



THE SACRAMENTO VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY

JANUARY 2012

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 2012

Program Planning Meeting, Arcade Library

Location: 2443 Marconi Ave west of Fulton Avenue, Sacramento.

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.. Refreshments will be served.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Legislative Interviews

If you would like to interview your state senator or assemblyperson, gathering information by following a patterned series of questions, please contact board member Alice Ginosar, who is coordinating this effort, at aliceginosar@yahoo.com.

Privatization Study Committee

If you would like to assist this committee in researching, compiling and coordinating activities, please contact co-chairs Bridgette Rivers at bcrivers@gmail.com or Nancy Compton at ncompton43@att.net

Speakers Bureau and June 2012 Election

Planning is underway for the June statewide primary election. There will be only two statewide measures on the ballot, which means not as much advocacy activity as in some other elections. We hope that League members will assist the voter service team as they will again do a yeoman's job of explaining new districts plus a top-two primary election. Besides speakers and moderators we need question sorters and hostesses to greet the public. To volunteer, contact Voter Services Director Cheryll Moore at voterservice@lwvsacramento.org.

Apologies for the Omission! The name of Folsom City Council Member Kerri Howell was inadvertently omitted from the photo caption on the cover of the December 2011 Voter.

Post-Eleanor Event: A white platter was left at the Eleanor event. If this is your platter, please contact Louse Eihnsphahr at EWilli7021@aol.com to arrange its return.

SAVE THE DATE:

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, May 19-20, 2012. League of Women Voters of California Leadership Council, Sacramento; Plan to Attend, More information to come

2010-2011

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Voice Message for all directors:
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to members and supporters of the League! 2011 was a successful year for us, due to the work of our board of directors, our fund development committee and members who recruited new Leaguers. In 2011, twenty nine diverse new women and men members joined our organization, and in 2010, the League of Women Voters of California recognized us for increasing our membership.

League Visibility: We are pleased that in past months we built and developed relationships with ethnic and rainbow chambers of commerce, provided voter service consultation to a new Latino grassroots organization, gave ballot presentations to traditional men's organizations, visited college campuses to give election presentations to students and staff, reached out to sister organizations like the Soroptimists, provided voter registration to Occupiers at Chavez Park, gave election presentations to senior citizens in assisted living centers, promoted the League with women law students at a local university, and as mentioned above, promoted an appreciation of differences by recruiting a diversity of new League members.

Volunteer Opportunities: Upcoming public activities providing opportunities for member volunteers include Legislative Interviews, the LWVUS Privatization Study and the LWVC Initiative and Referendum Study (Summer 2012-March 2013). In the New Year, many activities center on the election season. We will call on members to support public candidate forums and to speak on ballot measures for civic groups all across Sacramento County. If you have not attended our Speakers Bureau Training, watch the Voter for a schedule, or contact our Voter Services Director.

Member Recruitment: Principally, we count on members and supporters to help build our organization by recruiting civic-minded friends, co-workers and neighbors to join the League. Remember, we cannot complain about our form of government if we have not worked to increase understanding of major public policy issues, influenced public policy through education and advocacy, and participated in securing our democracy!

Program Planning: Saturday, January 14, 2012, our annual Program Planning meeting is scheduled at Arcade Library. We hope you will attend to discuss and prioritize issues for focus 2012-2013. See you there!

VOTER SUPPRESSION

By Eileen Heaser

Voter suppression reports and articles are on the upsurge. An article by Sherrilyn A. Ifill for *The Root*, describes misleading “robocalls” used by Republicans during the 2010 Maryland gubernatorial election [Robert Ehrlich was running against the incumbent]. Three hours before the polls closed the voice on the phone informed African American listeners that the incumbent Gov. M. O’Malley [D] had been “successful” and went on to encourage voters to stay home and “watch the returns on TV.” Later, R. Ehrlich was tried and found guilty of election fraud.

The Brennan Center for Justice’s report, *Voting Law Changes in 2012*, provides information on suppression laws passed in 2011 and pending in 2012. So far 19 laws and two executive actions passed in 14 states **may have** the possible impacts :

- A. making it significantly harder for more than five million eligible voters to cast ballots in 2012,
- B. states that have cut back on voting rights will provide 171 electoral votes in 2012, i.e., 63% of the 270 needed to win the presidency and
- C. five of the 12 likely battleground states have already cut back on voting rights.

