



Santa Cruz Voter

League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County

April 2012

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Calendar

Thursday, April 26, 2012

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

Status of Health Care in Santa Cruz County
 Rama Khalsa, Ph.D., Giang Nguyen, RN, MSN
 Community Foundation Santa Cruz County
 7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003
 Free admission; optional light lunch \$15
 Reservations required.

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

1 -3 P.M.

LWVSCC Board Meeting
 Santa Cruz County Bank
 720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Thursday, May 10, 2012

10 A.M. - Noon

June Ballot Measures Pros and Cons
 Aptos Library
 7695 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003

Saturday, June 2, 2012

LWVSCC Annual Meeting

Bruno's Barbeque
 King's Village Shopping Center
 230-G Mount Hermon Road, Scotts Valley

The Status of Health Care in Santa Cruz County

LWVSCC Presents County Health Officials

Rama Khalsa, Ph.D.
and

Giang Nguyen, R.N., M.S.N.

Thursday, April 26, 2012
11:30 A.M. – 2 P.M.

Community Foundation Santa Cruz County
 7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003

Free admission; open to the public

Reserve your seat by April 20:

(831) 426-VOTE (8683) or send an email to league@lwvsc.org

A light lunch will be served for \$15 per person (prepaid) or you may bring your own lunch. To prepay for the lunch, send a check payable to LWVSCC to Sandy Warren, 150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz, California 95060

Lunch begins at 11:30 A.M.; presentation starts at 12:10 P.M.

On Thursday, April 26, LWVSCC presents an update on the status of health care in Santa Cruz County by the recently retired director of county's Health Services Agency, Rama Khalsa, Ph.D., and her successor, Giang Nguyen, R.N., M.S.N. They will discuss Santa Cruz County's key health assets, the next steps in health reform, and the county's current health challenges.

LWVSCC Takes the Initiative on State Ballot Measure Study

✓ In early April, the LWV California's Education Fund will have **information on state ballot propositions** online at CAVotes.org. On May 10 our local League will have a **free public meeting to discuss the Pros and Cons** of the ballot measures at the Aptos Library from 10 A.M. to noon.

✓ **LWVC joined a lawsuit against Secretary of State Debra Bowen** in response to her December 2011 memorandum to County Clerks and Registrars stating that none of the individuals sentenced under the state's prison realignment program are eligible to vote. The League holds that individuals sentenced to county jail under the prison realignment should be allowed to vote, as they are not "in state prison" or "on parole" as required by a 2006 ruling that people confined in county jail as a condition of felony probation are entitled to vote under California law. For more details see the March 7 press release at <http://cavotes.org/>, click on "Press".

✓ The LWVUS signed onto a coalition letter in **support of the DISCLOSE Act**, introduced in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse on March 21. It closes loopholes created by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision. Similar to the Disclose Act recently rejected by the California legislature, this legislation focuses solely on disclosure provisions and does not contain special exceptions for any group and fixes the problem of untimely disclosure of donors to Super PACs that surfaced during the 2012 presidential primaries. More at lwv.org

As of early March 2012, the number of initiatives targeted for the November 2012 ballot is huge: four have qualified, 67 have been cleared for circulation, and five are pending at the Attorney General's office. On average, 21 percent of proposed measures actually make it to the ballot, predicting 20 measures will be decided in November.

Had enough? During the May 2011 League of Women Voters of California Convention, delegates voted to study California's initiative and referendum process in order to update LWVC's position, last updated in 1997. A local committee will be formed here in Santa Cruz and begin meeting in August. We will educate ourselves using material provided by the state committee, prepare to present it at a local meeting, then conclude by submitting a consensus report in March 2013.

In evaluating these various proposals for reforming the initiative process, the LWVC Study Committee is examining initiative and referendum history, process, and key concerns to uncover policy matters and solutions that will stand the test of time in shaping the League's positions in the future.

