



Santa Cruz VOTER

League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County

April 2013

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Calendar

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

1 –3 pm

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank
720 Front Street, Santa Cruz

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

1 –3 pm

Local Program Planning

24 Oak Road (Pasatiempo),
Santa Cruz, 95060

Tuesday, May 1, 2013

12 –1 pm

Emergency Center Tour

Santa Cruz Regional 911
495 Upper Park Rd, Santa Cruz
Lunch follows at DeLaveaga Golf
Course

Saturday, June 1, 2013

11:30 – 2pm

LWVSCC Annual Meeting

Clubhouse at Seascape Golf
Course
610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos

League Prepares to Launch New Approach to Online Voter Information

Big changes are coming soon to the Internet near you! Building on last fall's successful test of Smart Voter's new "Next Generation" web technology, the state League is poised to launch a brand new way of engaging and informing California voters online later this year. Detailed plans are currently being finalized and are expected to be announced at the state League Convention in San Jose on May 16-19.

The new approach is expected to incorporate the most current techniques from both online journalism and interactive web technology to create a completely new experience for the 24 million Californians who will be eligible to vote in 2014. Regular updates and news stories based on some of the best coverage and analysis of election-related subjects in the Golden State will be featured at the completely-redesigned Smart Voter® website, along with the award-winning personal ballot lookup that California voters have used for more than fifteen years. Visitors will be able to enjoy a robust range of streaming videos, audio clips, interactive graphics and carefully-selected stories about upcoming election issues and contests, ballot measures and changes to the voting process.

Importantly, the new Smart Voter® will allow the League at all levels to partner more extensively with other leading civic groups and news media outlets around the state, and to provide information tools and content that can be easily shared on the websites, mobile apps and social media of those organizations to greatly expand our impact. The Next Generation design will make all of this valuable information just as easy to explore on the touch screens of smartphones and tablet computers as the biggest flat panel monitor.

By spearheading these capabilities to expand and innovate in how we will provide voter service, the leadership of Smart Voter® hopes to ensure that local Leagues throughout California will have the tools to be a vital source for voters well into the 21st century. A campaign to raise additional support to complete this important transition to the League's future in online voter information is currently underway. Right now, thanks to a \$25,000 challenge offered by a group of longtime Smart Voter® supporters, every new or increased donation to Smart Voter for the Next Generation project by June 30, 2013 will be matched until the challenge goal is met. Checks should be sent to LWVC Education Fund, 1107 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95814-3608, with a notation that you wish to designate your gift to Smart Voter. We appreciate your support!



COMMUNITIES SERVED BY THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Aptos • Ben Lomond • Bonny Doon • Boulder Creek
Capitola • Davenport • Felton • La Selva Beach
Santa Cruz • Scotts Valley • Soquel • Watsonville

Presidents Message

Dear Fellow Leaguers:

I was out of town from January 31 through February 20, so I'm not in a position to share much news as to what our League was doing in February. My trip was a lot of fun, but very tiring. I flew to Viet Nam to visit my son and grandson, who live in Ho Chi Minh City. The day after I arrived, we flew to Bali and spent a week at a Club Med there. There are 86 Club Meds in the world and, so I understand, they have different emphases. This one catered to adults with or without children. I have heard that some of them cater to swinging singles! This was not the case at "our" Club Med. We had a wonderful time swimming, both in the ocean or in a pool. My grandson enjoyed the children's activities and all three of us went on an elephant ride. The elephants were very sweet—they even serenaded us with their harmonicas when our ride was over. I have a picture of myself hugging my elephant's trunk while he (or she) returns my affection by wrapping his trunk around me. Other than that, my son and I mainly just kicked back and relaxed. When we returned to Ho Chi Minh City, several of my son's friends invited us over to dinner, served with chopsticks, of course. I managed fairly well. I didn't do much sightseeing in Viet Nam because this was about my 12th visit. I have been going there every year since my son moved there 12 years ago to accept a position as an ESL teacher.



—*Sincerely, Irene*

LWV Local Program Planning Meeting

Come to our League of Women Voters meeting on Wednesday April 10 and help us plan next year's program. The meeting will be held at League Webmaster Judy Brock's home at 24 Oak Road in Pasatiempo from 1 – 3 pm.

We will review all local LWVSCC positions to determine if they need updating and decide whether to undertake a new study of a local issue. We will also be soliciting ideas for luncheon programs for next year. Is there something you are interested in learning more about or do you want to bring a particular issue to the attention of the community? This is your opportunity.

New members, this is your chance to learn about our local League and to have input on next year's program. If you are unable to attend you can still contribute by e-mailing our local website lwvsc.org or calling 426-VOTE(8683).

LWVC Convention 2013

The 64th State Convention of the League of Women Voters of California is scheduled for Friday, May 17 through Sunday afternoon, May 19, 2013, with special pre-convention events on Thursday, May 16. It's being held at the Dolce Hayes Mansion in San Jose this year—just 40 minutes away—a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the League.

