



Santa Cruz Voter

League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County

March 2012

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Calendar

Tuesday, March 13, 2011

1 -3 P.M.

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Thursday, March 15, 2012

1 - 3 P.M.

Local Program Planning Meeting

Beach Cliff Clubhouse

863 Via Palo Alto, Aptos 95003

Thursday, April 26, 2012

11:30 A.M. - 2 P.M.

Status of Health Care in Santa Cruz County

Speakers Rama Khalsa, Ph.D. and Giang

Nguyen, RN

Community Foundation Santa Cruz County

7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003

Free admission; optional light lunch \$15

Saturday, June 2, 2012

LWVSCC Annual Meeting

Bruno's Barbeque

King's Village Shopping Center

230 G Mount Hermon Road, Scotts Valley

Local Program Planning

Thursday, March 15, 2012

1 – 3 P.M.

Beach Cliff Club House

863 Via Palo Alto

Aptos 95003

All LWVSCC members are encouraged to attend our upcoming Local Program Planning meeting on March 15. This is a great opportunity for members to learn about our local League positions and to recommend issues and activities to focus on during the coming fiscal year beginning July 1.

At this meeting, we will review all [local LWVSCC positions](#) to determine if any positions need a fresh look or require an update. We look to our members to let us know what topics they are interested in seeing addressed at our program meetings in the coming year. We will also consider if any new studies should be undertaken by our local League. Any member willing to spearhead a study can present their suggestion for a new issue for our League to study. We also welcome suggestions for speakers and locations.

We will vote on program and study recommendations at our Annual Meeting on June 2. We look forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions for the coming year: you power our League!

If you are unable to attend, you may contribute your recommendations by e-mail at league@lwvsc.org or call 426-VOTE (8683). Please plan on attending and carpooling, if possible.

News Briefs

✓ In January the LWVUS board adopted **Power the Vote** as our call to action to tie together everything the League does this year. Working in Congress, state legislatures, and with local registrars, we can come together to ensure that the power to shape our democracy is the power of the vote and not the power of big money and big media.

✓ On January 31 AB 1148, the **California Disclose Act** aimed at requiring greater transparency in funding for political ads, came in two votes short of the 2/3 majority needed to pass in the State Senate due to nearly unanimous Republican opposition. The LWV of California has endorsed AB 1648, a new, stronger, version of the Disclose Act that would require disclosure of the three largest funders of \$10,000 or more.

✓ The Santa Cruz Chapter of the United Nations Association celebrates **International Women's Day** on Saturday March 17, noon to 3 P.M., at Loudon Nelson Center, 301 Center Street. This event features a panel discussion of active young women from our community, Irish music, songs by the Raging Grannies, and a silent auction. Admission is free, but you can buy lunch from an all-you-can-eat International Soup Kitchen for \$7.00. For more information contact the UNA Store at 903 Pacific Avenue, 425-7618.

Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act and Voter-Nominated Offices

On June 8, 2010, California voters approved Proposition 14, which created a “top two” or “open primary” election system.

Except for the office of U.S. President and county central committee offices, offices that used to be known as “partisan offices” (e.g., state constitutional offices, U.S. Congress, and state legislative offices) are now known as “voter-nominated” offices. What used to be known as a “political party affiliation” is now known as a “political party preference.”

Under the Top-Two Candidates Open Primary Act, all candidates running in a primary election, regardless of their party preference, will appear on a single primary election ballot and voters can vote for any candidate. The top two overall vote-getters—not the top vote-getter from each qualified political party—will move on to the general election. Additionally, candidates are no longer allowed to run as “independents” or “write-ins” at the general election.

Now, under the Top-Two Candidates Open Primary Act, candidates for voter-nominated office must indicate their party preference or lack of party preference on the primary and general election ballots. Political parties can no longer formally nominate candidates for voter-nominated offices, so a candidate who finishes in the top two at the primary election and advances to the general election is not the official nominee of any party for the office.

May 21 is the last day to register to vote in the June 5 primary election. Forms are available at post offices and the elections office, room 210, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz. You can also [complete the form on line](#), then print it and mail it.

More details from California's Secretary of State are [available online](#).

Another good resource from LWV of California is [“The Rules Have Changed: Elections 2012,”](#) an article that examines election changes in depth, by Lianne Campodonico, LWVC Voter Service Director.

—Morgan Rankin, Voters Service



*Jan Karwin and Susan Mauriello
at February Luncheon*

President's Message

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the Valentine luncheon fundraiser at the Hilton Hotel. The banquet tables were beautifully decorated, the food was good, our keynote speaker CAO Susan Mauriello was riveting, and the silent auction was simply magnificent. I'd like to especially commend Maria Nesheim, Program Co-Chair, who stepped up to carry out the preparations when Co-Chair Peggy Marketello's husband Tom passed away just two weeks before the event. Even though the show had to go on, our heartfelt sympathy was with Peggy during this sad time.

Special thanks to all attendees whose generous silent auction purchases raised \$800 for the League; we also received \$265 in donations. We made good progress toward reaching our fundraising goal for the year because so many of you contributed desirable gifts and/or made generous bids on your favorite items. For League members who were not able to attend our Valentine fundraising event, the RSVP card with the invitation provided the option of making a donation. If you haven't already done so, please consider helping our local League reach this year's fundraising goal by sending a check, payable to LWVSCC, to LWV of Santa Cruz County, P.O. Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010. Your support will be greatly appreciated and will enable our League to carry out its service to the voters in our community and to cover our budgeted administrative and advocacy expenses.