A few of the ideas currently being studied by the LWVC Study Committee include ways to level the imbalance of money interests; increasing the transparency for funding sources; methods of engaging and educating the public about ballot measures; restructuring the process by adding analysis, deliberation, debate, negotiation, and amendments; revisiting the process by which direct initiatives qualify; and how technology could enhance the process.

If you are interested in getting involved in this timely study, contact Sandy Warren (sandra3warren@yahoo.com or 426-9389).

More information about the Initiative and Referendum study, can be found at <http://ca.lwv.org/lwvonly> From the home page select "Issues" then "Initiative and Referendum". LWV members can take part in the ongoing discussions about the study by joining the California Initiative and Referendum ListServe or the Facebook group. More information is at the LWVC member only site at <http://www.ca.lwv.org/lwvonly/> Login may be required. Scroll down to "Studies and Concurrence."

LWVC Announces Positions on June Propositions

LWVC supports Proposition 28, the Legislative Term Limits Reform Act. This simple reform will help make our legislature more accountable and effective. The current limits on how many terms an individual can serve in the legislature would be replaced by a twelve-year limit on the total number of years one could serve—whether in the Assembly, the Senate, or a combination of the two. Legislators would focus on serving their districts rather than running for a new office. Proposition 28 won't solve all the problems in Sacramento, but it brings positive change to make the Legislature more effective and accountable.

LWVC has taken a neutral position on Proposition 29, the California Cancer Research Act. This measure would add a one-dollar per pack tax on cigarettes sold in California, with proceeds to be used for cancer and other smoking-related health issues, anti-smoking campaigns, and law enforcement. While the League supports these causes, we believe that earmarking state revenue for specific expenses reduces the legislature's flexibility to set budgets that respond to current needs. If funds are earmarked for specific expenses, we strongly prefer that this be accompanied by a sunset clause, requiring review of the expenditures on a regular basis.

Local Program Planning Meeting Report

Our Local Program Planning meeting was held on March 15. Pam Newbury, Ann Wise, Morgan Rankin and Jan Karwin read and explained the League's current positions. No changes were suggested to the local League's positions on County Government, Education, Land Use, Library Services, Transportation, Voters' Rights, and Water Resources, although the question was raised about whether pedestrian safety should be added to our transportation position. In addition, no changes were suggested to the Healthcare position, but it was decided that we wait until after the April 26 Healthcare program to finalize this.

Several suggestions were made by members for topics at next year's League meetings, including water in Santa Cruz County, land use issues surrounding the proposed UCSC expansion, transportation, and an examination of LAFCO, the county's Local Agency Formation Commission. The most popular proposals were for a State of the University talk with UCSC chancellor George Blumenthal and a program on emergency preparedness and procedures.

—*Kathy Van Horn, Secretary*

Precautionary Principal to be Discussed at Cabrillo

The Precautionary Principle

Friday, April 20, 7-9 p.m.

Cabrillo College Forum, Room 450

Speaker: Carolyn Raffensperger of the Science and Environmental Health Network

Free parking available in all student lots for this event.

The Precautionary Principle says that a substance or practice must be proven safe for humans and for the environment before it can be used. Cleaning or landscaping products, fish ladders or fracking, would all be of concern under this principal. Protect the rights of nature and the rights of generations to come.

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.

Membership Report

This month the League welcomes Dottie Speidel, a long-time League member newly come to Santa Cruz. Dottie first joined the League when she lived in Lincoln, Nebraska, and continued being an active member when she moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, serving on the board and engaging in other activities. She chaired a major local study that determined that agencies meant to help Native Americans weren't serving them well at all, which resulted in lots of follow up activity. She moved to Santa Cruz last December to be near family.

At a dinner on March 16 to benefit the Caravan to Cuba effort, Lois Muhly and League member Nancy Abbey were honored for their support for the caravans, as well as community activism for other worthy causes.

