



# The Palo Alto VOTER

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February 2020, Vol. 35, No. 6

## Message from our President

Wow - 2020 is finally here! Let's all take a deep breath, get a good night's rest and then charge into 2020. We will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. We will host Vote-a-Palooza at the Art Center on February 22. We will experience our first year with the new Voter's Choice Act and support the 2020 Census. We will fight for fairness in housing, confront our ever-worsening climate emergency, and tackle the realities of lax firearms laws. - And that's just between now and June!

In the second half of the year we'll celebrate 100 years of Women's Suffrage, and of course, there's a Presidential Election for which we plan to turn out 100% of our empowered, educated, enthusiastic voters!

Up first, in preparation for all these goings-on, is our Program Planning Meeting where our LWVPA membership shapes our work for the foreseeable future. It's our chance to revisit our program areas in order to refine and focus our work. In addition to setting our LWVPA priorities, we send recommendations to the National level to help define the work for Leagues around the country. Mark your calendar for February 1st. The event will be held at Channing House and you'll get a survey beforehand to help us with some pre-work to make our session as efficient as possible.

Buckle up - 2020 is going to be awesome. I can see it clearly now.

As always, I'm grateful for your partnership and teamwork as we tackle empowering voters and defending democracy.

Warmly, [Terry](#)



## University A.M.E. Zion Solidarity Service

Pastor Smith (left, with Terry) expressed his warm thanks for the support of our many League members who attended the Sunday, January 5th, Solidarity Service at University A.M.E. Zion Church. While the vandalism at the church was hateful, the response from the community was a warm embrace. You can see photos of the service above and read [our statement of support](#).

### **FINAL REMINDER!** **Please Renew Your Membership**

[Your membership in the League](#) supports our commitment to empowering voters and defending democracy! **Thank you!**

We are required to drop non-renewed members by January 31st. We appreciate your membership in the League and strive to make our programs and services meaningful and effective. If you aren't sure if you've renewed for 2020, please email Lynne Russell, Membership Co-Chair, at [lynnerrussell1@gmail.com](mailto:lynnerrussell1@gmail.com).

## Your League needs YOU at our annual Program Planning Meeting 2020!

Saturday, February 1, 2020, 8:30 – noon

Channing House, Eleventh Floor

[850 Webster Street, Palo Alto 94301](https://www.google.com/maps/place/850+Webster+Street,+Palo+Alto,+CA+94301)

Light brunch provided. [Register here.](#)



Where should LWVPA focus its energy in this major election year? Make Your Voice Heard! Join us to help determine National and Local League emphases for 2020-22.

**Program Planning is the League’s truly grassroots process for setting its agenda for education and advocacy.** In League, “Program” means the positions we have and the actions we take on issues at local, state and national levels. Every year every League member has the opportunity to influence the selection of issues where the League will focus time, talent and money. Your enthusiasm and interest keep our program vital. You’d never skip voting in an election; you shouldn’t skip the League’s equivalent. **The program planning process is your voice for action!**

On the morning of **Saturday, February 1**, we will meet to discuss the areas where we want to focus our local energy next year and the resources of the national League over the next two years.

**LWVUS Recommends** the continuation of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work, which includes:

- Redistricting
- Voting Rights
- Improving Elections
- Campaign Finance/Money in Politics

Read about Program Planning, the Campaign for Making Democracy Work, and LWVUS action in 2018-19 [here](#).

**LWVUS Asks** if we support adopting a position on Voter Representation and Electoral Systems by the concurrence process (adopting a position without further study, based on positions already held by local or state Leagues). Our LWV California is one of the Leagues with such a position. Read about this position [here](#).

**For LWVPA**, the choice of issues for emphasis is up to you! Our League has many positions on

- [City Government](#)
- [Social Policy](#)
- [Natural Resources](#)

We have active committees working on Housing and Transportation, Responsible Gun Ownership, and Natural Resources.

We will also have an update on Voters Service activities in this critical election year.

What do YOU want your League to focus on? **Watch for a survey on local issues and actions, coming soon.** You can also bring your ideas to the meeting or send a message to [lwvpaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:lwvpaoffice@gmail.com)

**See YOU there!**

*Ellen Smith*

# Celebrate 100 years of the League of Women Voters at Vote-a-Palooza!

February 22, 2020 2-4pm

Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd, Palo Alto



Come to our **Vote-a-Palooza Open House** to celebrate the League of Women Voters' 100th Anniversary and to celebrate voting.

- Rinconada Library (adjacent to the Palo Alto Art Center) will be Palo Alto's main Vote Center.
- Voters can drop their ballots at the Rinconada Vote Center anytime between February 22 and March 3, so join us to be among the first to vote in the 2020 Primary.
- Voters can get their ballots reprinted and register to vote.
- "March" to the ballot box with suffragists.
- Grab a bite to eat from the food trucks.
- Hear from *New York Times* best-selling author Julie Lythcott-Haims, author of *How to Raise an Adult* and *Real American: A Memoir*.
- Kids can cast their "votes" and enjoy voting activities.

Let's turn out 100% of our voters!

Feel free to [post our flyer](#).

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

While the [19th Amendment](#), ratified in 1920, technically granted women the right to vote, it did not initially extend to women of African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American heritage. Reasons included widespread sexism, enduring inequality, and racism from within the women's suffrage movement. White southern support of women's suffrage only existed so long as racist and supremacist racial lines were upheld.

Through fraud and intimidation, voting officials in the South denied voter registration to Black women and barred them from accessing ballot boxes. It wasn't until the Voting Rights Act was passed nearly a half century later, on August 6, 1965, that Black women were officially allowed to exercise their right to vote.