On February 18, several of our members along with a League member from LWV Monterey Peninsula, enjoyed a meeting with Assemblymember Bill Monning where we discussed timely issues as part of the League's annual Legislative Interviews. The [report of our Legislative Interview](#) with Assemblymember Bill Monning is available online.

Also, we need your help to recruit members to serve on our local League Board of Directors for the coming year. If you or a member you know might be willing to contribute some time and talent to further the League's role in our community, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee (listed below) and offer your suggestions for our League Board.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Stephanie Harlan, Chair, 475-7184, slharlan@sbcglobal.net
Joyce Aoyagi, 688-1722, joyce_aoyagi@comcast.net
Barbara Lewis, 335-7816, bobbi44@gmail.com
Morgan Rankin, 426-6412
Janet Welch, 475-2390

I hope to see you at our upcoming meetings.
—Jan Karwin, President

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

___\$65 Individual annual membership

___\$97.50 Two members in a household

___\$30.00 Student membership

___Contribution \$ _____

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWV Education Fund.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____

Email _____

Susan Mauriello Speaks at League's February Fundraiser



County Administrative Officer Susan Mauriello

County Administrative Officer Susan Mauriello spoke at the League's fundraiser at the Hilton Hotel in Scotts Valley on February 12. Her topic, "Open Your Hearts and Minds to Public Safety Realignment," refers to the changes taking place in the County in response to AB 109 passed in 2011 to deal with reductions in the state prison population ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court. In the future, low level offenders will no longer be sentenced to state prison but will be housed by the counties.

The U.S. leads the world in incarceration rates, and California's rate is no exception. Despite the fact that crime rates have remained relatively stable, incarceration rates have increased rapidly, as has the cost of housing these prisoners. The causes for this include the three-strikes initiative and increased incarceration for drug crimes. Healthcare costs have soared due to aging prisoners and the necessity of providing mental health services, for which more patients are treated than in than hospitals and residential treatment centers combined.

According to Ms. Mauriello, the AB 109-mandated changes will result in a net increase to the local prison population of approximately 100. The County is already well ahead in its preparations to handle this increase. It has as a model the juvenile justice system which has already undergone an extensive overhaul starting in 1998, which has resulted in a significant

decrease in the juvenile hall population. Alternatives to incarceration were instituted which were far less costly. These included supervised probation, ensuring timely court appearances, and diverting low- and medium-risk youth to community-based programs.

Ms Mauriello pointed out that, as a result of the County's experience with the juvenile justice system, we are well-situated to accommodate the coming changes. In addition, Ms Mauriello states, we are fortunate to have "strong leadership from our forward-thinking sheriff and committed government leaders" who advocate using evidence-based practices to address criminogenic and psychological and medical causes of criminal activity. "Punishment alone won't make a difference," she said. At the same time, any changes made must be data driven, evidence based, cost effective, and protective of public safety. Santa Cruz County is well on its way to ensuring the local implementation of AB 109 will be successful. Ms. Mauriello's expertise has been acknowledged by Governor Brown with her appointment to the Corrections Standards Authority where she will assist other counties with implementation of the law.

—Kathy Van Horn, Secretary

Editor's note: Patrick Dwire [reported on the meeting](#) for the Santa Cruz Good Times; his report of the talk is available online.



Attendees peruse silent auction offerings

Budget, Privatization, and Elections Discussed at Regional Meeting

Six local League members attended LWV of California's Northern California Regional Meeting in San Jose on February 25. The keynote speaker, the Honorable Chuck Reed, Mayor, City of San Jose, discussed the challenges of not having set aside enough money for retirement funds due to today's lower interest rates and how selective privatization of city services has helped lower costs. Helen Hutchinson, second Vice President, LWV of California, spoke on the League's positions on upcoming ballot referendums and redistricting (look for more on this in upcoming editions of the Santa Cruz Voter).

LWVC board director Syeda Reshma Inamdar explained why the League must work to educate the public about the state budget, as many misconceptions about expenditures and funding sources confuse voters. She also touched on the importance of establishing good budgeting practices, taking into account demographics, adequate reserves, and revenue volatility. The process would be improved, she said, by budget reforms, including instituting a two-year budget cycle. When considering ballot measures, voters must decide on the appropriate size of the public sector.

Cathy Lazarus, LWVUS Privatization Study Committee member, headed a panel discussion on privatization. Jane Light, San Jose Librarian, and John Tang, Director of Government Relations at the San Jose Water Company, talked about the pros and cons of privatization and the importance of considering all angles when deciding on what services are best suited to privatization. Privatization should be consistent with the public interest and the process should be open and transparent.

Lianne Campodonico, LWVC Voter Services Director, rounded out the presentations with an update on changes to the primary voting system in the upcoming election and a discussion of some of the special situations engendered by the

redistricting process. She also gave us a brief glimpse of the six measures on the ballot for next November (so far; dozens more may yet qualify). For details on ballot measures, she recommended www.Ballotpedia.org.

Many thanks to the San Jose-Santa Clara League for hosting this event.

—Pam Newbury, Editor

Membership Report

New members added to our Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters in February are Tracey Hawes and Dee Frye. We welcome the most recent additions to our local League.

—Barbara Lewis, Membership Chair

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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of Santa Cruz County
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