



# VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

October 2009

Volume 37 Number 3

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## Candidate Forums For the November 3, 2009 Election

Hear the candidates and ask your questions

### Sunnyvale City Council

Thursday, October 8, 2009  
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Sunnyvale City Council Chambers  
456 W. Olive, Sunnyvale 94086

### Cupertino Union School District

Wednesday October 14, 2009  
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Nimitz Elementary School  
545 E. Cheyenne Drive, Sunnyvale 94087

### Cupertino Sanitary District

Wednesday October 21  
7:00 – 8:15 PM

The Commons Clubhouse  
21116 Freedom Drive, Cupertino  
(Park on Alves between The Commons and Quinlan Center)

Forum information: [www.cs.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.cs.ca.lwvnet.org)

For information about everything on your  
ballot visit [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We're off to a busy start with several candidate forums. Please be sure to tell your friends and neighbors about them. The information is located on the front page of our newsletter. If you would like to help with the forums, please contact Marilyn Howard. We'd love to have some additional help from people familiar with software programs such as Microsoft Word and other tools to make flyers, etc.

Health Care Reform is front and center. Now is the time to contact our Congressional members to encourage them to pass a quality, affordable health care system with cost controls as we've already heard Medicare is having financial challenges. Carol Kuiper, from the Los Altos/Mountain View League, summarized several key points from Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's Town Hall in Palo Alto that is well worth reading and has been included in our Voter. The final bill is expected to be created in September so your constructive ideas need to be faxed or called to them as quickly as possible. This is democracy and your voice should be heard so please take the time to contact them

Thank you,

Elaine Manley, President

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## THE LEAGUE RECOMMENDS

Based on study and analysis the League of Women Voters of Cupertino-Sunnyvale has taken positions on two measures on the November 3, 2009 ballot.

### **Measure B Utility Users Tax – City of Cupertino YES**

The League of Women Voters supports measures to ensure revenues both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services; that contribute to a system of public finance that emphasizes equity and fair sharing of the tax burden as well as adequacy; that include long range finance methods that meet current a future needs while taking in account the cumulative impact of public debt. We feel that Cupertino's Tax Measure meets our criteria and deserves our support.

### **Measure G Parcel Tax - Fremont Union High School District YES**

The League of Women Voters believes that an education system should meet the needs of each individual student; challenge all students to reach their highest potential; and develop patterns of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. We feel that the Fremont Union High School District meets our criteria and deserves our support.

Go to [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org) for the text of the measures.

For more information on Measure B go to [www.cupertino.org/measureB](http://www.cupertino.org/measureB)

For more information on Measure G go to [www.aboutmeasureg.org](http://www.aboutmeasureg.org)

## Board Briefs

At its August and September meetings your board:

- Reviewed the LWV Santa Clara County Government position.
- Heard plans for Candidate Forums.
- Agreed to support the City of Cupertino's Utility User Tax Measure.
- Agreed to support the Fremont Union High School Parcel Tax.

## Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Fran Grabau and Pat Meyering.

Thank you for including a donation with your dues: Harold Brown, Dorothy Normark, and Mavis Smith.

Welcome new members: Janet Bertaina and Michael Lusk.

Thank you for your donation to the Community Appeal: Gail George and Martin Sorenson.

## The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

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Editor: Roberta Hollimon

[lwvcseditor@comcast.net](mailto:lwvcseditor@comcast.net)

Mailing: Dorothy Givens  
LaVerne Prentice

# LWVC REGIONAL WORKSHOP



**The Palo Alto League invites you to learn what the League does and how it does it!**

**Date & Time:** Saturday, October 24 - Registration 9:30 am  
Workshop ends at 2:30 pm  
**Location:** Avenidas, 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto CA  
*Just north of University Ave, 6 blocks east of El Camino Real*

**Price:** \$25/person; \$30 after October 16 (\$15 if bring own lunch)

**Topics:** **Tools You Can Use:**  
**A Guided Tour of the League's Members' Only Web Page**  
**Redistricting and Constitutional Reform:**  
**What's Happening and What You Can Do To Make It Happen**  
**How Leagues are Using Their Web Sites, Social Networking, and Video to Communicate with the Public**

**Register (and pay by credit card) at the LWVC website: [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org) by October 16 or write check payable to **LWVC** & mail with form to **LWV Palo Alto, 953 Industrial Ave., Ste 113, Palo Alto CA 94303****

If you have questions or need additional information contact LWV Palo Alto at (650) 327-9148 or [lwvpa@lwvpaloalto.org](mailto:lwvpa@lwvpaloalto.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ League \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## IMPLEMENTING INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING

The League of Women Voters of Santa Clara County has approved making implementation of Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for county elections an issue of emphasis for action for the coming League year. We are now looking for people who want to help with this action.

IRV provides for the election of a majority winner in a single election, without the need for a separate runoff election. Instead of voting for only one candidate, voters would rank the candidates in the order of their preference, i.e. 1st choice, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, etc. Ballots would be tallied by first choices, and if one candidate gets a majority, that candidate wins. Otherwise, the lowest vote getter would be eliminated, and all the ballots recounted according to their highest remaining choice. This process would be repeated until someone gets a majority, thus winning.

