



Vol. XXIX No. III
 December 2013
 January 2014

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
www.lwypaloalto.org

LWVPA's 75th Anniversary!

*Join us to Celebrate 75 Years of
 Achievement in Palo Alto and Stanford*



Co-hosted by the Woman's Club
 of Palo Alto and co-sponsored
 by the Palo Alto Weekly
 and Palo Alto Online

The Status of Women – Past/Present/Future Saturday, December 7

10:00 am - 1:30 pm

The Woman's Club
 475 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto

We begin with a panel of three outstanding women:

- * **Carol Christ**, former President of Smith College, now on the faculty at UC Berkeley
- * **Judge LaDoris H. Cordell** (retired), now the Independent Police Auditor for the City of San Jose
- * **Myra Strober**, Stanford Professor of Education and founding Director of the Clayman Institute for Gender Research

Followed by a celebratory box lunch and speaker:

Jennifer Waggoner

President, League of Women Voters of California
"The Status of Women/Empowering Women"

To make a **reservation**, please click on [reservation form](#), print it, fill it out and mail it to the League office with \$25 for lunch - **no later than December 2**. Donations gladly accepted.

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Save the Date:

Program Planning in 2014!

Our annual **Program Planning** meeting will be on **Saturday, January 25**, from 9:00 am until noon at the home of Alice Smith, **so put this on your 2014 calendar now**. This year we will focus on National and Bay Area positions.



Message from our President

Celebration Time

By now you have received your invitation and return card for our **75th Anniversary Celebration** on **Saturday, December 7**, at **The Woman's Club of Palo Alto**. Please make your menu choice and send in your payment with the return card in the envelope provided. Also, you are encouraged to send a donation in honor of our 75 Years of Achievement. **All reservations with payment must be received by Monday, December 2.**

Happy New Year

Our annual **Program Planning** meeting will be on **Saturday, January 25**, from 9:00 am until noon at the home of Alice Smith, 4284 Los Palos Circle, Palo Alto, so put this on your 2014 calendar now. This year we will focus on National and Bay Area positions.

Help New Citizens Register To Vote

The right of every American citizen to vote is a basic League principle.

After many years of Leagues being unable to participate, the Registrar of Voters in Santa Clara County has invited each League in Santa Clara County to serve as volunteers at the monthly **naturalization ceremonies** to help new citizens register to vote.

Our League has been assigned the months of **August and September in 2014** to assist the Registrar as volunteers at the Heritage Theater in Campbell. The dates are August 21 and September 18 from 10:30 - 11:30 am and again from 1:30 - 2:30 pm.

To meet and assist these new citizens in registering to vote is one of the most rewarding experiences for League members who cherish this right. **Liza Taft, our Voter Registration coordinator**, is looking for at least two persons for each of these dates. Please email or phone Liza to volunteer for an experience that will put a smile on your face.

Mary Alice Thornton

 **LWVUS has issued its "First Call" to Convention 2014 in Dallas, TX, on June 6-10, 2014. Please plan to join national, state and local League leaders from around the country for this lively biennial event. During this five-day gathering, you will hear nationally known speakers, learn more about the issues important to the organization and the nation, participate in training sessions, and join in the discussion and networking that make the League a strong and vital force in our democracy. See the [Convention 2014 webpage](#) for more information. Contact Mary Alice Thornton if you wish to go.**

LWV of Palo Alto: Officers, Directors, Off-Board Roster (650) 903-0600, www.lwvpaloalto.org

OFFICERS	DIRECTORS	OFF-BOARD	
Mary Alice Thornton <i>President</i> president@lwvpaloalto.org	Veronica Tincher <i>New Voices; Smart Voter Liaison; Speakers Bureau</i>	Nancy Olson <i>eAction Alert</i>	Luise Maier <i>Hospitality</i>
Bonnie Packer <i>1st Vice Pres., VOTER Editor</i> lwvpaoffice@gmail.com	Trina Lovercheck <i>Voter Service Chair</i>	Arnold Petersen <i>Budget Committee Chair</i>	Mitzi Henderson <i>VOTER Mailing</i>
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		Jeff Rensch <i>Housing</i>	Marlene Prendergast, Chair Barbara Spreng Pat Saffir

