



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

January 2009

Volume 36 Number 6

In This Issue

Bay Area League Meeting	3
Board Briefs	2
Calendar	6
League News	5
Letter to Obama	4
Membership News	2
National Popular Vote	5
President's Message	2
Program Planning	1
Smart Voter	2

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The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

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Editor: Roberta Hollimon

lwvcseditor@comcast.net

GRASSROOTS DAY

aka Program Planning

Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Time: 10:00 am – 12 noon

Place: Olsens'
611 Hubbard Avenue
Santa Clara, 95051

OR

Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Time: 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Place: Spiller's
10371 Plumtree Lane
Cupertino, 95014

What do you want to see on the agenda for the League in California for the upcoming biennium?

As valued members of this grassroots organization, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to indicate the issues on which we believe the state League and all local Leagues in California should focus their time, talent, money, and reputation.

The program planning process is an opportunity to think strategically about the work of the League on the state level. Consider where there is the most need, where we will be most effective, and what activities best serve our mission. And consider the indirect impact of these choices, particularly on membership recruitment and retention, fundraising, and our reputation—all of which are crucial to the future of our local League as well as that of the LWVC.

We will also plan the program of our local League. What do you think we should be doing in Cupertino and Sunnyvale: monitoring housing and commercial development, observing school boards, participating in studies?

The Program Planning meeting is presented at two different times to accommodate the needs of our members. Plan to attend the meeting that fits your schedule.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2008 is coming to an end and as I reflect upon our activities, our local League is gaining traction. We have more members and we're making a bigger impact in our area. Our group helps keep democracy working and the more I look around, the more valuable I realize our group is. The more people that become informed with facts about local issues, the more likely they are to do something positive to handle those issues. We are working diligently to reach more people with every year. We are a group that cares, that wants to be informed, and that wants to do something about it. I'm glad you are member.

Speaking of members...I'm happy to announce Laurel Stell has agreed to join our Board and help publicize more of our activities and information on our local website. And I'm also happy to announce the Vice Mayor of Sunnyvale, Melinda Hamilton, has joined our League and will work with us to coordinate the Sunnyvale Candidate forums and increase public access through various technologies.

In closing, thank you for helping our League. Happy holidays and may we all have a better 2009! :-)

Elaine Manley

SMART VOTER SETS ALL-TIME RECORDS

SmartVoter.org set a number of records in the November general election, providing well over nine million Web page views in six states (California, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts). This broke the single-election record by more than two million page views. Records were also set within California, by far and away the largest segment and a majority of SmartVoter.org's visitors.

Voters requested more than 800,000 "My Ballot" lookups and at least 180,000 page views related to basic voting procedures, voter registration information and specific information for new voters. Eighty-six and one-half percent of California's registered voters were located in participating counties where all local contests and ballot measures were listed on SmartVoter.org and where local candidates were invited to post additional biographical information and descriptions of their positions on vital community issues.

Board Briefs

At its December meeting your board:

- Appointed Laurel Stell to board.
- Learned that the December lunch was well attended and the speakers were very informative.
- Learned that that we are almost at the financial break-even point of VOTER costs by sending the VOTER by email.

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Mary Boyle, Pat and Jim Jackson, and Albert and Joan Wehde.

Thanks for including a donation with your dues: Kirsten Holmquist and Norma Medlin.

Welcome new member: Melinda Hamilton

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA

Water: California's New Gold

2009 Bay Area League Day

Saturday, January 31, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Registration and refreshments: 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607

Faced with a changing climate and a drought cycle in California, the Bay Area has a critical opportunity to plan for the future use of water, a finite resource. The demise of a healthy Delta system has raised the question of water use, diversion and storage. Can the Delta fisheries be restored while the farmers continue to use 80% of the water supply passing through the Delta? Is there a conveyance system that can provide protection for the fisheries and an adequate supply of water for the farmers? Can the choice of crops affect the water usage? Should all water users be required to have water meters? These are the questions we have — come to Bay Area League Day and join the discussion in the search for answers!

Keynote Address: State of the Delta and Water Resources

Lois Wolk, Newly Elected State Senator and State Assemblymember (2002-08)

Delta habitat: Can a healthy Delta habitat be restored?

Christina Swanson, Executive Director, Bay Institute

Crop choices: Can California be more water-wise in growing crops?

A.G. Kawamura, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture

Heather Cooper, Research Associate, Pacific Institute

Levee maintenance: What are the threats to the Delta levees?

Raymond B. Seed, Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, UC Berkeley

Regional-conveyance of water: Who owns the waters of the state?

Katherine Kelly, California Department of Water Resources

Bay Area regional perspectives of the Delta Vision:

Kathleen Van Velsor, Project Director for Water and Land Use Studies, ABAG

This year's Bay Area League Day is made possible in part by the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

✂ ----- **REGISTRATION FORM** -----

The price of this year's Bay Area League Day is \$25 (\$15 without lunch) before January 23, and \$30 (\$20 without lunch) after that. To register, please write check payable to "LWVBA" and send with this form to 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612.

Name: _____ Local League: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Registration is also available online at www.lwvbayarea.org.

For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an e-mail to editor@bayareamonitor.org.

LEAGUE SENDS LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT BARACK OBAMA

The League's letter congratulated the President-Elect and urged him to explore new ways to bring all Americans into policymaking efforts.

