



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

March 2015 *Celebrating 50 Years of Voter Education in Santa Cruz County* Volume 49, Number 7

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Local Program Planning

Tuesday

March 3, 2015

1-3 p.m.

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street

Santa Cruz, 95060

Calendar

Tuesday, March 3, 2015; 1-3 p.m.

Local Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street

Santa Cruz, 95060

Tuesday, March 10, 2015; 1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz 95060

Thursday, April 9, 2015; Noon to 2 p.m.

The Current and Future State of Water Supply in Santa Cruz

Rosemary Menard, Director, SC Water Department

Santa Cruz Public Library Meeting Room

224 Church Street

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Bring your lunch; free and open to the public

Tuesday, April 14, 2015, 1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 5; 7-9 p.m.

A League-sponsored Public Forum: Drug and Alcohol Disorders in Our Community

Harbor High School Theater

300 La Fonda Avenue

Santa Cruz, 95062

Free and open to the public

Tuesday, May 12, 2015; 1-3 p.m.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Saturday, June 6, 2015

LWVSCC Annual Meeting

Save the date; more details to come.

Come to this month's local program planning and tell us what issues you want to hear about at League meetings in the coming year. Have an idea but can't make the meeting? Send us an e-mail and tell us about it at league@lwvsc.org.

We also need to decide if LWVSCC will participate in the LWV of California statewide study on higher education. Statewide studies allow the League to take positions and support legislation, having more local Leagues participate allows the state League to more accurately gauge the feelings of members throughout the state. This is an excellent opportunity to get involved with the League, no experience necessary, just a willingness to meet once a month or so over the next year to learn about and discuss higher education issues in California. Let us know if you want to join the committee or want more information about what is involved, e-mail league@lwvsc.org

Santa Cruz Water Update in April

On Thursday, April 9 from noon to 2 p.m. Rosemary Menard, director of the City of Santa Cruz Water Department, will speak to the League about local water issues at the main branch of the public library, 224 Church Street, Santa Cruz.

Menard will review the current state of Santa Cruz's water supply in light of the drought. She will also discuss the progress being made by the City Council-appointed Water Supply Advisory Committee.

Invite a friend and bring your bag lunch to this meeting, which is free and open to the public.

President's Message

Dear Members,

If you attended our 50th anniversary celebration at Seacliff Inn in

February, you will know that John Laird, our California State Secretary of Natural Resources, knows his information, and has a talent for bringing differing interest groups together into collaborative agreements. He really knows how to draw (80+) and please a crowd with his knowledge, humor, and thoughtful conversation.

A big hand of applause to the LWV Board and our program chair Jan Beautz for their efforts in putting on this successful event. Many thanks also to Dee Takemoto for donating the flower centerpieces, whose sale brought in needed dollars for our Education Fund, which allows us to present events such as last May's Sheriff candidates forum and our upcoming forum on alcohol and substance use disorders, as well as keeping Santa Cruz voters informed about ballot measures and offering other voter services.

In the next VOTER, our Treasurer, Marcia Minnihan, will report to the membership on her interview with State Assemblymember Mark Stone (D—Monterey Bay). The interview team had hoped to talk to State Senator Bill Monning (D—Carmel) at the same time, especially about his End-of-Life Choices bill, but there was a birth of a new grandchild in his family and we will have to wait. Congratulations, Bill. Our thanks to Marcia for doing the interview again this year.

We are still looking for members interested in participating in the [LWVC Public Higher Education Study](#) (the price of education, availability of housing, no tuition for community colleges, percentages of out-of-state students usurping locals, gender equity in salaries at UCSC, price of textbooks), as we do have a vested interest with two colleges in our county. Do we have anyone out there interested in participating in this study? If so, please send us an e-mail at league@lwvsc.org

—Peggy Walker Marketello
President LWVSCC



Membership Report

As part of a series of LWVSCC board member profiles for the 2014-2015 year, this month we hear about treasurer, Marcia Minnihan, who has contributed her time and talents to our League since joining after her retirement.

Born on a farm near Jefferson, Iowa, Marcia Minnihan attended a one-room country school for her elementary education. She experienced ever larger school environments as she went to high school, then Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, and finally she graduated from the University of Iowa with a secondary teaching degree in English and a math minor. The Viet Nam war brought her fiancée to California, and Marcia joined him after graduation. Since Iowa's teaching degrees are not honored in California, she found her way into banking. After having two children, she worked in various financial institutions for the remainder of her career, including Washington D.C., Minneapolis, and the last several years in San Francisco.