The use of IRV would save the County money, as County races would only appear on the ballot in November, instead of both June and November. The bigger impact would be on campaign finance, as candidates would not have to raise money for an

expensive runoff election. In addition, experience elsewhere with IRV shows that campaigns tend to be less negative and more focused on issues.

Leagues may take action based on the LWVC position supporting the use of IRV for executive offices (which covers the Assessor, District Attorney, and Sheriff), and the County LWV position supporting the use of IRV for the Board of Supervisors.

We will be lobbying the Board of Supervisors to implement IRV as they are authorized to do so by section 208 of the County Charter.

We plan to meet with the Supervisors individually in the fall. An IRV Implementation Action Committee has already been established. If you would like to participate in these meetings, or help in the planning, send an email to [lwvscc-irv-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:lwvscc-irv-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) and indicate to which League you belong. (If you don't have access to email, call Steve Chessin at 650-962-8412.)

*Steve Chessin*

## A LETTER FROM MARY WILSON, PRESIDENT LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Dear League Member,

Intentional lies. Disorderly conduct. Threatening and confusing actions. These are the desperate tactics of those who oppose health care reform.

**And now the League of Women Voters is under direct attack by the very same people who mislead, confuse, and sow fear in an attempt to stop much needed reform.**

A newly formed organization calling itself the “League of American Voters” is conducting an advertising campaign against health care reform that seeks to undermine public support by sowing fear and mistrust. We sent a letter calling them to task for using a name clearly designed to be confused with the League of Women Voters in order to disseminate misleading information and block health care reform. We asked them to reveal the major sources of funding for the advertising campaign.

Their response? A blast email to their followers condemning the League of Women Voters.

**We have begun to get disruptive and downright rude phone calls and emails from “supporters” of the so-called League of American Voters. We are arranging for greater security due to a variety of threats that have been made. And we’ve begun exploring what legal options are available to help us protect our name in the face of those who are misusing it.**

Is this what it has come to?

This is just one example of the fight we face in standing up for Americans in the battle for real health care reform. This is an opportunity both to educate people and to always act with civility when championing our causes. As you know, our democracy depends on honest and open debate among real people. We must be vigilant against attack campaigns funded from unknown sources that mislead, confuse and scare Americans.

Make no mistake: The League of Women Voters believes quality, affordable health care should be available to all Americans. As a 90-year-old membership organization that is one of the most trusted nonpartisan voices in the United States, we know that health care reform must protect coverage for those who have it, provide coverage for those who desperately need it, and protect us all against skyrocketing costs.

**Please make a contribution to help support this critical work.** Thank you for being such a good friend to the League. As always, we appreciate your support.

Sincerely,



Mary G. Wilson  
President, LWVUS

## MEMBERS HEAR SPEAKERS ON LOCAL TAX MEASURES

The League of Women Voters of Cupertino-Sunnyvale held its Fall Kickoff meeting Saturday, August 22, 2009 at Arya Restaurant in Cupertino. Attendees heard speakers from the City of Cupertino and the Fremont Union High School District talk about ballot measures appearing on the November 3 ballot.



Speakers meet with members following the presentations. From left, Polly Bove, Linda Davis, Jason Spiller, David Woo, Evelyn Lundstrom, and Rose Marie Twu.

David Woo, Finance Director for the City of Cupertino, offered information about Measure B on the November ballot. The Cupertino Users Utility Tax, a local tax for local needs, is an update of a tax originally passed in 1990. There is no change in the existing tax rate but the measure will clarify what can and cannot be taxed, close unintended loopholes and continue the exemption for seniors. The tax funds general city services including neighborhood police patrols, library services, city streets, parks and open spaces, senior programs, and school crossing guards. Mr. Woo stressed that seniors of the city can be exempt from this and other utility taxes if they personally option out of paying them.



David Woo,  
Finance Director,  
City of Cupertino

Polly Bove, Superintendent of the Fremont Union High School District (FUHSD) addressed the Parcel Tax that will be on the November 3 ballot. Superintendent Bove said, "It's about the students" as she presented slides illustrating her remarks. The five high school sites, Cupertino, Fremont, Homestead, Lynbrook, and Monta Vista, have 10,300 students and were named in the top 6% of Distinguished Schools in the United States by NEWSWEEK magazine. The district API scores of 857 are the third highest of all 84 high school districts in California. FUHSD served 38,000 community members with Community Education programs last year.



Polly Bove,  
Superintendent,  
Premont Union  
High School  
District.

The district receives its funding from local property taxes with no "per student" funding from the state. With the housing economy down this funding has decreased. This Parcel Tax is an extension of the current Parcel Tax at the same rate. It would be used for maintenance, upgrading facilities and salaries to continue competing for the best possible educational opportunities for students in the district.

District board member and LWV member, William Wilson, responded to a question about the schools' fields. He stated that the 91 campus acreage utilized by the increasingly larger number of students assured the constant use of every field. Wise planning has been ongoing with conservation, economic, and environmental considerations by experts in their design.

