



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

April 2014

Volume 41 Number 9

In This Issue

Bay Delta Conservation Plan	4&5
Board Briefs	2
Calendar	8
Commuter Benefits Program	7
CUSD Parcel Tax	3
Editor's Message	2
Eleanor Roosevelt	6
June 3rd Primary Election	1&3
League News	7
Member News	2
MROSD Bond Measure	3
Opportunities for Involvement	2

LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale Board of Directors

President	Elaine Manley
Vice President	Susan Hough
Treasurer	Roberta Hollimon
Directors	Suzanne Ford Marilyn Howard Russ Howard Bruce Kendall Michael Lusk Nancie Plumb Jason Spiller Katharine Turner
Off Board	
VOTER Mailing	LaVerne Prentice

The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

Published 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Cupertino-Sunnyvale.

Yearly subscriptions: \$10/year to non-members.
Members subscribe through annual dues.

Editor: Roberta Hollimon
lwvcseditor@comcast.net
Mailing: LaVerne Prentice

CANDIDATE FORUMS

Congressional District 17

Saturday May 3, 6:45 PM

Fremont City Council Chambers

3300 Capital Avenue, Fremont 94538

Candidates

Representative Mike Honda Ro Khanna

Vinesh Singh Rathore Vanila Singh

Joel Vanlandingham

Superior Court Judges

Monday May 5, 7:00 PM

Mountain View City Hall

500 Castro Street, Mountain View 94041

Candidates

Office #21

Julianne Sylva

D A Lempert

Office #24

Dianne Ritchie

Mathew S. Harris

Annrae Angel

Assembly District 28

Wednesday May 7, 7:00 PM

Cupertino Community Hall

10350 Torre Avenue, Cupertino 95014

Candidates

Barry Chang

Evan Low

Michael Hunsweck

Chuck Page

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting

Saturday May 24, 9:45 - 11:30 AM

Sequoia Room, Sunnyvale Senior Center

550 E. Remington, Sunnyvale, CA 94086

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

This issue of the VOTER is a good example of League activities that make us both political and nonpartisan. People often ask, "How can you say you are nonpartisan when you support ballot measures?"

The League is nonpartisan because it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. It is political in that it reaches positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement and takes action for positive change on those positions.

On page 1 you see the nonpartisan arm of the League as we present candidate forums, inviting all candidates in a contest to present their views so voters can make an informed vote. We also support Smart Voter, the premier site for unbiased election information.

On page 3 you see our political arm. We are able to take positions on ballot measures because we have studied issues and come to agreement on positions. When the League supports or opposes measures it is after careful study seeing if the measure achieves our goals.

Now that election season is upon us there are many "Opportunities for Involvement." Look in the box below to see if there is something that you can do to either help the electorate or help the League fulfill its mission. Do you have just two hours? Then you could help stuff envelopes for our Community Appeal. Four hours? Help new citizens register to vote. Even more time? Volunteer for a board position or an off-board position. We need more people on the Nominating Committee, help with Voter Service, and the various aspects of membership.

In this issue, we belatedly celebrate Women's History Month with an article on Eleanor Roosevelt on page 7. On pages 4&5 you'll find a report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan forum and page 7 reports on the Bay Area Leagues' support of a Commuter Benefits Program.

Enjoy your reading.

Roberta Hollimon

Board Briefs

At its March meeting your board:

- Took a position in support of the Cupertino School District Parcel Tax and a position in support of the MidPeninsula Open Space District (MROSD) Bond Measure. The MROSD measure will be signed by the County League.
- Learned that the budget Committee has started its work under the chairmanship of Sharon Jenks.
- Decided to hold a candidate forum for Assembly District 28 and Superior Court Judges.
- Heard from the nominating committee that its work is almost complete.

Opportunities for Involvement

- The Nominating Committee is putting together a slate of candidates for the next board of your organization. We need a member to help with this process.
- Do you have two hours in April to help with the Community Appeal by stuffing, sealing, and stamping envelopes?
- May 20, at the naturalization services you can help new citizens register to vote.
- We need many helpers for Candidate Forums, question sorters, timers, question card distributors and collectors.

