



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

April 2011

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KICKOFF EVENT FOR EDUCATION STUDY "THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION"



Peg Hill

League members in Santa Clara County had the opportunity to hear Peg Hill, co-chair of the LWVUS Education Study Committee, speak about the scope and timetable for the year-long study of the federal government's role in education. A LWVUS director since 2010, Hill is League President in Richardson, Texas, and a Professor at the University of Houston – Clear Lake. Her longtime commitment to education includes more than 40 years as a teacher and long service on local and state education committees.

Hill reported that the scope of the study is limited to issues of equity, funding and standards/assessment. June 2012 is the deadline for reaching a national consensus on a position, without which the League of Women Voters cannot speak to federal education issues such as No Child Left Behind.

The national committee will begin with an overview of the history of the federal role and where it is today. They will then focus on the components of the Elementary and Secondary Education act which speak to the equity issues. Finally, the committee will address the Common Core Standards and the subsequent assessment issues. Study materials will be shared with local Leagues in the Spring and our League will schedule meetings in the fall to educate members and the community about the issues and come to consensus.

The next meeting of our Local League's study committee will be held on Wednesday April 6, 2:00 PM at Le Boulanger, 20488 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino. You are invited to join us.

LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale Board of Directors

President	Susan Hough
Vice President	Russell Howard
Secretary	Louise Levy
Treasurer	Roberta Hollimon
Directors	Suzanne Ford Marilyn Howard Bruce Kendell Jason Spiller Barbara Sullivan Katharine Turner
Off Board	
Dues Secretary	Delores Carson
VOTER Mailing	LaVerne Prentice

Cupertino-Sunnyvale members, left to right, Susan Hough, Lois Smallwood, Rose-Marie Twu, and Barbara Sullivan attended the meeting.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am scrambling to think of something to write for the VOTER, as I am recovering from a virus and have not been keeping up. I didn't even make it to the most recent Board meeting. And you know what? The Board runs just fine without me there. There isn't really any special qualification for being President. The same is true of the other positions -- Secretary (you need to be able to write. Or type. Or run a recorder and transcribe. Preferably in English), Treasurer (adding and subtracting are good to know), even Voter Service (have a knack for organization and a willingness to contact people). And that's not even to mention at-large Board member (Show up. Offer occasional opinions. Eat cookies)! It's not that our Board members aren't special -- they are! It's just that our members are pretty special already. There's no secret to serving on the board or volunteering in some other capacity -- it's just a willingness to spend a little time (not even very much, usually) and an ability to learn new things. Come give it a try! To explore the idea of spending an hour or two with the League each month, contact me at shough@mennen.org, or go straight to the nominating committee at lwvcseditor@comcast.net

Susan

SMART VOTER SAYS THANK YOU

The Smart Voter team thanks the board of the LWVCS for its generous donation to Smart Voter - the signature program of the LWVC Education Fund. This unique public service provides free Web space to all California candidates, which helps candidates inform voters about their qualifications and positions - and it provides a free Web site for voters, with well organized information on candidates and ballot measures.

Funding for SmartVoter does not come from your member dues (PMP paid to the LWVC). SmartVoter relies on financial support from county registrars and city clerks as well as donations from local Leagues and individuals. Can you help continue Smart Voter's important service with a personal donation? You may make a tax deductible contribution online at <http://www.cavotes.org/about/donate> (under special instructions, please write SmartVoter) or send a check (with a note designating the contribution for SmartVoter) to the LWVC Education Fund, 1107 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95814.

Board Briefs

At its March meeting, your board:

- Received a request from the Budget Committee for guidance on use of Ed Fund reserves and agreed to draw \$500 from reserves in the next fiscal year.
- Heard an interim report from the nominating committee.
- Decided to send two delegates to LWVC Convention in May.

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Michael Gottwald, Jim and Pat Jackson, Jo Loer, Ruth Mansberger, Ann McElroy, and LaVerne Prentice.

Thank you for including a donation with your renewal: Joyce Bartlett, Peter Botsford, and Sharon Jenks.

