Napa County Mental Health and Napa County Social Services. She had a private psychotherapy practice and taught part-time at California State University, Sacramento in the Division of Social Work. Kristine joined the LWVSC in 2014. Joining the Voter Services Committee in 2016, she assisted with voter registration and made a presentation on the *Pros & Cons* of the propositions. She is concerned about human rights and wants people to be empowered by making informed decisions. As a new Board member she is interested in voter services, climate change, homelessness and affordable housing.

Barbera Bass (pronounced "Barbara") is a native Clevelander, who holds a Bachelor's Degree in History from Cleveland State University and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science from San Jose State. Prior to retiring, she was branch manager at the Arden-Dimick Library. She chose a career in libraries because she sees them as a bulwark of democracy. She sees the League of Women Voters in the same light, as an institution that defends the right to think and vote freely. She is particularly interested in voting rights and voter education.

Theresa Riviera has worked as a Congressional District Field Representative, as an analyst for the Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity, and as middle management in Sacramento County government. She has taken a leadership role working on voter registration and education in low-income areas with the Cruz Reynoso Voter Engagement Coalition. As the Civic Committee Chair for the League of United Latin American Citizens, (LULAC) Lorenzo Patino Council #2862, she represented LULAC as part of the League's coalition with Common Cause to get the Sacramento City Independent Redistricting Commission adopted by charter amendment.

Theresa believes in working hard for family and community and she values trustworthiness, loyalty and fairness. Hence, she is committed to civic learning and democratic engagement and has thus joined LWVSC in sharing these goals. She strongly believes that people should have a voice in how their country and local communities are shaped and developed and that by working together for the greater good and that people can make a difference. Theresa is very happy to serve on the Board to advance these goals.



In Memory
Mary Catherine Troka
 May 22, 1933—May 30, 2017

Catherine was raised in southern California and she attended the University of the Pacific, earning a degree in music after which she enrolled in San Jose State to pursue a teaching career. Catherine moved to Rocklin where she taught piano from her home, was an organist at St. Rose Church, Roseville, and was a substitute learning disabilities teacher at Roseville High. After retiring she earned a Master's Degree in Education from Sacramento State and became involved with adult literacy and tutor training.

Catherine joined the LWVSC in November of 2002. From the outset she became an active member, including the following volunteer work: delivering voter forms to post offices, serving as interim treasurer, and serving as membership director for many years. She organized new member coffees, served on the Board for several years and was part of the four-member management team that served as president of the local league, 2012-2013. Catherine tabled for many events to encourage League membership and involvement. She was an active member of the Mid-City Unit. Catherine had many friends that she interacted with and was involved with numerous activities including swimming, book club membership, music, theatre and movie attendance and events with her family of whom she was so proud. She is sorely missed by her many League friends

Obituary: *Sacramento Bee*, 6/11/17 B7. E. Heaser/S. Bakker

Cont. page 3—Homeless

Where does morality stand, when half a billion dollars were invested in building an arena last year and the need for building adequate affordable housing was ignored? In the past 15 years, Sacramento lost 705 people, one death each week of a homeless person exposed to cruel summer heat, bitter winters and violence on the streets. There are 70,000 people on the waiting list for affordable housing and Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA) spokeswoman, Angela Jones reported: "We continuously outreach to land lords to participate in our program." *Sacramento News and Review*, 8/17 p 9.

Where does LWVSC stand on this community and familial tragedy? Concerned members studied this painful situation and in 2015 at our Annual Meeting voted for our Position on Homelessness. Quotes from that position: "We support the de-criminalization of homelessness." "We support measures that provide for the needs of homeless people ..."

On August 23 the County Board of Supervisors did vote 3 to 2 to approve the additional \$5 million to be added to the 2017-18 budget for enforcement and cleanup on the Parkway. Some of the money was for additional trash removal costs, although most was for law enforcement. Homeless advocates were lobbying the Supervisors to spend the \$5 million on services to meet the needs of homeless individuals and families.

LWVSC's position seems to align with the position of homeless advocates. Stronger law enforcement is not as important on this issue; the spirit of compassion for our most vulnerable population should take precedence.