On March 20, League member Celia Scott was given the annual Peace Award by the Santa Cruz Branch of the International League for Peace and Freedom. Once a year, this award in the form of a simple wooden doll is passed on to a WILPF member in recognition of their contributions and commitment to peace.

—*Barbara Lewis, Membership*

In Memoriam:

Lifetime LWV Member Ilse Emilie Rowe

1929 - 2012

Our League mourns the loss of Lifetime League member Ilse Rowe, who passed away on March 28 at her home in Santa Cruz with her son and daughter in attendance. Services were held on March 29.

Ilse, a League member for over 55 years, has been a valuable asset to our League whose work will be hard to replace. Her bright mind and lively wit enlivened many League events here in Santa Cruz. On March 2 of this year, she received the Candy Coonerty Woman of Valor award for her community service. She was also active in American Association of University Women and Hadassah.

Born in Germany in 1929, Ilse and her family immigrated to the US when she was 9 years old. She majored in English at U.C. Berkley, where she met her future husband, Everett; they married in 1950 and soon moved to San Jose, where a friend recommended that she join the League of Women Voters. As a young mother, Ilse appreciated meetings held at the home of Janet Gray Hayes, then mayor of San Jose, where attendance was always good because the mayor hired a babysitter. During that time she found her calling at the League as a presenter at Pros and Cons meetings as well as organizing meetings, chairing groups, and working on the board. In the 80's, Ilse and Everett moved to Santa Cruz. With the children grown, Ilse became more active in League. One of her favorite activities was when she helped to arrange elegant wine tasting fundraisers at the UCSC Chancellor's house.

Five years ago Ilse was awarded lifetime membership in the League as a 50-year member. At that time, she reminisced that she joined the League hoping to meet really great people, as indeed she did. As she thought back on her experiences and all she had learned from the League, she summed it all up in one sentence: "It's been a great run."

—*Pam Newbury, Editor*

You may view a 2007 Voter interview with Ilse online at <http://lwvsc.org/files/IlseRowe2007interview.pdf>

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 _____

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of Santa Cruz County*

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President's Message

I encourage all LWVSCC members and their friends to join us on April 26 when our guest speakers Giang Nguyen and Rama Khalsa, respectively the current Director and the recently retired Director of the County's Health Services Agency, team up to present information on the Status of Health Care in Santa Cruz County.

After 13 years as the county's mental health director, Khalsa spent the next 12 years as the county's Director of Health Services Agency (www.santacruzhealth.org). She was a key leader in the development of the local children's health coverage initiative, helped found the Safety Net Clinic Coalition of Santa Cruz County, and actively pursued funding and services for low-income and uninsured residents of the County. She has worked on state and federal legislation supporting public health, mental health, and health reform.



Rama Khalsa

As part of the California Legislative Women's Caucus annual tribute to outstanding California women, Assemblymember Bill Monning recently named Khalsa as the 27th Assembly District's 2012 "Woman of the Year" for going above and beyond her duties when providing healthcare service and for tirelessly championing children's health, ensuring access to quality healthcare for all who need it, and improving the health and well-being of all Santa Cruz County residents.

Much of Khalsa's time recently has been spent on preparing for a vast expansion of MediCruz (a program aimed at assisting the county's poorest residents) through the Affordable Care Act. Now that she has retired, however, Khasla has handed over that responsibility to Nguyen, who will focus on those reforms as they continue through 2014.



Giang Nguyen

Nguyen spent 21 years as Director of Nursing in the Fresno County Psychiatric Hospital as well as in various other managerial and directorial positions in public health. Recently she has served as Executive Administrator for the California Department of Mental Health before taking over as Director of the Health Service Agency after Khasla's retirement.

Be sure to make your reservation and help spread the word to others. If you would like to print the Health Care event flyer to share with your friends, go to our on line calendar at <http://lwvsc.org/calendar.html> and click on the "Flyer" link.