November Board Meeting Summary

At its November Meeting your board took the following actions:

- Accepted the October Minutes and Treasurer's Report.
- Unanimously approved the budget for the **75th Anniversary Celebration.**



The board also:

- Held debriefing discussions on the Measure D election and the Affordable Care Act meeting.
- Reviewed the October 9 Lunch with the League meeting on Caltrain Modernization.

The board also learned that:

- The LWVC Guide to California Government is available for purchase from LWVC for \$18.95.

- LWVPA membership is currently at 261 members. Final notices will be sent to those members who have not yet renewed their membership.
- There will be a mailing party to mail invitations for the **75th Anniversary Celebration.**
- **New Voices for Youth** is using a popular crowd funding site, **Indiegogo**, to raise the necessary funds needed to maintain their program. It is hoped that the Indiegogo campaign succeeds so that students at the Menlo-Atherton High School can continue the program in 2014.
- The next Lunch with the League will be on November 13 on Transportation Demand Management.

Submitted by Virginia Pirrotta, Secretary

Come to our 75th Anniversary Celebration!

We hope you will join us to celebrate our **75 Years of Achievement in Palo Alto and Stanford** on **Saturday, December 7, 2013, 10 am to 1:30 pm** with the theme “**Status of Women – Past/Present/Future**”. The **Woman's Club of Palo Alto is co-hosting** and the Palo Alto Weekly and Palo Alto Online are co-sponsoring this very special event. Detailed information is on the front page.



After moving to Stanford in **1938**, Mrs. Paul Eliel, who had served as an officer of both the National and State Leagues, invited 40 women to her home to begin organizing the Palo Alto League of Women Voters. Their first board meeting was held at the beginning of 1939. By January 1940, the membership had grown to 128 and the first study on city government was held the following year. Growth continued, with a new League in South

San Mateo County splitting off in 1954 and a Los Altos-Mountain View League formed in 1960.

Over the years, LWVPA has conducted a wide range of studies on which it bases its positions on local issues. One of its first campaigns was for the establishment of the **United Nations** in the 1940s. Go to our website at <http://lwvpaloalto.org/Anniversary.html> for more highlights of LWVPA's activities over the decades.

Much thanks to the amazing celebration planning committee: **Pat McGuire, Alice Smith, Mary Alice Thornton** and **Veronica Tincher** and also **Vicki Sullivan** and **Marlene Prendergast**, President and Vice President of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, respectively (and also LWVPA members).

We mailed 803 announcements to LWVPA members, LWVPA supporters, Woman's Club members, all local elected officials and neighboring Leagues. Thanks to the mailing party: **Julie Barney, Barbara Bowden, Chris Logan, Pat McGuire, Lee Sendelbeck** and **Mary Alice Thornton**.

Send in your RSVP card and your check for lunch now!

Submitted by Veronica Tincher



The next **Lunch with the League** will be a panel discussion on

Planned Community (PC) Zoning

featuring our illustrious LWVPA members:

Wynne Furth, former Palo Alto City Attorney, **Judith Wasserman**, former member of the Architectural Review Board and the Public Art Commission and **Phyllis Cassel**, former Planning and Transportation Commissioner.

Wednesday, January 15, 11:45 am - 1 pm, Hobee's, 4224 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

Contact Phyllis Cassel for more information. RSVP to lwvpaoffice@gmail.com



Advocacy Report - Phyllis Cassel

Maybell Senior Affordable Housing. I am sure that you all know that Measure D, which would have allowed the Palo Alto Housing Corporation to build affordable housing for seniors, did not pass. This vote will likely have implications beyond just affordable senior housing. LWVPA took a strong stand in favor of Measure D and much time was spent by our members supporting the YES on D campaign. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard.