After retirement in 2010, she joined her partner, Richard, in their Aptos home. She listened for volunteering opportunities, and a friend suggested LWV. Soon after joining, she was elected to the board as treasurer, a role she has held for three years. One of her special interests is interviewing our legislative representatives. She is also active in tutoring students in math and reading, and is president of the St. Vincent de Paul conference at St. Joseph's Community in Capitola. She enjoys travel, visiting her daughter in Germany, and her son and two grandchildren in Mesa, Arizona.

Welcome to new member Susan Shane, who joined our LWVSCC in January. Having lived in Santa Cruz for 33 years, Susan had a 25-year career as a marine mammologist, and raised two daughters as a single mom. Currently, she volunteers in the Dominican Hospital Emergency Room and on the board of Advocacy, Inc., which focuses on the rights of seniors and the mentally ill. Susan has done work for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, educating high school students about mental illness in order to reduce the stigma. Having been a member of LWVSCC in the 80s, she was inspired to rejoin the League after hearing our voter service team explain the propositions on the 2014 ballot. She views creating informed voters as a terrific community service.

During February, March, April, May, and June, LWVSCC members are encouraged to recruit new members. New members who join in February or March only pay half of the regular dues (\$32.50 for an individual or \$50 for a household membership), which is good through June 30 of the current year, at which time they will be asked to renew. Those who join in April, May, or June pay the full membership dues (\$65 for single membership; \$100 household), and will be considered paid-in-full until June 30 of the next calendar year, which is a good value. To encourage more students to join the League, our current members might consider sponsoring a student membership for \$30. Find out more about joining on the "[Join the League](#)" page at lwvsc.org.

—Barbara Lewis, 1st Vice President/Membership

LAIRD ON CALIFORNIA'S WATER CHALLENGES:

How to survive the drought without going nuclear

On February 22, the LWVSCC was fortunate to have the Honorable John Laird, State Secretary of Natural Resources, speak at our 50th anniversary luncheon. He began with an overview of his recent work. He successfully negotiated with Nevada to save the Lake Tahoe Compact. His negotiations with the Klamath tribes to remove dams and restore watersheds brought them from opposition to agreement. This created the largest network of marine protected areas in the US. He worked with the federal government to create a desert renewal plan with permanent mitigations for desert habitat while finding the best sites for renewable energy.

Laird also presided over the process to reform what is now the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Department of Fish and Game). He oversaw the creation of "Parks Forward," a program to establish a sustainable state parks system. He worked to protect agricultural land in California by using cap and trade money.

Governor Jerry Brown has set goals for moving away from gas and oil towards renewable energy while reducing emissions; Laird's challenge is to figure out how we actually do that. According to Laird, in California we now have the toughest regulations in 50 states on hydraulic fracturing (some states have banned fracking altogether). In addition to doing scientific environmental impact studies, we now require water quality monitoring before and after drilling. This monitoring will help us obtain massive amounts of data to better understand the effects of fracking, giving us good information on which to base our decisions.



John Laird speaks at LWVSCC luncheon

Those are some of the issues Laird works on when not dealing with water concerns, but water is the biggest and most complex issue he deals with. He frames it in terms of our present situation, where the current drought has broken records. Last year our fire season never ended, with 473 fires in January, 2014, compared to zero in January, 2013. Collectively, the state and federal government deliver 5 million acre feet in a typical year to 25 million Californians and agriculture. Last year they delivered 200,000 acre feet of water, just a fraction of normal.



John Laird answers questions from the audience

The state water system is based on the Sierra snowpack melting and being collected, with the San Joaquin and Sacramento River delta as the hub. During the 51 days in the rainy season without rain, the state was concerned that we might lose control of the salinity on the farms where there are water intakes, putting us on the verge of a historic problem of proportions never faced before. The last three years were the driest in recorded California history, and it would take 150% of normal rainfall to bring us out.

Continued on page 5

1965: A LEAGUE IS BORN

Fifty years ago the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz was granted status as a “provisional” League. In March of 1965 the list of our board of directors read as follows: “President: Mrs. Frederick Levy [Robin], First Vice President and Membership Chairman: Mrs. William Blade [Judy], Second Vice President and Membership Chairman: Mrs. Harold Zenner [Jene], Treasurer: Mrs. Edward Kinney [Jeri], Secretary and Bulletin Editor: Mrs. Richard Colby [Marian], Voters Service: Mrs. Paul Norton [Donna], Publications Chairman: Mrs. Georges McCormick [Dawn], Unit Chairman: Mrs. John Wagstaff [Kay], Public Relations Chairman: Mrs. Joseph Hartney [Lue], and Program Chairman: Mrs. Arnold Jacobs [Loraine].” (In the “it’s a small world” category, Jene Zenner’s address is listed as 220 Morrissey Boulevard in Santa Cruz, which is now the home of League member Joyce Anderson, where we have held several new member teas in recent years!)