To help contact the League at league@cs.ca.lwvnet.org.

Member News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Bruce Kendall, Ruth Mansberger, LaVerne Prentice, and Barbara Rogers.

Thank you for including a donation with your membership renewal: Tracey Edwards and Sharon Jenks.

LWV CUPERTINO SUNNYVALE SUPPORTS CUPERTINO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT PARCEL TAX MEASURE A ON THE MAY 6 MAIL-IN ONLY BALLOT

Text of Measure A: *“Without increasing the current tax rates, to protect outstanding core academic programs in reading, writing, math and science, retain highly qualified teachers, provide updated classroom technology for a 21st Century education, keep libraries up-to-date, and retain music and art programs, shall Cupertino Union School District consolidate/renew its existing \$250 education parcel tax, without increase, for eight years with citizen oversight, no funds for administrator’s salaries, exempt senior citizens, and all funds staying in local schools?”*

If passed, this ballot measure would replace the Measure C tax with a new parcel tax, taking effect July 1, 2015, and expiring June 30, 2023 (the Measure B tax will have just expired at the time the new tax takes effect). It would levy \$250/parcel per year, the same as currently paid under B and C. Starting July 1, 2015, the total paid per parcel over the lifetime of the tax would be \$2000, as compared to \$250 if the new tax were to fail passage and Measure C ran until expiration. As with Measures B and C combined, the new tax would raise about \$463 per student per year.

The exemptions for seniors, the disabled, and contiguous parcels would remain the same as they are under Measures B and C.

The board of the Cupertino-Sunnyvale League voted to support the measure based on its positions on Financing Local Education: “...Districts whose boards actively endeavor to achieve quality education, to alleviate racial imbalance, to maintain responsiveness, and to develop administrative effectiveness and community participation.”

Go to our website <http://www.ca.cs.lwvnet.org> for an overview of the measure, school finance, and the school district.

LEAGUES SUPPORT MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT (MROSD) BOND MEASURE AA ON JUNE 3 BALLOT

The Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County, along with the Leagues in San Mateo County, have agreed to support the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Bond Measure AA on the June 3 ballot and have signed the ballot arguments.

The measure is to improve access to hiking and biking opportunities, protect and preserve redwood forests, natural open spaces, the scenic beauty of our region and coastline, critical wildlife habitat, restore creeks to protect water quality, and reduce forest fire risk.

Basics:

- Passage would allow MROSD to issue up to \$300 million in general obligation bonds over 20 – 30 years.
- To pass, the bond measure needs 2/3 approval by voters in the Open Space District.
- The bonds would be funded by an increased property tax rate not to exceed \$3.18 per \$100,000 assessed values (in the first decade will not reach maximum as it is projected that not all the bonds will be sold at once).
- MROSD’s current funding of \$17 per \$100,000 assessed value goes primarily for maintenance and general operations; there is not much remaining for any significant capital projects.
- The bonds will fund 25 high priority projects selected through intensive public outreach; **first and foremost of these projects is public access (about 55% of land owned by the district is not yet open to the public).**

Our League supported formation of MROSD in 1972. At the regional and county levels, we support measures that ensure adequate parks and the protection of natural resources, open space and agricultural land, both outside urban growth boundaries and in urbanized areas.

The District has done an outstanding job in acquiring property for “passive” recreational use and for protecting open space resources. Over 62,000 acres have been protected since MROSD’s inception. Now the District needs funding to open much of this acreage to the public and to fund additional acquisitions.

Funding measure overview:

http://www.openspace.org/news/bond_measure.asp

List of 25 projects to be funded:

<http://www.openspace.org/top25tour/index.html>

BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

On March 1, the meeting room at Martin Luther King Library was crowded with over 100 attendees, estimated by a show of hands to be 80% League of Women Voters members and 20% non-members. The presenters were excellent, offering a wide range of views. It was refreshing to hear them debate each other's arguments. As one presenter said in apres-event chit-chat, "If you don't hear speakers contradicting each other, you know something is wrong, you haven't pulled together a broad enough set of points of view."