Homeless issues. The “Stop the Ban Coalition” met at Saint Mark’s Episcopal Church to hear from Roslyn Scheueman, Case Manager for New Beginnings Counseling Center in Santa Barbara which manages a Safe Parking Program. The program helps people who are living in their vehicles. It has contracts for 107 spaces throughout Santa Barbara County in 17 churches, businesses and municipal and county lots. There is a complicated application process and once in the program, participants receive counseling services. There is also an extensive set of rules. They recommended that if we start such a program in Palo Alto that we start small, work out the issues that may arise, then expand with a successful program. Funding comes from HUD, city and county and private donations. It looks like the “Stop the Ban Coalition” will continue to work towards establishing an approved parking program for people living in vehicles.

Summary of LWVC-Supported Bills Sent to the Governor’s Desk in 2013

One of the major functions of LWVC (LWV California) is to lobby for those issues for which the LWVC has applicable positions. The 2013 legislative session dealt with approximately 825 bills that originated in the California Senate and 1430 that originated in the California Assembly, plus other resolutions and documents. The **LWVC took positions on 68 bills** on a wide range of issues and followed, but did not take positions, on another 57 bills. The LWVC has set priorities for its work; its small staff plus volunteers cannot cover everything. **Of these 68 bills, 26 were forwarded to Governor Brown for signature. Six of the 26 were vetoed.**

Following is my summary of the LWVC recap of these 26 bills. More information on these bills can be found on the LWVC website: Act Now, Bill Status: <http://ctweb.capitoltrack.com/public/publish.aspx?session=13&id=a899e928-bc22-48b2-9091-5d5b5bb176f8>

Campaign Financing: LWVC had been intensely lobbying for three campaign finance bills plus SB 52, the DISCLOSE Act. **Only SB 3 went to the Governor’s desk. The Governor vetoed this bill** saying that parts of SB 3 are costly and unnecessary. However, he said there is no doubt that the current online campaign finance disclosure system is outdated and cumbersome. He therefore ordered the Government Operations Agency to consult with the Fair Political Practices Commission and the Secretary of State and return to him with recommendations on the best way to improve campaign disclosure.



Community College System: The Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, **signed by the Governor**, mandates community colleges to create an associate degree for transfer in every major and area for emphasis offered.

Gun Control: The Governor signed two LWVC-supported gun control bills and vetoed three. To reduce the backlog in the Armed Prohibited Persons System, SB 1450 appropriates \$24M from the Dealers Record of Sale Account to the Department of Justice. SB 683, the Firearms Safety Certificate, prohibits the purchasing, selling, loaning, delivering or transferring of any firearm without a valid safety certificate. The Governor **vetoed** the firearms assault changes in SB 374, stating that we already have the most restrictive gun laws in the nation. The Governor **vetoed** SB 567, stating that this bill would ban a small group of specialty rifles with no identified impact on public safety. The Governor **vetoed** AB 180, stating that it would be too confusing for Oakland to have laws different than the rest of the State.



Energy: The Governor **signed the Green Tariff Shared Renewables Program** that will allow participating large electrical corporations to enable ratepayers to participate directly in qualifying offsite electrical generation facilities that use renewable energy resources.

Hazardous Materials: SB 4, Oil and Gas Well Simulation bill, defines processes such as fracking and develops a permitting process. The **Governor signed the bill**, stating that it establishes strong environmental protections and increases transparency. He stated he will instruct appropriate departments to develop an efficient permitting program and will work next year for some clarifying amendments.

Health Care: ABX 11 and SBX 11, Medi-Cal eligibility bills, were **signed**, implementing various portions of the Affordable Care Act.

Housing: AB 1229 would have allowed municipalities to adopt **inclusionary zoning**. It was **vetoed** with the Governor stating that he feels that it discourages housing

production and he wants to await the results of an inclusionary housing case pending before the California Supreme Court.

