



# Santa Cruz Voter

League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County

October 2012

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## Pros and Cons of State Ballot Measures

**Thursday  
October 4, 2012  
11 A.M. to 1 P.M.**

Aptos Public Library,  
7695 Soquel Drive  
Aptos

*Free and open to League members and the public.*



### Calendar

Thursday, October 4  
11 A.M. - 1 P.M.  
Pros and Cons Talk  
Aptos Library  
7695 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Tuesday, October 9, 2012  
1-3 P.M.  
LWVSCC Board Meeting  
Santa Cruz County Bank  
720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Dates to save for 2013:  
Thursday, January 24 2013  
Thursday, February 28 2013  
Initiative and Referendum Study consensus meetings; details to be announced.

Should the definition of human trafficking be expanded and penalties for those crimes be increased? Should consumers be told when their food contains genetically engineered ingredients? Ballot measures on these issues plus auto insurance discounts, three-strikes law changes, the death penalty, taxes, redistricting, and political contributions will all be voted on in November’s election.

To be an informed voter and learn more about all eleven ballot measures, don’t miss our Pros and Cons presentation on October 4 at the Aptos public Library at 11 A.M. Our Voters Service co-chair, Morgan Rankin, will analyze the ballot measures from a non-partisan perspective.

This program is free and open to League members and the public. No reservations are required.

The last day that you can register to vote is October 22. Register online at <http://www.votescount.com/reg.htm> or contact the County Elections Office at 831-454-2060.

## News Briefs

✓ The LWV has asked presidential candidates Gary Johnson, Barak Obama, Mitt Romney, and Jill Stein to provide answers to some of the most pressing public policy questions. See what the candidates have to say at [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org), the League's non-partisan national voters' guide supported by the education fund.

✓ A recording of the July webinar on redistricting is now available online at [ca.lwv.org](http://ca.lwv.org). The League talks with commissioners Connie Malloy and Stanley Forbes to find out more about how California's new redistricting commission works.

✓ Election Day Voter Registration (AB 1436—Feuer) has passed the state legislature and is waiting for Governor Brown's signature (as of our publication date, the bill is still on his desk; for an update on the bill's status, go to [www.aroundthecapitol.com](http://www.aroundthecapitol.com) ). AB 1436 allows eligible Californians to register and vote up to and on Election Day. Ask Governor Brown to sign this bill to increase voter participation and access to voting.

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## LWVSCC Supports Local School Bond Measures

While the League is non-partisan, we do make recommendations on ballot measures on which we have an established position. At our September 11 meeting, the LWVSCC board voted to support two school bond measures on the November ballot.

[Measure L](#) would authorize the Pajaro Valley Unified School District to issue \$150,000,000 in bonds at an estimated tax rate of \$38 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation in the Aptos and Watsonville areas.

[Measure M](#) would authorize the Pacific Elementary School District in Davenport to issue \$830,000 in bonds at an estimated tax rate of \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation.

Funds raised would stay with the local districts, and each would have an independent citizens' oversight committee to ensure that the funds were used only on the approved list of projects.

After reviewing these ballot measures and discussing the pros and cons, the board decided to support these bond measures based on our established local [Education Position](#) that supports "adequate financing, carefully managed, and in the absence of alternative sources of revenue, raised through presently available methods..."

—Jan Karwin



*Pajaro Valley High School*

## County HSA Director Provides Update on Affordable Care Act

At our September luncheon, the League was privileged to have [County Health Services Agency](#) Director Giang Nguyen, RN, MSN, address issues surrounding the Affordable Care Act (ACA). She began by showing "[Health Reform Hits Main Street](#)", a ten minute animated video prepared by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation that explains what the new health care reform law does and doesn't do and what it costs.

The provisions of the law come into play gradually over the next few years. Some provisions are already in place, such as additional free preventative care and screenings, high risk pools for those with preexisting conditions, and guaranteed coverage of children under 26 on their parents' plans. There will also be controls on health insurance premium increases and tax rebates for small businesses.



In 2014 Medicaid will expand to cover all of the lowest income Americans, including childless

adults, who are below 133% of the federal poverty level (\$14,404 for an individual or \$29,327 for a family of four in 2009) and there will be tax credits for those whose employers don't provide insurance or whose income is too low to buy adequate insurance. Health insurance exchanges are expected to give consumers good information, lots of choices, and a fair playing field, which should result in competitive rates from insurers. Insurers will be required to cover everyone, and consumers will be required to pay a tax penalty if they don't buy coverage.

The cost, \$938 billion over 10 years (2% of federal budget, 3% of overall health care spending), will be offset by cost cutting measures and new taxes, for a net reduction in the federal deficit. The ACA provides no benefits to undocumented individuals.

In Santa Cruz County, 7,000 clients from the Healthy Families program will move to Medi-Cal in 2013. In 2014, MediCruz and the Low Income Health Program will transfer clients to Medi-Cal. The number of uninsured clients in the county is expected to drop from 43,500 (19%) in 2012 to 18,700 (8%) in 2014, an 11% reduction.