JOAN MAHER **Santa Clara Valley Water District**

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is the water wholesaler which delivers water to the majority of water retailers used by county residents. A key point of Ms. Maher's presentation is that finally, after decades, there is a comprehensive plan across the many water authorities, but the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) is just one element of several of that coordinated approach. She said over 56 endangered fish species will be helped by implementation of the BDCP, while at the same time our deliveries of water to Santa Clara County will be better insured against interruptions and earthquake risk. Paying for the BDCP plan would involve a small increase – from \$2 to \$7 – to an average monthly residential water bill.

CURT SCHMUTTE **Civil Engineer**

Curt Schmutte, civil engineer, former manager of the Delta levee system and advocate for the current BDCP.

Mr. Schmutte showed interesting maps, map animations and photos to suggest how much the delta has changed in 150 years and how the current system of levees is unsustainable in his opinion. Many fish species have suffered from the disappearance of habitat including salmon; they often need to be trucked over dry spots. The levees that are concrete don't offer the baby salmon any place to hide from predator striped bass.

Areas near the levees, whether dirt levees or concrete levees, are over 20 feet below sea-level and are becoming unfarmable because of salt seepage.



Salination from the ocean is reaching farther and farther up the Delta rivers when our droughts occur, reducing the habitat for fishes. At this point, an earthquake could cause the collapse and sinking of many Delta islands, allowing salt water throughout the entire Delta. The BDCP plan with its twin tunnels will mitigate all that.

DEIDRE DES JARDINS **Sierra Club of California Water Committee**

Ms. Des Jardins began her remarks by saying Mr. Schmutte was overstating the earthquake risk of a complete Delta collapse, which in her opinion was not likely. She said that his scenario could only occur if the epicenter were immediately under the Delta, not 45 miles away at the Hayward fault. Quake waves mainly dissipate down. During Loma Prieta there were no levee failures.

She is critical of the current BDCP plan because it does not give enough consideration to climate change. She argued that the "drier" climate change models of the future had not been given enough weight in planner assumptions, and hence the current plan is expensive and yet can't save us. Planners expect — unrealistically — to be able to take reservoir levels down to the minimum in consecutive years. That's a gamble. In consecutive dry years of the future, there won't be enough flow going down the Sacramento to use even the existing pumps there nor the higher capacity proposed new tunnel pumps. There will be ocean salinity going right up to the mouth of the tunnels rendering them useless.

She advocates the Sierra Club alternative — it emphasizes spending on water efficiency and water recycling infrastructure instead of tunnels and flow diversion. She also said the habitat restoration is not funded in the BDCP; it just part of the larger unfunded strategy. Similarly, she said that much needed levee improvement to protect the population and build infrastructure in the Delta is not funded in the BDCP either.

DOUG OBEGI
Natural Resources Defense Council

Mr. Obegi presented polling results showing that 95% prefer a smaller water tunnel or no tunnel at all.

His organization is advocating a smaller tunnel and using the rest of the money on local storage infrastructure and more recycling and conservation.

His organization finds each of these different kinds of “new” water supplies would mean much less diversion of any annual spring river flow. Flow is more important for the fish right now. According to his organization, the largest “new” water supply is expected to be **recycled** municipal water supplies. One opportunity — the city of San Francisco takes all the water from the Hetch Hetchy lake and Tuolumne River in Yosemite, uses it once and pumps it as waste to the ocean.

Obegi argues that these new supplies are the cheapest. Even better, investing in local water storage infrastructure creates local jobs and more jobs per dollar than housing construction. Los Angeles has done this. If LA can do it, the rest of the state can too.

RICHARD ROOS-COLLINS
Water Power and Law Group

Mr. Roos-Collins wanted to create a sense of urgency among the audience. He advocated taking some action — like the BDCP — over continued inaction. He related a short history of long past “warnings” about an inadequate water supply and salmon stress...1961...1971. Now... finally a collapse of flow in 2014.