Our local League is eligible to send two voting delegates. However, attendance at convention is open to everyone and the League encourages all members to attend. Registration fees range from the full registration price of \$375 down to single workshops @ \$40 each. One can also register for a single convention day to include plenary sessions and workshops with or without lunch. Workshops are usually scheduled in the afternoons.

The theme of the convention is myLeague: Leading the Charge for Change! Here's a sampling of the workshops that will be available:

- Taking Action in Your Community: An Intensive, Hands-on Workshop about Advocacy in the local League environment
- The Future of Voter Service: Learn How to Use Smart Voter's "Next Generation" for Your League
- Local Advocacy on State Issues
- myLeague's Website
- myLeague Charging into Social Media
- A Citizen's Guide to the California State Budget
- Healthcare Reform for California and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Read more about speakers, workshops, special activities and registration on the League's convention blog at <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/>

Let me know if you plan to attend as I will be helping to arrange carpooling.

—*Jan Karwin, jan@karwin.com, (831) 460-1714*

Membership Report

Recent additions to our local League of Women Voters are Kathleen McCreesh, an Aptos resident, and Joan Hebert and Erik Thomassen, household members who belonged to Carpinteria/Santa Barbara LWV for years and currently live in Santa Cruz. Welcome to all our new members.



—*Barbara Lewis, Membership Vice President*

League Fundraiser

The League's annual Valentine's themed fundraiser luncheon and silent auction was held on February 10 at the Scotts Valley Hilton. It was very successful thanks to the many League members who helped with planning and set up and/or donated auction items. Special thanks to Program Chair Peggy Marketello. UCSC Chancellor George Blumenthal was the featured speaker and his topic was "Local Roots and Global Impacts". Before beginning his talk, Professor Blumenthal who was named chancellor of the University in 2007, thanked the audience for passing Proposition 30.

He began by stating that UCSC is ranked 7th in the world of universities under 50 years old and gave several examples of accomplishments which led to this ranking. The astronomer, Sandy Faber was recently awarded the national medal of science. UCSC's program to develop alternatives to methyl bromide makes it a leader in sustainable agriculture. UCSC was recently named to be a national cancer hub, acting as a storage site for cancer genomes. Genomics is facilitating a brave new world of cancer treatment with major changes coming. In the words of David Haussler, Director of the Center for Biomolecular Science and Engineering, "It's time for the nerds to treat cancer".



UCSC plays an important role in our community. Many students do volunteer work through the student run volunteer center and UCSC is the top employer in the County, generating \$1.2 million in economic activity annually.

Chancellor Blumenthal emphasized that UCSC strives to be a good neighbor. Traffic is down 20% from 10 yrs ago. Water use is down 22%. The University uses only 6% of the city's water. It pays for extra police to deal with student parties while educating students to be good neighbors. It is forming partnerships with City and County agencies, for example, the fire department. The University is also experimenting with alternate energy generation with several ongoing experiments on the municipal wharf.

UCSC's 10 residential colleges make it a standout in the UC system. The students get a small college experience while being a part of the larger UC system. UCSC's educational methods offer students ample opportunities to get actively involved in their community and professors are eager to work with students. 60% of students have done research with a faculty member by the time they graduate. Students share their IT skills with the developing world. They have the opportunity to intern in Silicon Valley where they can address real world problems. UCSC's student body is increasingly diverse. 1/3 of the student body is currently underrepresented minorities. 52% will be the first in their family to graduate from college. At the same time UCSC is able to be ever more selective in its students. There were 46,000 applications for admission this year.

Chancellor Blumenthal encouraged locals to volunteer at the University. Docents are needed at the Seymour Discovery Center, Lick Observatory, Arboretum, Farm and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. The USCS Women's Club which is open to the community raises money for scholarships for re-entry students at its annual Chocolate Festival. To volunteer, search campus volunteer opportunities at ucsc.edu. Finally, Chancellor Blumenthal summed up by telling us that "UCSC is rooted in the local community but scans the globe and even the universe."

A number of questions from the audience were answered following his talk including about UCSC's commitment to the liberal arts and social sciences. He responded that UCSC is a liberal arts university and the arts division at UCSC is "amazing". In addition an emerging program in Latin American and Latino Studies just got approval for its doctoral program.

League member Pam Newbury asked a question about the lack of qualified applicants for higher level jobs. Chancellor Blumenthal responded that students need training for existing jobs and those that will become available in the future. Students from overseas need to be able to stay and work in this country after graduation. One half of Silicon Valley startups were by someone born outside of the US.



The chancellor also answered questions regarding growth of the university and water use. He is confident that conservation can keep up with demand. Asked about the increasing numbers of out of state students he responded that he would like to increase the number to about 5% of the student population. Non resident students pay \$33,000 per year versus \$13,000 for California residents. Finally, upon being asked if he would accept the UC president's job, he said he would think about it as "the next five years will be ever more crucial for the University System".