Juvenile Justice/Dependency: SB 342 sets requirements for social worker and probation worker visits and SB 528, Dependents: Care and Treatment, authorizes dependent minors to make some medical care decisions for themselves. **Both bills were signed.**

Reproductive Choices: AB 154 makes it a public offense for a person to perform an abortion unless the person has a valid license to practice as a physician and surgeon or the person holds a license or certificate to perform aspiration and medical abortions. AB 980 states that all primary care clinics, including those that perform abortions, must be subject to the same licensing and building codes. **The Governor signed both bills.**

Voting Rights: Seven of the bills LWVC supported became law and one was vetoed. A County Registrar of Voters may now consider a voter registration application valid even if the voter's place of birth is not completed. The Secretary of State is to establish procedures and guidelines for voting in the event of a natural disaster or other state of emergency by the end of 2014. A local election official is allowed to establish procedures that permit a voter to request a vote-by-mail ballot via the telephone. A person lawfully admitted for permanent residency to the United States may, in an election, perform the duties of a clerk as a precinct board member, but may not count the



ballots. Each official California State internet website will have a hyperlink to the online registration page of the California Secretary of State. SB 362 revises provisions for the Secretary of State to certify voting systems developed by local jurisdictions. Lastly, one of the bills authorized procedures to allow voters to vote who are out of state due to an official state of emergency.

Governor Brown **vetoed** a bill that would have required the Attorney General to provide translations to all the "intention to circulate" initiative petitions before they are circulated. Current law already requires translation for measures that qualify for the ballot. Governor Brown stated that the costs of this bill outweigh the benefits.

Water: AB 1200 would have authorized a pilot project to investigate potential water quality impacts associated with using recycled water on agricultural land. This bill was **vetoed** by the Governor; however, he instructed the State Water Board and the Regional Board to start an efficient permit process so that the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District farms are encouraged to begin using recycled water.

Open Government: SCA 3, Public Information, requires each local agency to comply with CPRA (California Public Records Act) and the Brown Act and any further changes to those Acts that further the people's right to access information concerning the conduct of the people's business. **Signed by the Governor.**

Submitted by Phyllis Cassel

New Voices Launches Crowd-Funding Campaign



Kids have a lot to say . . . and through *New Voices for Youth (NV4Y)*, local high school students have been learning how to express themselves through video documentaries. This program, started almost ten years ago by League members from the LVWSSMC and LWVPA, has been helping local students develop their voices and become civically engaged by teaching video production. Our Menlo-Atherton High School (MA) students have made videos about diversity at their school, about the challenges of teen parenting and, more recently, about the challenges facing young men and their responsibilities related to their sexuality. Check them out on the New Voices website: www.newvoicesforyouth.org/.

Now the future of this collaboration between the two Leagues and MA High School is endangered. It's important that these young people continue to be civically engaged and empowered to speak out on issues important to them!

To raise necessary funds to keep going, NV is launching a "crowd-funding" effort through Indiegogo.com. Here's how it works: League members on our e-blast distribution will receive a short email announcement asking them to visit the New Voices Indiegogo web site. There, you'll see videos about the students and the New Voices program at MA High School. You will have the opportunity to make a donation – any size will help toward our goal of \$15,000. Equally important, you will be asked to forward the message and any other comments you wish to friends, family, neighbors and anyone else you might think of who is interested in youth programs and would want to invest in the future of under-represented kids. That's what crowd-funding is all about – spreading the word for a project across a wide audience.

The New Voices for Youth Committee and staff are sure you'll like what you see – and thank you for considering supporting *New Voices* and the students it serves.

Staff: **Ana Angel, Tanuj Chopra.** LWVSSMC: **Sheila Botein, Carole Dorshkind, Kathleen Weisenberg.** LWVPA: **Veronica Tincher and Betty Gerard.**

Submitted by Veronica Tincher

Lunch with the League Report:

What is a Successful Transportation Demand Management Program?