Thank you for your donation Flo Stafford.

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LWVC CONVENTION

The 65th state convention of the League of Women Voters of California will be held from Friday, May 13, through Sunday, May 15, 2011 with a special pre-convention workshops and Smart Voter dinner on Thursday, May 12. The Convention will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 450 E Harbor Blvd in Ventura, CA 93001.

This year, in response to requests from members, the League will be offering a few Thursday workshops that the public and members not registering for convention can attend for a fee. Those workshops will be: Treasurer's Workshop; Smart Voter Workshop; The 2012 Project (advice and tools for women interested in running for public office). And of course the Smart Voter dinner on Thursday evening. Those registering for convention do not have to pay a separate fee for Thursday workshops.

LWVC Convention Speakers and Workshops Appeal to members and non-members alike. If you are in the southern part of the state mid-May and want to drop in for a day or more, there are special day rates for visitors.

Luncheon speakers

- * Beverly Merrill Kelley, Ph.D., talking about the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in California on Friday
- * District 33 Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian speaking Saturday about his work to keep civility in politics

A variety of workshop presentations, including

- * Thursday: "The 2012 Project" to educate women on the impact they can have as public officials, inspire them to run, and connect them with resources needed if they decide to take that step
- * Friday: "After Citizens United, Is Local Campaign Finance Reform Possible?" Can local Leagues continue to fight for clean elections and fair campaign financing?
- * Saturday: "Sustainable Communities Strategies—SB 375." What will the local impacts be of this legislation designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by way of changes to land use and transportation development patterns?

Get all the details by visiting the Convention Blog and *join us on the beach in Ventura!*

THE PRICE OF REPEALING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: CALIFORNIA

As a result of the Affordable Care Act, families will soon be free from the constant worry that they will not be able to get health care when they need it the most. But repealing the law would strip Americans of this new freedom and take us back to the days when big insurance companies had the power to decide what care residents of California could receive—allowing them to once again deny coverage to children with pre-existing conditions, cancel coverage when people get sick, and place limits on the amount of care people can get, even if they need it. What’s more, without the law, insurance companies could overcharge for insurance just to boost their profits, or use fine print to deny medical treatments that are covered under people’s policies.

In addition, repealing the law would add at least a trillion dollars to the deficit, which America cannot afford, nor do we want to pass that debt to our children and grandchildren.

At a time when California residents will soon be finally free from worrying that affordable coverage will not be available to them and their families when they need it the most, repealing the Affordable Care Act would be devastating. California residents, providers, small businesses and other employers would be denied critical new benefits of the law, from protections against insurance industry abuses to new coverage options and millions of dollars in support so states like California can deliver quality, affordable health care options to all of its residents.

Without the Affordable Care Act:

* **Critical Consumer Protections Would Be Lost:**

- **196,000 young adults would lose their insurance coverage** through their parents’ health plans, sometimes just after they finish school and as they are looking for a job. Families across California would lose the peace of mind the Affordable Care Act Provides by making sure that young adults can stay on their parents plan to age 26 if they do not have coverage of their own.
- **More than 18.8 million residents of California** with private insurance coverage would suddenly find themselves **vulnerable again to having lifetime limits** placed on how much insurance companies will spend on their health care.
- Insurance companies would once again be allowed cut off someone’s coverage unexpectedly when they are in an accident or become sick because of a simple mistake on an application. **This would leave 2,705,000 people in California at risk of losing their insurance** at the moment they need it most. New insurance plans would no longer be required to cover recommended preventive services, like mammograms and flu shots, without cost sharing, nor would they have to guarantee enrollees the right to choose any available primary care provider in

the network or see an OB-GYN without a referral.