The first mimeographed newsletter, dated May 15, 1965, of the “Provisional League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz” (note that “County” was not part of the League’s original title) announced a general meeting where “Mr. Norman A Walter, newly appointed mayor of SC and experienced member of the city council has agreed to speak concerning our city government.” Other events included a “know-your-town” workshop, a human resources workshop, various unit meetings, and a board meeting. Clearly the young League was already in full swing!

Treasurer Jeri Kiney attended the state convention in April and reported our official recognition as a provisional League. Jeri wrote, “Our pledge of \$50 has been made, representing our share of underwriting the operating expenses of State and National Leagues. So long as we remain provisional, we are not permitted to take action as a League, but as informed individuals, there is much that we can do.” The Santa Cruz League at that time included 69 members and received a “warm reception and welcome.” The state agenda adopted that year concerned an evaluation of proposals to revise the state constitution and the state’s responsibility for water quality.

Later that year, the Human Resources unit addressed issues of inequality in education and employment. The United Nations workshop looked for ways the provisional League could support the United Nations. Other discussions looked at apportionment of state legislatures and Supreme Court decisions: “What landmark decisions did the Supreme Court make that are bringing about this political revolution?”

In September, League members registered 62 voters at the county fair, “for which we receive 10 cents per head to fatten the treasury.”

By December, our membership was up to 103. Dues were \$7.50 a year. The Finance Committee, planning for their “Finance Drive,” asked members to “...consider MEN!! We need about 8 gentlemen of the area who would be willing to help us as advisors and lend the use of their influential names to our campaign.” The Finance Drive, held in February, “asks the financial support of those in the community interested in furthering citizen participation in government.” At the training workshop, Al Castagnola, a member of the League’s Men’s Advisory Committee, portrayed “a prime prospect” while “two intrepid lady Leaguers” persuaded him of the value of the League’s work in Santa Cruz. The article concludes, “Even the most retiring solicitors can bring back great results. Our goal this year is \$500.”

Look for more news about our League’s beginnings in subsequent VOTERS this spring.

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*

CALIFORNIA'S WATER CHALLENGES *Continued from page 3*

The governor launched an internal process to create a California Water Action Plan (CWAP), a simple blueprint for what we have to do to create water sustainability for the next 5 years and beyond. Laird's agency, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), in conjunction with the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), was tasked with the effort to develop and implement the plan. The plan, finalized in early 2014, identified several major needs, among them: more reliability in existing water supplies, more water storage, conservation as a way of life, more water recycling, habitat restoration, and more operational efficiency.

Until last summer, California was the only state without a framework for regulating groundwater. In the next few years the CNRA will establish regional agencies to regulate each basin, and then put in place a plan to achieve balance and sustainability in each basin while allowing as much local control as possible.

The CWAP creates a long-term strategy to use funds from the 7.5 billion dollar water bond passed last November. The process begins with public meetings around the state and setting up a merit-based application system for grants to be made in accordance with the plan. The bond includes a major piece for recycling, some for storm water capturing, and some for regional projects. Laird also emphasized that, for areas not served by state water, the bond includes money for other projects to balance it out and help make our local water systems reliable.

To qualify for state money spent on water storage, projects must have a public benefit, such as fish, water flow, or recreation. Those who will benefit from the water must pay for part of the dam project, and local agencies need to obtain financial commitments from other sources to pay for the non-state part of the project.

Laird addressed water conservation as another key component of the CWAP, emphasizing that consumers can become very efficient and successful at conservation, and that reliability must go hand-in-hand with conservation. He brought up several instances in the past where a goal was achieved, even though they didn't understand at the outset how they would get there. The goal for water conservation is a 20% per capita reduction by 2020, with a check-in when we are half way through to see if we are still on target.

Water rights are another thorny issue in California. Some riparian water rights granted prior to the 1914 water rights law still give priority to those who had those rights prior to the law, making fairness difficult to achieve and causing hardship for those with junior water rights. In Australia during their 10-year drought they completely revised their water rights system by spending a few billion dollars to buy out everyone's water rights. Unfortunately, to do so in California would cost well over a hundred billion dollars, and it's hard to imagine that circumstance.

Laird completed his talk with a lengthy question-and-answer session. A [video of Laird's full talk](#), including the questions and answers, can be viewed by clicking on the link at lwvsc.org.

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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