*Delores Carson*

# H.R. 3200 AMERICA'S AFFORDABLE HEALTH CHOICES ACT

## Healthcare Questions and Answers

(Abridged from document prepared by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's Office following recent Town Hall meetings on Health Care)

### Overview

**H.R. 3200** provides quality, affordable healthcare for all Americans and controls health care cost growth. The bill addresses coverage and choice, affordability, shared responsibility, cost controls, prevention and wellness, workforce investments. It builds on what works today and fixes what is broken. It protects current coverage—allowing individuals to keep the insurance they have if they like it—and preserves choice of doctors, hospitals and health plans.

**Question:** *What is the **individual mandate**? What if I can't afford to purchase health insurance? Won't it be mandatory under H.R. 3200?*

**Answer:** Every American has the responsibility to have health coverage. Medicare recipients will continue to receive Medicare benefits, as will those receiving TRICARE and VA benefits. Lowest income Americans will continue to receive Medicaid benefits. Americans who earn up to 400% of the poverty level (\$88,200 for a family of 4) will receive affordability credits to help them purchase insurance on a sliding scale.

**Question:** *What is a '**public option**'?*

**Answer:** The **public option** is a government-run, non-profit healthcare plan. Similar to Medicare, it will not be funded by government subsidies, but solely by the premiums it collects (just like private plans.) The **public option** will be required to follow the same regulations placed on private insurance companies, including staying financially solvent. The public option will exist only as long as Americans want to buy into it.

**Question:** *How much will this bill cost?*

**Answer:** The CBO's latest estimates the cost to be \$1.042 trillion over ten years. To pay for this, addressing inefficiencies in Medicare and Medicaid and cracking down on fraud, waste and abuse in these programs will save \$465 billion over the next ten years; \$583 billion will have to be raised to cover the rest of the cost. A proposed 1.2% tax on the wealthiest income earners would help to pay this cost, and the Senate is considering other options.

**Question:** *Will health reform force all Americans out of their private insurance plans and into a government-run plan?*

**Answer:** No. If you like your insurance, you can keep it. H.R. 3200 builds on the employer-based coverage we have today.

**Question:** *Will the legislation require me to join the public plan if I lose my private coverage?*

**Answer:** No. If you lose your insurance, you will be able to shop for a new plan in the Exchange and determine which plan best suits you and your family's needs.

**Question:** *Will insurance companies be able to drop patients who have pre-existing conditions?*

**Answer:** No. Insurance companies will be prohibited from discriminating based on pre-existing conditions. The practice of **rescission** (where insurance companies drop a patient once they become ill) will also be banned.

**Question:** *Will this plan lead to rationing of care?*

**Answer:** No. Healthcare decisions should be between a doctor and their patient. The legislation significantly increases research funding to gather data about what procedures are most effective to give doctors the best possible information when treating patients.



## CALENDAR

### October

Thu	8	7 – 9 pm	<b>Candidate Forum</b> Sunnyvale City Council Sunnyvale City Council Chambers 456 W. Olive, Sunnyvale
Wed	14	7 – 9 pm	<b>Candidate Forum</b> Cupertino Union School District Nimitz Elementary School 545 E Cheyenne, Sunnyvale
Mon	19	7:30 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b> Board Room at 19925 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino
Wed	21	7 – 8:15	<b>Candidate Forum</b> Cupertino Sanitary District The Commons Clubhouse 21116 Freedom Drive, Cupertino
Sat	24	9:30 – 2:30	<b>LWVC Workshop</b> Avenidas 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto

## WHO REPRESENTS YOU

### UNITED STATES

<b>President Barack Obama</b> <a href="mailto:comments@whitehouse.gov">comments@whitehouse.gov</a>	202-456-1414
<b>Senator Barbara Boxer</b> <a href="mailto:senator@boxer.senate.gov">senator@boxer.senate.gov</a>	415-403-0100
<b>Senator Dianne Feinstein</b> <a href="mailto:senator@feinstein.senate.gov">senator@feinstein.senate.gov</a>	415-393-0707
<b>Rep. Anna Eshoo</b> <a href="mailto:annagram@mail.house.gov">annagram@mail.house.gov</a>	650-323-2984
<b>Rep. Mike Honda</b>	408-558-8075

### CALIFORNIA

<b>Gov. Schwarzenegger</b> <a href="mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov">governor@governor.ca.gov</a>	916-445-2841
<b>Senator Elaine Alquist</b> <a href="mailto:senator.alquist@senate.ca.gov">senator.alquist@senate.ca.gov</a>	
<b>Senator Joe Simitian</b> <a href="mailto:senator.simitian@senate.ca.gov">senator.simitian@senate.ca.gov</a>	650-688-6384
<b>Assemblyman Paul Fong</b> <a href="mailto:assemblyman.Fong@assembly.ca.gov">assemblyman.Fong@assembly.ca.gov</a>	

### SANTA CLARA COUNTY

<b>Supervisor Liz Kniss</b> Email: <a href="mailto:liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org">liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org</a>	650-965-8737
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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  
of Cupertino-Sunnyvale  
P.O. Box 2923  
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

**FIRST CLASS**