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to 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 League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

____\$65 Individual annual membership

____\$100.00 Two members in a household

____\$30.00 Student membership

____ Contribution \$ _____

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____

Email _____

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LWV Representatives Meet With Senator Bill Monning

Representatives from LWV of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties met with State Senator Bill Monning on Friday, February 8, 2013 to ask questions on the budget process, election reform/money in politics and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). LWV representatives included Pam Newbury, Joyce Anderson, and Marcia Minnihan from Santa Cruz County and Vickie Gilfix from Monterey County.

Concerning the budget, Senator Monning mentioned the benefit of California’s bond rating increase from A- to A as a result of Proposition 30 and related actions. Regarding revising the tax structure, he mentioned reviewing deductions, including fraudulent deductions, lowering localities’ requirements for passing certain tax increases to 55% from two-thirds, and reviewing the balance of individual and corporate taxes. He endorsed the notion of equity in taxes, such as instituting an Oil Extraction Fee and increasing taxes on fossil fuels. This promotes compensation for related harm to the environment.

Regarding election reform, Sen. Monning endorsed a disclosure act with greater transparency to inform voters of the largest contributors in a campaign. While some studies suggest a weak correlation with money spent and election results, it can have a significant impact, particularly on the California initiative process. He said independent expenditures teams can spend without limit and with no accuracy checks; they should be required to adhere to the same rules as elected officials.

Regarding RHNA, Sen. Monning stated the general position at the state level is that communities rule in making local decisions on change and development. Only when communities do nothing to increase affordable housing will the state step in. He acknowledged complexities due to limited water, roads and infrastructure to support housing growth. He also suggested that communities receive credit for mobile home parks, currently not in the evaluation algorithm.

Sen. Monning invited additional questions to be sent to his office for written responses.

Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 1

Clubhouse at Seascope Golf Course
610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos

LWV Representatives Meet With Assemblymember Mark Stone

Representatives from LWV of Santa Cruz and Monterey counties met with State Assemblymember Mark Stone on Friday, February 22, 2013 to ask questions on the budget process, election reform/ money in politics, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and local water supply. LWV representatives were Joyce Anderson and Marcia Minnihan from Santa Cruz County and Vickie Gilfix, Dennis Mar, and Kemay and Carson Eoyang from Monterey County Peninsula.

Assemblymember Stone commented that Proposition 30 and budget cuts have mitigated the structural deficit in California. Now the State Administration must address all the cuts in services to families, children, seniors, and the disabled. He feels we need to address needs in education and human services, including early learning. He supports the current budget process in which more responsibility is relegated to the budget subcommittees rather than high-level negotiations only involving "The Big Five." This use of the subcommittees promotes wider discussion and more transparency.

Concerning election reform and money in politics, Assemblymember Stone criticized the huge, largely-useless spending, particularly in the initiative process. He acknowledged that it will be difficult to change. It would probably require a grassroots movement. Faster identification of contributors and those behind media messages would better inform the voters.

Assemblymember Stone noted that his legislative class will be able to serve twelve years in the Assembly. He hopes that this possibility will promote more long range thinking among legislators.

Assemblymember Stone supports the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and feels it has led to better development. While imperfect, he would be very cautious about changes that might reduce its strength. He considers its main flaw to be the ability of last-minute objections to obstruct progress; however, some last-minute objections have been valuable to the project.

Concerning the RHNA, Assemblymember Stone understands the concerns of those communities that have water, space or infrastructure constraints. The State Department of Housing essentially looks at the state as uniformly similar. He supports a better analysis of potential growth given local constraints. However, it could be politically complex to make changes.

When asked about solutions and challenges to clean, inexpensive, adequate water supply, Assemblymember Stone emphasizes politicians and the public asking the right questions. Attention must be paid not only to water supply but what agencies bear the responsibility of monitoring water after its use. He encourages stronger supervision of fracking practices. He supports reviewing all options before going forward with approving desalination. A state-level water bill may be passed by 2014 that may challenge local solutions. He supports public ownership of water services.

Assemblymember Stone concluded with his two personal priorities: 1) children, including foster care and early education, and 2) environmental, including marine debris, oil fracking, and "sharps" in the waste stream.

Assemblymember Stone remarked that he considered the League's candidates' forums a great service to voters. He said that other groups will sponsor forums, but none have the reputation for integrity and neutrality as does the League.

Patton Video

Gary Patton is a local attorney who has extensive government and environmental experience including twenty years as a member of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. View a presentation by Mr. Patton on How to Keep The Government Honest, < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uw4CY7iryMQ&feature=youtu.be>> which was recorded at an event sponsored by the LWV of the Monterey Peninsula. He advocates for the Public Records Act, Brown Act, Conflict of Interest Provisions, and other tools used to keep government transparent.