These restrictions especially affect the young, minorities, low-income, and disabled. ²In Florida and Texas laws were passed to severely limit voter registration drives. The LWV in Florida placed a moratorium on all voter registration activities as the law was too burdensome. (Weiser, pg. 20-)

The NAACP is going to the United Nations with this issue, see: [Defending Democracy: Confronting Modern Barriers to Voting Rights in America](#) .

The League, since its inception, has advocated for full inclusion in the voting process, and continues to register voters and monitor elections.

¹Ifill, S. A. (12/8/2011). [Black Voters Told, ‘Relax Don’t Vote’](#) *The Root*.

²Weiser, W.R. & L. Norden. (2011). [Voting Law Changes in 2012](#). NY University School of Law., Brennan Center for Justice, New York December 13, 2011

FLORIDA LAWMAKERS SUBPOENAED IN ELECTIONS LAWSUIT

By Steve Bousquet

The Miami Herald, Herald/Times Tallahassee Bureau

November 29, 2011

Eleven state legislators were hit with subpoenas in a federal lawsuit involving four controversial provisions of Florida's new election law.

The subpoenas to six senators and five representatives, all Republicans, were issued on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Florida and the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic voter advocacy group, by their attorney, Daniel O'Connor of the Washington, D.C., firm Bryan Cave LLP.

Both organizations have been working to prevent the U.S. government from approving the changes, which they say will disenfranchise voters and make it harder to register new voters in Florida headed into a critical 2012 presidential election.

The lawmakers, most of whom supported the legislation, are ordered to produce by Dec. 14 "all documents" related to the four major election law changes at issue in the case.

Those changes curtail early voting from 14 days to eight, reduce the shelf life of voter signatures on ballot initiative petitions from four years to two, require third-party groups to submit voter registration forms within 48 hours and require voters who update addresses at the polls to cast provisional ballots if they have moved from a different county.

The state initiated the lawsuit by asking a panel of three federal judges to "pre-clear," or approve, the changes as required by law to ensure that they do not discriminate against minority voters in Hillsborough, Collier, Hardee, Hendry and Monroe counties.

In a memorandum filed with the three-judge panel in the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia, the League of Women Voters of Florida and the National Council of La Raza say they have suspended all voter registration efforts because of the law.

"Fewer early voting days and restrictions on casting a regular ballot are directly at odds with the League's mission to increase civic participation," the memorandum says.

Steve Bousquet can be reached at bousquet@tampabay.com or (850) 224-7263.

Read more: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/11/29/v-print/2524058/florida-lawmakers-subpoenaed-in.html#ixzz1fSP3TbAF>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Nancy and Fred Teichert

LWVC INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM UPDATE STUDY

League of Women Voters of California

During the LWVC Convention in May, delegates adopted an update of the initiative and referendum process in California. The state study committee has been chosen, has met once in person, adopted a study scope, budget and tentative timeline. They are responsible for developing the study material that all local Leagues in California will use to come to consensus. The consensus meetings will be in late 2012 or early 2013—after the 2012 presidential election.

The study committee divided into subgroups, each taking a topic to research:

- history of the initiative and referendum process, with an emphasis on California
- description of the initiative and referendum process as it exists today in California
- a comparison of other states and how they are using the processes for direct democracy
- identification of key issues with the processes
- ideas or methods for reforming the process

The group also agreed to create community education and outreach material as part of its work, with the help of some as-yet-to-be-identified grant money.

There are multiple ways to find out more about the study, and join in the ongoing discussion. There is a Facebook group (League of Women Voters of California Initiative and Referendum Study), a Yahoo Group that you can link to via the LWVC members only page (contact local League leadership if you need information about how to find this), and a page on the League's website (<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/issues/initiativeand-referendum.html>), where the study committee will provide a continually updating list of articles and reading materials.

Membership Form

Please fill out this form, include a check or money order and mail to:

League of Women Voters of Sacramento County

1107 9th Street Suite 300

Sacramento, CA 95814

Individual Membership \$65.00

Family Membership (two adults at same address) \$100.00

Student Membership \$15.00

Supported Membership (\$15 minimum) _____

Assistance requested from Membership Support Fund; Please fill in amount enclosed

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Membership dues are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes. Joining the LWVSC makes you a member of all levels of League (local, state, and national).

END THE DEATH PENALTY WITH SAFE CALIFORNIA INITIATIVE
League of Women Voters of California

Volunteers gathering ballot-qualifying signatures

The League of Women Voters of California believes it's past time that we halt executions. That's why it endorses the SAFE California Initiative, which is presently being circulated to collect the necessary signatures to qualify it for the November 2012 ballot. (SAFE stands for Savings, Accountability & Full Enforcement). If it passes, the initiative will replace the death penalty with permanent imprisonment (life without the possibility of parole), including the conversion of existing death sentences to that alternative.