By Alice Ginosar

Water Conservation and Climate Change

Recently, at the request of the City of Sacramento Utilities Department, I testified before the City Council on behalf of the LWVSC in support of a City Water Conservation ordinance. The Ordinance was passed by a six to three vote to regulate outdoor watering. The Ordinance will go into effect in the spring of 2018, following a City conducted public education program which will include outreach to community and neighborhood organizations.

Outdoor watering will be limited to two days a week with certain exceptions:

- Irrigation systems with smart controllers, drip irrigation, using soaker hoses, and watering vegetable gardens.
- Car washing with a hose with a shut off nozzle.
- When temperatures are over 100 degrees for more than two days.

In the past, the average City water use was as high as 310 gallons per day per capita (gpdpc), one of the highest values in the state. During the recent drought it was lowered to 160 gpdpc as a result of state regulations. The City has estimated that this ordinance will result in an average use of 190 gpdpc. In addition, the City has accelerated its water meter installation program and now hopes to complete the process by 2020. Water meters along with usage-based rates will also result in conservation.

Excessive watering can contribute to climate change since the treatment and pumping uses approximately 20 percent of electrical energy in the area. Scientific studies indicate that climate change will result in more erratic weather patterns and a substantial loss in snow pack water storage that makes conservation even more critical. By R. Bettis

Welcome New Members

Vanessa Cordero
Sandi & John Kniep
Inger Lindholm
Joan Normington
Jodi Samuels
Jill Shallenberger
Kimberly Smith

Transportation, Climate Change and Social Equity

In Sacramento and all of California transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions equaling approximately 40 percent of the County and State totals. Recent efforts and achievements show some promise of partial mitigation of this threat.

It has been announced that Sacramento is the recipient of a \$44 million “Green Cities” grant as part of the Volkswagen legal settlement. Many claims and legal actions against this auto manufacturer were following the disclosure that the company had falsified testing of emissions of air pollutants such as nitric oxides. I participated in the advocacy supporting Sacramento’s selection with correspondence to the California Air Resources Board that was responsible for allocation of these funds.

These funds will be used to install charging stations for electric vehicles and purchase zero emission vehicles with an emphasis on establishing a car sharing programs in disadvantaged communities. The press conference announcing this selection was held in a disadvantaged community. Participating were Mayor Steinberg and representatives and leaders from Congress, the Legislature, County Supervisors, City Council and Metro Air Quality District.

State Senate Bill 1, the gas tax and license fee increases, and Senate Bill 388, the extension of the state Cap and Trade program to mitigate GHG emissions to the year 2030, were passed and signed by the Governor this past year. These measures have the potential of generating hundreds of millions of dollars statewide each year for use in improving public transit and bike and pedestrian facilities that will reduce private auto use and emissions. By Rick Bettis

Homelessness Updates

All references are to the *Sacramento Bee*, August 23, 24 & 25, 2017

Reporter C. Hubert, 8/24, 2B, states that more than 300 people congregated at St. Mark's United Methodist Church August 23, to discuss actions for the homeless. The event was organized by Sacramento Area Congregations Together. Representatives from churches, Sacramento Steps Forward, Family Promise, neighbors and Mayor Steinberg attended.

By a three-two vote the County Supervisors approved a \$5 million plan to add park rangers, maintenance staff and sheriffs to the 23 mile parkway and adjacent neighborhoods. Annually the County spends \$40 million on the parkway. An additional \$6.2 million was added earlier this year to the annual fund in order to increase homeless services for the chronically homeless. A 75 bed shelter is scheduled to open in 2018 serving 300 people. Since the beginning of the year the Parks Department funded a sergeant and four rangers to enforce legal camping on the first 4.5 miles of the parkway. Opponents to the plan stated that the homeless will be pushed into neighborhoods. The head of the Sacramento Valley Conservancy pointed out that Camp Pollock has a "... clear view of the degradation of this precious natural resource ... to abandon [the parkway] would be to abandon the best part of Sacramento ..." 8/24, 2B. A geologist exclaimed that the contaminated parkway and water pollution downstream has legal ramifications.