At the November **Lunch with the League**, **Dr. Joseph Kott**, Lecturer and Visiting Scholar, Stanford Program on Urban Studies, and former chief Transportation Official for the City of Palo Alto, described **best practices of a successful Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program**. These include having an integrated program, including many employers, over a large, well-defined area or district, such as downtown Palo Alto or the California Avenue business area. The



program should manage, support and advocate for the infrastructure for a wide variety of commuter options, such as carpools, vanpools, Caltrain, Palo Alto and Marguerite shuttles, VTA, bicycle (storage and showers), discounted or free transit passes and electric vehicle recharging. Parking fees can also be an effective incentive. Aggressive marketing and public-private partnerships are also very important. A successful TDM program can reduce single-rider motor car trips significantly. Stanford reduced these car trips from 72% to 47% from 2002 to 2012.



After his talk, Joe (as many of us know him) sent the following message to the Palo Alto Neighborhood Associations:

I was honored to give a luncheon presentation yesterday, in between teaching classes at Stanford and San Jose State, to the Palo Alto League of Women Voters on best practices in managing transportation demand in downtown and other commercial districts. Wonderful to see old friends there, including former Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council members. I much enjoyed the lively conversation about an important issue for public policy in Palo Alto and in many other communities in our region.

The League of Women Voters is an example in modern times of those community-spirited volunteer organizations that the great French friend of America, Alexis de Tocqueville, praised in his brilliant book about our national culture, written after his visit to our country in the 1830s, "Democracy in America". Inspiring to see that this American tradition of civic engagement for good government is still alive and well!

Thanks, Joe!

Submitted by Bonnie Packer

Affordable Care Act – Overview

The following brief summary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is based on several sources, including Bob Brownstein's presentation at the League-sponsored event on October 23 and a panel organized by State Assemblyman Rich Gordon and Senator Jerry Hill with representatives from some local and county organizations working with the ACA.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage begins January 1, 2014. The initial Open Enrollment period is October 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014. After this, people will have to wait until the next Open Enrollment period, except if there is a life-changing event such as decreased income, birthday, marriage, divorce, death or additions to the family.



The goals of the ACA are to:

- Cover more people
- Provide more benefits including mental health
- Lower costs for consumers
- Improve quality and efficiency
- Create a stronger workforce and infrastructure such as school and community-based health centers, and
- Place greater focus on public health and prevention

Some of the provisions in the law have already been implemented, such as children staying on parents' insurance until they are 26 years old.

Changes in the **Medicaid** (Medi-Cal) system include eligibility based on income and not on assets, except for long-term care (nursing home care), for persons under 65 with income less than 133% of the Federal poverty level. There are some **Medicare** changes including help with the drug "donut hole" and increased payments to primary care physicians. **Probably the most important change will be that all policies must meet the Federal standardized benefits.** Insurers cannot apply lifetime or annual limits on coverage, and one cannot be denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition.

For **California-specific** information go to www.coveredca.com or call 1-866-967-4677. For a longer description of the many provisions of ACA, please go to the summary chart prepared by the American Public Health Association at www.apha.org/advocacy/Health+Reform?ACAbasics/

Submitted by Liza Taft

Thanks to Phyllis Cassel and Liza Taft of LWVPA, Sue Graham and Cathy Lazarus of the Los Altos/Mountain View League and Michael Lusk of the Cupertino/Sunnyvale League who helped plan and implement the ACA meeting on October 23.

Housing and Transportation Committee



In the wake of the defeat of Measure D, there may be an effort by some citizens to curtail all "planned community" or PC zoning. The Housing and Transportation Committee will seek ways to ensure any zoning changes still foster the construction of new affordable housing, with the density that affordability needs. We have many other lively issues as well. Our next meeting is on **Monday, December 16, at 4:30 pm**. Please email **Jeff Rensch** at jrench@gmail.com if you would like to attend. You are most welcome!

Thanks to **Georgina Bailie, Jeri Foley** and **Mitzi Henderson** for helping with the mailing of the November *VOTER*.

Thanks

And special thanks to **Mitzi Henderson** for **organizing the Channing House mailing party**.