This endorsement is in accord with the LWVUS position supporting the end of the death penalty. The initiative is functionally equivalent to SB 490, a legislative bill endorsed by the California League.

Besides being ineffective and subject to error, the death penalty is a serious fiscal drain. Replacing it with permanent imprisonment would save the state a significant amount of money, estimated at \$1 billion over five years.

A study released in July 2011, by U.S. Appeals Court Judge Arthur Alarcon and Paula Mitchell, professor at Loyola Law School, found that death penalty cases, including legal costs and additional costs of housing inmates on death row, cost California taxpayers more than \$184 million every year. On average, \$308 million has been spent for each of the thirteen executions that have been carried out since the death penalty was reinstated in California in 1978.

While we waste millions on the death penalty, about half of serious violent crimes (homicides and rapes, at 46% and 56% respectively) go unsolved every year owing to limited law-enforcement resources. The SAFE California Act would use some of the savings from ending the death penalty to create a fund to increase the rate at which the serious crimes of homicide and rape are solved by funding additional law-enforcement capacity and would require that convicted murderers work behind bars and pay restitution into a victims' compensation fund.

The SAFE California Act and the campaign to gather qualifying signatures on its behalf are supported by a coalition of law-enforcement professionals, family members of murder victims, and individuals exonerated of wrongful conviction, as well as religious and civil rights groups. Sign up for email alerts, make a donation, and find more ways to get involved on the campaign site (www.safecalifornia.org).

El Camino Gardens: Treasure Trove of Dedicated Leaguers

by Alice Ginosar

Anita Corum is one of our “treasures” who faithfully has attended our Suburban Unit meetings at El Camino Gardens, Carmichael, even when she had visual difficulties and was unable to read the Voter. Anita shared with our unit one of the homemade Christmas cards she and her husband made many years ago, when she lived in Richmond that reflected the League message.

Before moving to Sacramento, Anita was President of LWV Richmond CA and mentored by our own Anne Rudin. It was in the late 1960's, and the League of Women Voters was conducting two studies on the revision of our California Constitution and on redistricting (yes same as we did 40 years later); Anne remembers Anita as being very “dedicated.” We were very happy when Anita joined our Sacramento League.

Others of our Treasure Trove at El Camino Gardens are: Janie Green, Sue Hughes, Mary McCullough, Doris Olson, Helen Shyrock, and Vivian Skintauy. Thank you all for your long service and support of the League of Women Voters.

UNIT MEETINGS

January meetings [January 9th & 10th] will focus on voter suppression. See the insert for suggested reading. Please invite friends, co-workers and neighbors to the Unit meetings.

UNIT	DATE & TIME	CONTACT	LOCATION
Mid-City	Monday, January 9th 6:15 PM	Catherine Troka 446-5933	1211 25th Street Sacramento 95816
Morning Suburban	Tuesday, January 10th 9:15 AM	Anne Berner 944-1042	2426 Garfield Ave. Carmichael 95608
Greenhaven/ Land Park	Tuesday, January 10th 10:00 AM	Mary Hopkins 422-6958	45 Sunlit Circle Sacramento 95831
Elk Grove	Tuesday, January 10th 1:00 PM	Bill & Elaine Lee 688-5360	8622 Shasta Lily Drive Elk Grove 95624

Eileen Heaser, unit coordinator, 916-456-2154 or eheser@csus.edu



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JANUARY 2012

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LWVC JOINS "THE CHILDREN'S MOVEMENT"

At the November board meeting members unanimously agreed to join *The Children's Movement* organized by League frequent partner, *Children Now*. *Children Now's* Ted Lempert explains that it's much more effective for children's issues to be taken seriously by the state legislature when we can leverage respected representation across fundamental children's health and education policy issues. The LWVC is joining this *Movement* on an opt-in basis, meaning that we will continue our traditional analysis of bills relating to children, and will sign on for specific bills when warranted. By joining, we become part of a coalition with dozens of other respected child advocacy organizations. See www.childrennow.org.

E-MAIL V SNAIL MAIL ANNOUNCEMENT

If you would like to receive the Voter by e-mail instead of U.S. postal service mail, please contact the League office at: lwvs@lwvsacramento.org.

Seventy per cent of League of Women Voters of Sacramento County members provided us e-mail addresses. If you have not shared your e-mail, please send it to: president@lwvsacramento.org.