He stated that 2/3 of the diverters of Delta flow have little responsibility for their water use. San Francisco diverts from Yosemite’s Tuolumne River and dumps the flow into the ocean after just one use. Some agricultural users are not paying enough. It is only equitable for all diverters to be made more responsible.

Decades of inertia have created a failure to coordinate among water agencies, resulting in water use inefficiency and habitat destruction. Now with BDCP there is coordination at last — it offers a plan for adaptive management of the flow to respond to the needs of species. “But don’t be persuaded by me or any one of the speakers here today. Ask more questions. If you don’t like the current BDCP, explain a better plan ...please submit comments on the plan. But don’t do nothing.” End the inertia!

MICHAEL FROST
Restore the Delta.org

Mr. Frost gave a hard-hitting presentation with two key points: 1) The tunnels idea is an antique idea from the 1940s and will fail, costing a fortune that could be better spent on “smart” water systems, 2) Central Valley agribusiness needs to change a lot.

Back in the 40’s, the hey-day of dam building, the expectation was that the northern rivers – Klamath, Trinity, Eel, Feather, etc., could all be dammed sending a large flow to the south. Large water tunnels would be needed. But in the 1970’s Reagan signed a bill that protected these rivers making them wild rivers in perpetuity. So there is no big flow, and therefore, no need for big water tunnels. Quite the opposite. Without the water from the wild rivers and with drought and climate change, the BDCP’s large tunnels are likely to be empty much of the time. They cannot produce any new supply of water, unlike smart water systems which can.

Frost also agreed with those speakers who said that the levees needed reinforcing and that talk about the impact of earthquakes on water supply was “fear-mongering.”



Left to right panelists Joan Maher, Doug Obegi, Richard Roos-Collins, Michael Frost, Deirdre Jardins , and Curt Schmutte



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: FIRST LADY, LEAGUE LEADER, PIONEER

By: Renee Davidson 03/13/2014

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 -1962) is commonly hailed as one of the most influential American women of the 20th century. In addition to serving as the First Lady of the United States from 1933-1945, she was a newspaper columnist, an author, a diplomat and a seasoned politician. She was also a formative leader of the League of Women Voters.

Deeply involved in social justice work, Eleanor Roosevelt believed strongly that women deserved a place at the table when it came to politics. Prior to her husband's presidency, she worked with and helped lead a number of women's groups, including the International Congress of Working Women, the Woman's Trade Union League and the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom.

After the League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 – the same year that Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for Vice President – she helped establish its policy agenda. As the League's Vice President of Legislative Affairs, she lobbied for reforms in Congress and worked tirelessly to strengthen women's role in politics, helping mobilize women voters through the League's nonpartisan training and lobbying work. "I've always found that the best workers in a political party frequently are graduates of the League of Women Voters," she wrote in 1953. "Members learn how to find out what they really want to know on a wide variety of subjects. The League...trains good citizens who have a sense of responsibility about what goes on in their locality, in their state and in their nation." Even after she resigned as League Vice President in 1924, she remained an active League member and continued to promote the League's platforms and ideals, including regularly writing for the League of Women Voters of New York's newsletter.

"I've always found that the best workers in a political party frequently are graduates of the League of Women Voters"

– Eleanor Roosevelt

Eleanor Roosevelt's work to empower women's participation as voters and political leaders only strengthened after her husband assumed the presidency in 1933. She consistently campaigned for the Roosevelt administration to hire women for executive level appointments, supported anti-lynching campaigns and fought for fair housing for minorities. Throughout these efforts, she held press conferences to inform women voters, including urging them to speak their minds and engage on policy issues.

After she left the White House in 1945, Eleanor Roosevelt continued to promote women's equality through her work not only with the League, but also with groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). As chairwoman of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations (now the Human Rights Council), she strengthened the League's involvement with the UN and its role as player and partner in global democracy. In acknowledgement of her invaluable work around women's and human rights, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by President Kennedy, among others. Though she was never awarded the prize, she received countless other honors.

