



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

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LEAGUE CELEBRATES 86 YEARS

From the LWVCS VOTER, February 1991, President's Message

The League of Women Voters is an outgrowth of the women's suffrage movement. On February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, delegates from the National American Women Suffrage Association met for a victory convention in Chicago. With votes for women close at hand they held a jubilant celebration and the last suffrage convention turned into the first convention of the League of Women Voters. In her convention address, the Women's Suffrage Association President, Carrie Chapman Catt said, "The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to create sex antagonism but to develop cooperation between men and women, it is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage. Are the women of the United States big enough to see their opportunity?"

That was the beginning of the national League, but California, back then as it is now, was a jump ahead of the rest of the country. In 1911 California was the sixth state to give women the right to vote and in that year the California Civic League was formed for women interested in participating in politics and civic life. In 1921 it became part of the League of Women Voters.

And so since its beginnings 86 years ago, the League has helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. It has tackled a diverse range of public policy issues, often involving League members in continuing action over several years or even decades.

Early on the League supported child labor laws, minimum wage, compulsory education, and equal opportunity for women in government and industry. In the thirties we worked on Social Security and Food and Drug Acts, in the forties we supported the United Nations and a U.S. Foreign Aid policy that improves the quality of life for the people of developing countries. The "witch hunt" period of the early fifties inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program that focused on the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Next came a study evaluating the federal loyalty/security programs and, ultimately, a League position that strongly emphasized the protection of individual rights. In the sixties we focused our energies on "Equality of Opportunity" which meant support for equal access to education, employment and housing. In the seventies we supported ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. And the list goes on. When we take up a new issue we don't drop the old ones. We continue to work on them until we feel our goals have been reached.

Let's say "Happy Birthday LWV" and rededicate ourselves to the League's mission: "...a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I write this three weeks into 2006. We've had a little rest after the elections, made time to simply enjoy each other's company at a holiday party, and held a program planning meeting to set our priorities for this year. And now, we take a deep breath before launching into another year of trying to build strong communities formed by the choices of an informed electorate. So what's on the agenda?

- 1) Start planning now for the next round of elections. June 6 will be upon us before we know it, and while only two ballot measures have qualified for this ballot so far, 29 are circulating for signatures. Quite apart from the primary races, which can always be interesting, there will be issues coming directly to the voters, and we will do our part to make those issues comprehensible.
- 2) LWV National Convention June 10-13, 2006 in Minneapolis. Now, Minneapolis is my hometown, so I might be a trifle biased, but do consider going to what promises to be a thoroughly enjoyable event. Details at www.lwv.org/convention.
- 3) Read the VOTER! I'm running out of room, and haven't scratched the surface of the opportunities you have to make a difference, whether your pet topic is energy, housing, voter rights or airports. Look for your chance to lend your voice or your time where it will count.

Susan

P.S. On a personal note, apologies for my absence from these pages last month, and thanks to the many of you who offered support and kind words following my mother's death. Community matters even more in hard times.

HAZMATTERS MEETING

The League's Hazmatters committee will hold its next meeting on Thursday, February 23rd from 10 am to noon at Mary Nichols' home, 330 Chatham Way, Mountain View 650-967-0650

Dave Drury, Senior Civil Engineer at the Santa Clara Valley Water District, will talk about the mercury problems in Santa Clara County creeks and rivers, stemming from the New Almaden Mines Area and from urban runoff. This past year, monitoring results have begun to show where mercury erodes into the creeks, where it hardens into glassine deposits and where it becomes methylated and available for fish consumption.

Board Briefs

At its January meeting the board:

- Set June 3 as the date for the Annual Meeting.
- Decided to hold the Community Appeal in March.
- Learned that the LWVUS Convention will be held in Minneapolis, June 10 – 13.

Looking Back

25 years ago members studied the issue of full voting rights for the District of Columbia.

15 years ago the Cupertino-Sunnyvale League's meetings focused on local government.

10 years ago members heard Carol O'Hare, editor of the revised edition of *Jailed for Freedom* speak on the legacy of the suffrage movement.

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Josephine Borucki, Terry Grant, Bruce Kendall, Natalie Mayer, Elizabeth Mulford, Judith Pogue, Jason Spiller, and Karen Zimmerman.

Thank you for including a donation with your dues: Andrea Harris, Michael Quinn, Alice McAllister, and Leanne and Charles Utilis.

LEAGUE NEWS

National – LWV Alameda County is one of fourteen Leagues across the country who will host forums during “Sunshine Week 2006” designed to stimulate public discussion about why open government is important to everyone and why it is under challenge today.

State – At its January 2006 meeting, the LWVC Board of Directors voted to support the library bond measure that will appear on the June 6 statewide ballot. If passed by the voters, the California Reading and Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2006 will provide \$600 million in general obligation bond funds for library construction and renovation. For more information about this act, visit www.yesforlibraries.com.

Bay Area – Bay Area League is taking action on regional air quality by encouraging local Leagues to support the adoption of local ordinances to restrict the emission of particulates from wood fired smoke.

Communities in the Bay Area will be asked to reaffirm the Smart Growth Vision for our region that was established a few years ago. The vision includes an emphasis on infill development, the coordination of transportation and land use planning, the protection of important open space resources and production of needed housing .

County – The Leagues of Santa Clara County will cosponsor with Silicon Valley Leadership Group a Visions and Values Solution Summit to be held in March.

TAKE THE BUDGET CHALLENGE

The California Budget Challenge is an online “game” <http://www.next-ten.org/> which lets you roll up your sleeves and create your own state budget for the next ten years. One handy feature of the package is the Weekly Budget Quiz which you can sign up for and receive by e-mail, or find on the Web site.

This game has been developed by Next Ten, an organization which creates tools that empower Californians through deeper understanding of critical issues affecting our future economy and quality of life.

LWVC Update 10/6/05

Next Ten has developed a simple but informative brochure explaining California's budget problems. To receive a copy contact Susan Hough, shough@mennen.org or Roberta Hollimon, rhollimon2@cs.com.

“RAMBLING WRECKS” FOR DEMOCRACY!

Donate your car, boat, RV or motorcycle by calling 1-800-320-0476. You'll get a deduction on your taxes, avoid a hassle at the DMV and provide a new source of funding for our organization. Make that "rambling wreck" work for democracy!

Help Make Government Work 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.

___ \$50 Individual member

Name: _____

___ \$75 Two members in a household

Address: _____

___ Contribution \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Checks made out to LWVCS are not tax deductible.