December 8, 2008

Dear Mr. President-Elect,

First, the League of Women Voters would like to congratulate you on your election. The League has a deep commitment to promoting the informed and active participation of citizens in their government. This year's election was an impressive example of the kind of widespread involvement of citizens that makes our democracy strong!

It is with that same commitment to true citizen participation that I write to you now as you assemble the members of the administration that will govern for the next four years.

We all recognize the extraordinary number of issues facing your Administration. In subsequent letters to you and the appropriate members of your Cabinet, I will address the League's specific concerns about such major problems as health care, climate change and partisan tensions in our nation's government.

But, the most important message I want to send to you now is that none of the issues can truly be resolved by the officials in your Administration without the full and active participation of multiple voices. Nor can problems be solved if they are discussed behind closed doors. Please encourage each of your Cabinet nominees to commit now to explore new ways to bring all Americans into the policymaking efforts of their departments. We see your health care policy team's current efforts as an excellent start in that direction.

For almost 89 years, the League has been well known for our work in engaging the public in the policymaking work of government at all levels, and in holding those governments accountable. Many organizations are expert at bringing their organizations' points of view to the attention of elected officials. But, the members of our 850 state and local Leagues around the country and the dedicated staff at our national office in Washington, DC, are not concerned just about making our organization's voice heard. We work to make sure that everyday Americans, who are affected by government policies, have a chance to be heard by both elected officials and the federal bureaucracy.

The League of Women Voters looks forward to working with you to help bring transparency to the federal government and opportunities for the public to be heard.

Sincerely,

Mary G. Wilson

President
League of Women Voters of the United States

LEAGUE NEWS

National –The League and coalition partners sent a letter to Speaker Pelosi urging her to ensure that the clarifications and changes necessary to address the problems with the new ethics rules are incorporated into House rules at the outset of the new Congress. A similar letter went to Minority Leader Boehner.

State – LWVC president, Janis Hirohama, said, “Winning passage of Proposition 11 last month was a huge victory. It capped a long struggle by the League and other reform groups to put an end to a redistricting system rife with conflict of interest. The LWVC played a major—and very visible—role in the hard-fought Prop. 11 campaign. League members worked hard for this victory. They collected signatures to qualify the measure for the ballot, attended speakers’ trainings and spoke to community groups about the initiative, donated to the campaign, sought endorsements, phone-banked, and urged their friends and family to vote for Prop. 11. Even after Election Day, as the fate of Prop. 11 hung in the balance, members volunteered to monitor the counting of provisional and vote-by-mail ballots in crucial counties. As it turned out, Prop. 11 won by a slim margin, and every single vote mattered. This great victory for good government would not have been possible without the efforts of all of our members.

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The San Jose/Santa Clara League has invited us to join them at their LUNCH WITH LEAGUE to hear John R. Koza, author of of “Every Vote Equal: A State-Based Plan For Electing The President By National Popular Vote,” speak on issues regarding selecting a representative government.

Date: Thursday, January 15, 2009
Time: 11:30 am
Place: Bella Mia Restaurant
58 South First Street, San Jose
Cost: \$15 payable at door
Menu choices: Cobb Salad, Grilled Portobello Sandwich, Grilled Chicken Sandwich, and Eggplant Lasagna

Please **RSVP** at: membership@lwvsjsc.org

Delegates to the 2008 National League Convention adopted a mini-study of the National Popular Voter Compact. Our local League has joined the County League committee in this study. If you would like to be part of the study and learn more about the National Popular Vote Compact, contact Roberta Hollimon at lwvcseditor@comcast.net

Join the League of Women Voters

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

Send your check to LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale, P.O. Box 2923, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

____ \$60 Individual member

Name: _____

____ \$90 Two members in a household

Address: _____

____ \$15 Student

____ Contribution \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Checks made out to LWVCS are not tax deductible.

CALENDAR

January

- Mon 12 7:00 pm **Board Meeting**
Meyering Office
19925 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino
- Tue 13 10:00 am **Program Planning**
Olsen's
611 Hubbard Avenue, Santa Clara, 95051
- Tue 13 7:00 pm **Program Planning**
Spiller's
10271 Plumtree Lane, Cupertino, 95014
- Sat 31 9:00 am **Bay Area League Meeting**
Water: California's New Gold
MetroCenter Auditorium
101 Eighth Street, Oakland 94607

February

- Mon 9 7:00 pm **Board Meeting**
Meyering Office
19925 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino

WHO REPRESENTS YOU

UNITED STATES

- President Bush** 202-456-1414
comments@whitehouse.gov
- Senator Barbara Boxer** 415-403-0100
senator@boxer.senate.gov
- Senator Dianne Feinstein** 415-393-0707
senator@feinstein.senate.gov
- Rep. Anna Eshoo** 650-323-2984
annagram@mail.house.gov
- Rep. Mike Honda** 408-558-8075

CALIFORNIA

- Gov. Schwarzenegger** 916-445-2841
governor@governor.ca.gov
- Senator Elaine Alquist**
senator.alquist@senate.ca.gov
- Senator Joe Simitian** 650-688-6384
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- Assemblyman Paul Fong**
assemblyman.Fong@assembly.ca.gov

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

- Supervisor Liz Kniss** 650-965-8737
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Permission is granted to reprint any part of this newsletter with credit to the League of Women Voters of Cupertino-Sunnyvale.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters
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FIRST CLASS