Decades after her death, she continues to epitomize the powerful role that women, including League members, have played – and continue to play – in furthering equality, strengthening our government and Making Democracy Work®.

<http://www.lwv.org/blog/eleanor-roosevelt-first-lady->

LEAGUE NEWS

National – Representatives James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), John Conyers (D-MI), Bobby Scott (D-VA), John Lewis (D-GA), and Senate Judiciary Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) have introduced common sense legislation that would repair and restore the Voting Rights Act. This bipartisan effort to fix the damage done by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby v. Holder* is necessary to restore and protect the rights of voters across the country. Please urge your elected officials to support this important legislation.

State - We all want more clarity, transparency and accountability in the initiative process! We are backing SB 1253, authored by Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, to address these priorities:

- * Give voters more useful information about initiatives so they can make informed decisions
- * Create clear and voter-friendly explanations of each initiative
- * Help identify and correct mistakes in an initiative before it appears on the ballot

LEAGUE SUPPORTS BAY AREA COMMUTER BENEFITS PROGRAM

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area made a statement before the Bay Area Air Quality Management District supporting a pilot program in the Bay Area, which would require employers with 50 or more full-time employees to select one of four commuter benefit options. Included is the option to design their own alternative commuter benefit that would be similarly as effective as the other three options.

The League has long favored measures that are designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and single-occupancy vehicle use, as well as programs to reduce the impact of air pollution. More recently, we place high priority on reducing carbon and other emissions from vehicles that worsen air quality and contribute to climate change. We support efforts to attain reductions of greenhouse gases in the Bay Area to meet the targets that have been established.

By promoting the use of alternative commute modes, this Commuter Benefits Program will decrease drive-alone commute trips to Bay Area worksites, thereby reducing traffic congestion, improving the speed of traffic flow during peak commute periods, thus reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and criteria air pollutants.

The Program was developed through a commendable process which included substantial outreach to businesses and public hearings around the Bay Area.

The pilot program will produce a report to the Legislature, including measurable results as to the extent to which the intended objectives of reduced emissions of air pollutants, decreased traffic congestion, and greenhouse gases were achieved.

--LWV Bay Area Board of Directors

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. Donations to "LWVCS" are also non-deductible.

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

CALENDAR

April

Mon 14 7:30 PM **Board Meeting**
Burnetts
729 Stendhal Lane, Cupertino 95014

May

Sat 3 6:45 PM **Candidate Forum 17th Congressional District**
Fremont City Council Chambers
3300 Capital Avenue, Fremont 94538

Mon 5 6:45 PM **Candidate Forum Judges Seats 21 & 24**
Mountain View City Council Chambers
500 Castro Street, Mountain View 94041

Wed 7 7:00 PM **Candidate Forum Assembly District 28**
Cupertino Community Hall
10350 Torre Drive, Cupertino 95014

Mon 12 7:30 PM **Board Meeting**
Burnetts
729 Stendhal Lane, Cupertino 95014

Sat 24 9:45 AM **Annual Meeting**
Sunnyvale Senior Center - Sequoia Room
550 Remington, Sunnyvale, CA 94086

WHO REPRESENTS YOU

UNITED STATES

President Barack Obama 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. Mike Honda 408-558-8075
mike.honda@mail.house.gov

CALIFORNIA

Governor Jerry Brown 916-445-2841
governor@governor.ca.gov
Senator Jim Beall 408-286-8318
senator.beall@senate.ca.gov
Senator Jerry Hill 650-212-3313
senator.hill@senate.ca.gov
Assemblyman Paul Fong 408-277-2003
assemblyman.fong@assembly.ca.gov
Assemblyman Rich Gordon 650-691-2121
assemblyman.gordon@assembly.ca.gov

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Supervisor Dave Cortese 408-299-5030
dave.cortese@bos.sccgov.org
Supervisor Joe Simitian 408-299-5050
joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org

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.

League of Women Voters
of Cupertino-Sunnyvale
P.O. Box 2923
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

FIRST CLASS