Also thanks to all the board and off-board members who reviewed this *VOTER* and a special thanks to **Ellen Forbes, Betty Gerard, Trina Lovercheck** and **Alice Smith** for their extra careful and invaluable proofreading.

Submitted by Bonnie Packer, VOTER editor

Education Committee



At our October **LWVSCC Education Committee** meeting we learned that the subgroup for the **LWVC Higher Education Study** met with LWVC Vice President Helen Hutchison to hone the proposal for LWVC board consideration at their January meeting. We also learned more about **Capital Appreciation Bonds** and had a lively discussion on **transitional kindergarten**. I presented information and led a good discussion about the importance of quality **Early Childhood Education (ECE)**.

At the next meeting of the **LWVSCC Education Committee** we will continue our reports and discussion on these issues. The meeting is on **Monday, January 27, 2014, noon** at Grain d'Or, 137 E. El Camino Real at Grant Road, Mountain View.

Submitted by Carole Stein

All are invited to the LWVPA Book Club!



The next selection of is

"The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion"

by Jonathan Haidt

The meeting and **our annual potluck** will be on **Friday, January 24, 2014, 10 am**, at Doris Petersen's home. All members interested in attending are welcome. **RSVP to Doris Petersen**
Please call **Betty Gerard** for more information.

*To link to the [websites](#) in the *VOTER*, you need to read this in a PDF format on a computer. Go to our website at www.lwvpaloalto.org/VOTER.html or email bbpacker@comcast.net to start receiving the *VOTER* as a PDF via email.*

Join our eAction Alert As a member of our eAction Alert team, you will receive email **Calls to Action/Action Alerts** so you can take action on issues the League really cares about. **Our State and National League offices want and need our participation.** During a 'busy' season this could be one to three messages per month. Contact **Nancy Olson** to join.



It's easy to join the LWVPA—Do it now! You will be glad you did.

**Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels:
National, State, Bay Area and Palo Alto.**

Men are encouraged to join. Dues grants are available.

For more information, call the League office (650) 903-0600.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

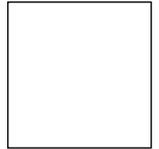
Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ email _____

Annual membership: \$70. Additional membership, same address: \$35. Student membership: \$35.

Mail check with this form to LWVPA, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Membership dues to the LWVPA are not tax deductible.

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 903-0600



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How to contact your elected officials:

CALENDAR

UNITED STATES

President Barack Obama (202) 456-1414

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/>

Senator Dianne Feinstein (415) 393-0707

<http://feinstein.senate.gov> - click "email me"

Senator Barbara Boxer (415) 403-0100

<http://www.boxer.senate.gov/>

Rep. Anna Eshoo (650) 323-2984

<http://eshoo.house.gov/>

CALIFORNIA

Governor Jerry Brown (916) 445-2841

<http://gov.ca.gov/home.php>

Senator Jerry Hill (650) 212-3313

<http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us>

Assemblyman Rich Gordon (650) 691-2121

<http://asmdc.org/members/a24/>

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Supervisor Joseph Simitian (650) 965-8737

joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org

LWVC GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT

Locate your elected officials with your street address

<http://www.guidetogovernment.org/>

Tue, Dec 3, 7-9:30 pm

Board Meeting

Petersen

Sat, Dec 7,

10:00 am-1:30 pm

75th Anniversary Event

Woman's Club

Happy New Year! 2014

Tue, Jan 7, 7-9:30 pm

Board Meeting

Gerard

Wed, Jan 8, noon

VOTER Deadline

Wed, Jan 15, 11:45 am-1 pm

Lunch with the League

Hobee's

Fri, Jan 24, 10 am

Book Club

Petersen

Sat, Jan 25, 9 am

Program Planning

Smith

Mon, Jan 27, noon

LWVSCC Education

Committee

Grain d'Or, Mountain View

Sat, Feb 1, 9:30 am-2:00 pm

Bay Area League Day

Oakland

Tue, Feb 4, 7-9:30 pm

Board Meeting

PCC building