County Supervisor S. Frost, "Viewpoints" 8/23, 9A, takes issue with where the money is coming from to fund the \$5 million, viz., it will rob other much needed funds for waste management, roads and infrastructure repairs and emergency services. Frost says "We need to wait until housing is built for the homeless before ... [moving] them ..." The Editorial Board, 8/23, 8A, finds the Plan developed by Supervisor P. Serna problematic. The Board states that legally authorities cannot force homeless people off the Parkway, destroy campsites and/or seize property without a notice, as this is public land. Officials can issue tickets for dogs without leashes and other infractions. They conclude that until shelters/housing are built and mental health and addiction services are provided the problem will persist.

Reporter A. Chabria, 8/25, 1B, reports on a forthcoming pilot plan proposed by Sacramento City Councilman J. Schenirer that would provide a "roving jobs van" to recruit homeless people in downtown Sacramento and pay them day wages to do tasks, e.g., pick up trash, scrub graffiti and pull weeds." Albuquerque, New Mexico has had a successful similar program since 2015.

Summarized by E. Heaser

Book and Report Notices Submitted by E. Heaser

In the book, *Locked In*, John F. Pfaff, Professor of law, Fordham University, writes that although mass incarceration is one of the biggest social problems in the United States he takes issues with Michelle Alexander's (*The New Jim Crow*) premise that "racist persecution of young black men for drug crimes" is the major cause. Pfaff thinks the imprisoning of non-violent drug users is only a secondary factor. More pertinent is that "... violence thrives among young men deprived of a faith in their own upward mobility, making drug dealing an attractive business" "... young men without a way out of poverty turn to gangs, and gangs always turn to violence." *The New Yorker*, 4/10/17, pgs. 71-72.

[*Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*](#), is an edited work by Paul Hawden, Project Drawdown research, with a forward by Tom Steyer, NextGen Climate. Described are 100 of the most substantive solutions to global warming including their history, carbon impact, relative cost and savings, how they work, and a method of utilizing/adopting the solutions. The editor notes that climate is one of the most complex systems and as yet no plan that goes beyond slowing or stopping emissions has been devised. [Retrieved](#) 5/22/2017

Reports

[Right Type Right Place Assessing the Environmental and Economic Impacts of Infill Residential Development through 2030](#). Berkeley Law, University of California, Center for Law, Energy and the Environment. By. N. Decker, C. Galante, E. Elkind, M. Hanson, K. Chapple and A. Martin. Produced by Next 10.

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The League of Women Voters of
Sacramento County

1107 9th Street, Suite 300

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916-447-VOTE

Fax: 916-447-8620

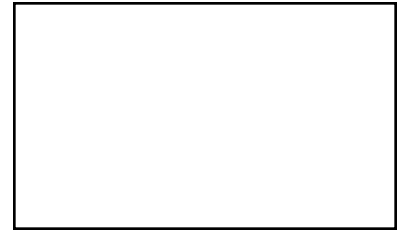
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[*Dynamics of Homelessness in Urban America*](#), 7/28/17 by Chris Glynn and Emily B. Fox, (Cornell University Library) is a 54 page paper examining "... time-varying homeless counts within the same community ...". "To examine trends in homeless population counts in the 25 largest U.S. metropolitan areas, we develop a dynamic Bayesian hierarchical model for time-varying homeless count data. Particular care is given to modeling uncertainty in the homeless count generating and measurement processes, and a critical distinction is made between the counted number of homeless and the true size of the homeless population. For each metro under study, we investigate the relationship between increases in the Zillow Rent Index and increases in the homeless population. Sensitivity of inference to potential improvements in the accuracy of point-in-time counts is explored, and evidence is presented that the inferred increase in the rate of homelessness from 2011-2016 depends on prior beliefs about the accuracy of homeless counts. A main finding of the study is that the relationship between homelessness and rental costs is strongest in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Seattle." [arXiv:1707.09380v1](https://arxiv.org/abs/1707.09380v1) July 28, 2017. Retrieved 8/12/17



Google Images 7/26/17