(adapted from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_suffrage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_suffrage))

### DEI Webinar:

Watch the excellent December 19, 2019 LWVUS webinar on DEI [here](#). The 2020 schedule, including monthly webinars through May—with the first on January 30—is on the same page.

# Advocacy Report

## National

**Voting Rights.** LWVUS strongly supported the Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA) which passed the House on 12/6/2019. The VRAA is a major step forward in correcting the damage to voter participation done by the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in Shelby, which stripped away many of the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, by allowing states with a history of racial discrimination to adopt new voting restrictions without prior approval of the Justice Department. "The Senate must pass the VRAA to mitigate racial discrimination in our elections," said Virginia Kase, CEO of LWVUS.

The VRAA addresses three major issues: making sure all eligible citizens are able to register and cast a vote; taking politics out of redistricting; and shining a light on how big money influences election outcomes.

**Voter Purging.** LWV Wisconsin challenged in federal court a planned voter roll purge of 234,000 voters based on unreliable data that the voters may have changed addresses. Voters were given 30 days to respond to a letter informing them they needed to take action, but the letters violated due process because they did not provide adequate notice of what the voters needed to do to remain on the voting rolls and didn't say the voters would be dropped from the rolls if they failed to act. The letters told the voters they could confirm their registration by voting in the next election, but failed to say whether it referred to the next scheduled election or the next one they voted in.

**Motor Voter Registration.** LWV Arizona won a settlement requiring Arizona to implement voter registration services during any change of address transactions, as required by the National Voter Registration Act. When Arizona drivers applied for new licenses, they were not notified that the simple transaction could terminate their voting privileges. As many as 384,000 Arizonans were registered at the wrong address, resulting in being placed on voter rolls in the wrong precinct. The settlement required the state to adopt policies which re-registered drivers when they changed their address.



## State

**Campaign Finance.** LWVC supported AB 571 which sets a default limit of \$4700 on individual contributions to candidates running in city or county elections, the same limit which applies to candidates for state offices. Why is this limit needed? Many local contributions exceed the size of contributions for state elected officials. Placing reasonable limits on contributions enables candidates to compete more equitably and allows maximum citizen participation in the political process. Very large contributions damage public trust in the democratic process by deepening perception that candidates will be more responsive to their financial backers than to their constituents.

## Local

**Climate change is a League legislative priority.** LWV Palo Alto's Natural Resources Committee (NRC) members are on the LWVC Climate Change Task Force. Mary O'Kicki and Dan Zalles are the chairs, respectively, of the Task Force's Food, Soil, and Agriculture Team and Wildfire Team. Three other state teams are Sea Level Rise, Transportation, and Building Electrification. These teams will learn about effective climate change policies and inform the public around these issues. The NRC will hold public education events on climate change policies, starting in April, to coordinate with Earth Day and also plans to educate the public about "Climate Victory Gardens", as a way to create healthy soils which sequester carbon.

*Lisa Ratner*

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David Springer



# League Events through **March 5**

## **Mark the Roe v. Wade 47th Anniversary**

Wednesday, January 22, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm  
"Step Up for Pro-Choice!"  
Los Altos Youth Center, 1 N. San Antonio Rd, Los Altos  
For speakers and more details, see [flyer](#)

## **Get updates on racial justice from ACLU**

Thursday, January 23, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
"Continuing the Fight for Racial Justice"  
Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd, Palo Alto  
RSVP [here](#) by January 20.

## **HELP CHOOSE LEAGUE ACTION PRIORITIES!**

Saturday, February 1, 8:30 am - 12:00 pm  
"LWVPA Annual Members' Planning Meeting"  
Channing House, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
850 Webster St, Palo Alto  
[RSVP](#) now to save your seat! See [flyer](#).

## **Concerned about State Senate candidates' Early Childhood Education positions?**

Sunday, February 9, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
"Early Childhood Education Candidate Forum"  
Performing Arts Center at Hillview Middle School  
1100 Elder Ave, Menlo Park. RSVP [here](#)

## **"Increasing and Broadening Participation in 2020 Elections and the Census"**

Tuesday, February 11, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  
Palo Alto Woman's Club  
475 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto

## **Vote-a-Palooza! LWV Palo Alto CELEBRATES THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' 100th BIRTHDAY**

Saturday, February 22, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm  
Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd, Palo Alto  
For full details, see [flyer](#).

## **"The Struggle for Women's Political Equality in California"**

Saturday, February 29, 9:30 am - 2:00 pm  
Bay Area League Day 2020:  
"Looking Back, Moving Forward"  
Dominican Center, 43226 Mission Blvd, Fremont  
Buy your tickets [here](#). For more detailed information,  
see [this LWV Bay Area page](#).

## **Census 101 Workshop for Newcomers**

Thursday, March 5, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Mitchell Park Library, 3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto  
Part of Palo Alto Library's "Welcome to America" series

## **League of Women Voters' 100th Birthday**

Friday, February 9

## **VOTE!**

Tuesday, March 3  
(or earlier by mail or at a Vote Center)

## **How to contact your elected officials**

### **United States**

[President Donald Trump](#) (202) 456-1414  
[Senator Dianne Feinstein](#) (415) 393-0707  
[Senator Kamala Harris](#) (415) 403-0100  
[Rep. Anna Eshoo](#) (650) 323-2984

### **California**

[Governor Gavin Newsom](#) (916) 445-2841  
[Senator Jerry Hill](#) (650) 212-3313  
[Assemblymember Marc Berman](#) (650) 691-2121

### **Santa Clara County**

Supervisor Joe Simitian (650) 965-8737  
[joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org)

### **Other Areas in California**

[Locate your elected officials by street address](#)

For a [complete list of your local electeds](#), see our website.