- **More than 18.8 million residents of California** would not know if they are receiving value for their health insurance premium dollars, as insurers in state would no longer be required to spend at least 80 to 85 percent of premium dollars on health care rather than CEO salaries, bonuses, and corporate profits.
- New insurance plans would **no longer be required to cover recommended preventive services, like mammograms and flu shots**, without cost sharing, nor would they have to guarantee enrollees their right to choose any available primary care provider in the network or see an OB-GYN without a referral.
- **Nearly 4.5 million seniors in California who have Medicare coverage** would be forced to pay a co-pay to receive important preventive services, like mammograms and colonoscopies.
- Medicare would no longer pay for an annual check-up visit, so **nearly 4.5 million seniors in California** who have Medicare coverage would have to pay extra if they want to stay healthy by getting check-ups regularly.
- * **269,623 on Medicare Would See Significantly Higher Prescription Drug Costs:** Medicare beneficiaries who fall into the “donut hole” in 2011 will be eligible for 50 percent discounts on covered brand name prescription drugs. Without the law, the burden of high prescription drug costs would hurt millions of Medicare beneficiaries across the country.
- * **California Would Not Receive Additional Resources to Crack Down on Unreasonable Insurance Premium Increases.** States would not have new resources to review proposed health insurance premium increases and hold insurance companies accountable for unjustified premium increases.
- * **California Would Not Receive Additional Funds to Plan for a Health Insurance Exchange:** States would not have new resources to build a new, competitive, private health insurance marketplace for consumers that provides lower costs, one-stop insurance shopping, and greater benefits and protections.
- * **California Would Not Receive Additional Funds to Support a Consumer Assistance Program:** States would not have new resources to help protect consumers from some of the worst insurance industry practices.
- * **440 Employers Would Not Be Receiving Help from the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program:** Businesses, schools and other educational institutions, unions, State and local governments, and non-profits would not be receiving much-needed financial relief to help early retirees and their families continue to have quality, affordable health coverage.

LEAGUE NEWS

National – The League and coalition groups spoke out in favor of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed Mercury and Air Toxics Standard: "The Environmental Protection Agency took sensible action to protect public health by limiting for the first time emissions of life-threatening toxic pollutants like mercury, arsenic and acid gases, dioxin and lead from power plants. This long overdue and critically important action...will save 17,000 American lives and prevent 120,000 asthma attacks."

State – LWVC announced that League Easy Web (LEW) now provides Web hosting to over 200 Leagues across the United States. Design and technology improvements are being coordinated with the LWVUS.

REDISTRICTING UPDATE

Redistricting in California remains a League priority as the redistricting process unfolds in California. The Citizens Redistricting Commission has been hiring staff and soon will be contracting with technical line-drawing experts and attorneys versed in the Voting Rights Act. They are planning to hold hearings around the state where Californians will describe the communities they believe should be kept intact as district lines are drawn. You can follow the progress of the commission's work and learn more about public input for the redistricting process at CAvotes.org.

To enhance our education and outreach LWVCEF joins the national League project, Redistricting: Shining a Light. This project seeks to raise awareness and promote transparency in the redistricting process on state and local levels. The LWVC will support events and forums by local Leagues throughout the state with grants to explain the new California redistricting process and the work of the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Look for details on the LWVC members only Web site. *[For help on how to access the members only site, send a request to lwvcseditor@compcast.net.]*

League observers have been watching and reporting on the meetings of the Citizens Redistricting Commission in Sacramento and Claremont. You can follow the work of the commission and read the League observers' reports on CAvotes.org.

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 payable to LWVCS to LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale, P.O. Box 2923, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

___ \$60 Individual member

Name(s): _____

___ \$90 Two members in a household

Address: _____

___ \$30 Student

City: _____ State: ___ ZIP: _____

___ Contribution \$ _____

Phone(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Membership checks are made out to LWVCS and are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWVCS Education Fund.

CALENDAR

April

Wed 6 2 PM **Education Study Committee**
Le Boulanger
20488 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino 95014

Mon 10 7 PM **Board Meeting**
Hollimon's
11155 La Paloma Drive
Cupertino, 95014

May

Mon 9 7 PM **Board Meeting**
TBD

Thu 12 - Sun 15 **LWVC Convention - "Grow the Future"**
Crowne Plaza Hotel
450 E Harbor Blvd. Ventura CA 93001

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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.

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FIRST CLASS