In 2015, clients eligible for both Medicare and Medi-Cal will have their services merged into a single benefits package in order to provide a more organized and efficient care system.

Santa Cruz County is preparing for these changes by working with the [Central California Alliance for Health](#) to assist with administrative activities. The [Health Improvement Partnership](#), a non-profit coalition of health care leaders dedicated to improving and increasing access to local health care

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systems, will facilitate collaboration among the [eight local safety net clinics](#). The HSA will work closely with other county departments to transition clients to Medi-Cal smoothly and help with outreach to enroll new eligible clients. Additionally, public-private partnerships are expected to help provide for new capacity demands.



Director Nguyen also promotes client education for the most efficient use of resources and the use of “navigators” to help clients find appropriate care. She also emphasized the importance of careful management to avoid under or over utilization of services and the need to provide accountability and competitive services to clients in an attractive environment.

Director Nguyen expressed concern about the state’s proposal to redirect Health Realignment Funds currently provided to all counties. The state asserts that because of the transfer of clients to Medi-Cal,

counties will no longer need that money. Nguyen explained that, to the contrary, the county will continue to need these funds for several reasons: to provide health services to undocumented population, to provide a local match for federal funding, and for those who cannot afford to pay for health care.

Nguyen also addressed concerns about the increased part played by the state in Santa Cruz County’s health care system as a result of the transfer of clients from locally controlled systems to Medi-Cal. She stressed the importance of continued advocacy while concerns are being settled and indicated that the state has acknowledged the need to involve stakeholders as they continue to work through the issues. “As a public health professional,” she concluded, “I’m hopeful.”

Following Director Nguyen’s talk, Leslie Conner, executive director of the [Santa Cruz Women’s Health Center](#) spoke about the \$1.3 million federal New Access Point grant received in June from Affordable Care Act funds. The grant money will be used to expand services to accommodate more low-income residents who will become eligible for coverage under the ACA. Founded 40 years ago by eight women from UCSC, the Women’s Health Center now serves 5,000 patients a year, women, children, and men.



—Pam Newbury, Editor



## Smart Voter—Unbiased Election Information Available 24/7

On November 6 over a million Californians will look at the League's voter information on the [SmartVoter.org](http://SmartVoter.org) Website. In California SmartVoter.org is your most comprehensive and accurate single source of election information, officially partnered with the Secretary of State and county registrars, as well as the LWV California Education Fund and local Leagues.

SmartVoter.org covers virtually every local election held in participating California counties. By contrast, most other services have spotty coverage, covering some election dates while leaving most out.

SmartVoter.org also has the most accurate location information to help voters find their polling place, while other services use databases that contain more errors and can send voters to the wrong spot. To help your voting friends and family members, make sure that you point them to <http://www.smartvoter.org/ca/scz> as their resource for learning about the candidates and measures on their ballot.

LWVSCC member Scott McGilvray, the Smart Voter Santa Cruz County Coordinator, is working with the Santa Cruz Elections Office and Smart Voter team members to provide content to Smart Voter about all the local candidates and measures.

—Bonnie Hamlin, *Smart Voter Northern California Liaison and member of the League of Women Voters of Oakland*

## LWVC Initiative & Referendum Process Update Study

The Initiative and Referendum Study Committee is sifting through many ideas to reform California's initiative and referendum process. The reform ideas cover a wide range of possibilities, from throwing out the whole process to a wholesale embrace of the growing trend of direct democracy as represented by the initiative and referendum.

Our study committee is hard at work examining history, process, and key concerns to uncover policy matters that will stand the test of time in sharing the League's positions in the future.

We are planning a lunch meeting during the second week of November, with a speaker to present the history of the process in California. The consensus process will begin in 2013 with two local meetings in Santa Cruz. We will split the 14 consensus questions between two unit meetings, the first on January 24, the second on February 28, so put the League on your calendar for those two Thursdays next year.

There is still time to get involved with the committee by contacting Sandy Warren at [sandra333warren@gmail.com](mailto:sandra333warren@gmail.com). You can view study materials on the [League-only website](#).

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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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## President's Message

Dear Fellow Leaguers:

At our September luncheon we were well-informed about the Affordable Care Act by HSA director Giang Nguyen. Many thanks to our Program Coordinator, Peggy Marketello, for her work arranging the luncheon. Be sure to read the report on Director Nguyen's talk in this edition of the VOTER.



Thanks also to our Voters Service chairs, Morgan Rankin and Eve Roberson, for coordinating National Voter Registration Day activities on September 25. We had 5 registration tables throughout Santa Cruz County.

Also, the LWVC Education Fund has published their Pros and Cons for this November's election, which may be accessed at [CAvotes.org](http://CAvotes.org). It runs to twelve pages, but is very interesting and well worth reading. Morgan Rankin will present pros and cons of all eleven ballot measures at the Aptos Library on October 4 at 11:00 A.M. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Irene Thomas, 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

\_\_\_\_\$100.00 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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