Reviving Civics Education:
Intro to iCivics with Ann Ravel

Please join us to hear Ann Ravel speak about iCivics, the organization founded by former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, and currently supported by Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Neil Gorsuch, to encourage and teach students to become active and engaged citizens via their web-based app.

The League of Women Voters works to promote civic education and help inform and educate citizens. In the effort to reinvigorate civic learning and engagement in democracy, we are excited to learn and hear from governing board member of iCivics, Ann Ravel! Read her full bio: Here

Saturday, January 26  9:00-11:00 am
League of Women Voters, Raptor Conference Room
3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto
Register Here by January 25
Questions? Please Email us at: lwvpaooffice@gmail.com or call us at 650-903-0600.

Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

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The Program Planning Process Is Your Voice!
WHERE SHOULD YOUR LEAGUE FOCUS ITS ENERGY?
Help us identify issues and set League priorities for 2019-2021

Please join Stanford Law School and the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

Understanding California’s Red Flag Law: Removing Guns from Those Who May Be a Threat to Self or Others
An educational event on California's Gun Violence Restraining Order, an important and underused tool to reduce gun deaths in our community.

Moderator: John J. Donohue III, Professor of Law, Stanford Law School
Panelists: Dean L. Winslow, MD, Professor of Medicine, Stanford University School of Medicine; Marisa McKeown, Supervising Deputy District Attorney, Santa Clara County; Julia Weber, JD, MSW, GVRO Implementation Fellow, Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence

Tuesday, February 12,  7 – 8:30 pm
Stanford Law School, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, CA 94305
Register Here

Don’t Miss Lunch with League, featuring guest
PAUSD Superintendent
Don Austin

Friday, February 8,  Noon – 1:30 pm
Details and registration info on Page 5

The League is a broadly based organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voter service and influences public policy through education and advocacy.
The League does not support or oppose political candidates or parties.
We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and an energized start to 2019! Your League has been working hard to gear up for our activities as we begin the new year, and I look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming events, talks and discussions!

With an important election season behind us, we are looking forward to having you engage in advocacy, voter service and community education issues that are important to you and the League of Women Voters. Our mission is to keep you informed and involved on public policy issues, so please learn more about how you can GET INVOLVED via voter registrations, observer corps (attending City Council and School Board meetings), or joining an issues or board team. Our continued goals include advocacy through civic engagement and increasing voter education and registration through our voter services programs, an integral part of our ongoing work!

**Make your voice heard at our Annual Planning Meeting - Saturday, February 23!***

Our most important member event of the year, LWVPA’s Annual Planning Meeting will be on February 23, and it is your opportunity to select the issues (our ‘program’), you’d like the League to prioritize in the upcoming session. The League sets its agenda through this Program Planning process. Together, we’ll decide what is most important for us to focus on, and turn those goals into an action plan. You voted in November because you care about our political future; now you need to come make your voice heard about what you want California’s and our League’s future to be.

**We’ll discuss League policy and positions at the local and state level:**
- Where should the League focus its energy over the next two years?
- What are the issues of concern to us here in Palo Alto?
- Where is there a need for legislative activity and other advocacy, both in Sacramento and in our city/county?
- Do we want to advocate on Immigration, Education, Housing, Climate Change, Gun Safety, Healthcare issues at the state and local level? Tell us!

**We’ll explore ways to participate in the LWVUS Campaign to Make Democracy Work.**
- Should we focus on Civics Education for all?
- Where does the Census 2020 fit into our priorities, and how can we advocate and educate on this important issue?

**We want to hear from YOU!** Keep an eye out for a pre-Program Planning survey to collect your ideas in the coming weeks. Please complete our pre-Program Planning Survey so we can collect your thoughts and ideas on issues of emphasis for our League for the upcoming period. Hit the ground running with the League in 2019!

There are several important League meetings and educational events coming up, so please register/RSVP. Our programs equip our members and community with the skills and knowledge needed to be actively engaged and informed about issues and policies that impact us, so we look forward to seeing you!

- **Transformation Roadmap** of the League on January 24
- **Reviving civics learning** w/Ann Ravel of iCivics on January 26
- **Meet PAUSD’s new Superintendent Don Austin** on February 8
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** in action (Bay Area League) on February 9
- **Red Flag laws on Gun Safety** w/Stanford Law on February 12
- **LWVPA’s Annual Planning Meeting** on February 23 (see more in this VOTER issue!)

If you have questions about any of these activities or questions about League in general, contact me at aishapz2016@gmail.com

Make attendance at a League event, one of your New Year’s Resolutions. And bring a friend! I hope to see you all!

*Aisha Piracha-Zakariya  
President
Board Meeting Highlights
November 27, 2018

Your Board:

Approved the following motions:
* Motion to ratify the email vote approving a letter sent to the Palo Alto City Council regarding housing zoning changes.
* Motions to approve the following upcoming events: i. Introduction to the iCivics curriculum with Ann Ravel in January; ii. A panel discussion on the Red Flag Law in February, co-sponsored by our Gun Safety Team and the Stanford Law School; iii. Brown bag lunch in February with the new PAUSD Superintendent, Dr. Don Austin; iv. Co-sponsored event in March with the Stanford School of Earth, Energy, and Environmental Sciences with Liz Carlisle on "Reviving Rural Jobs, Ancient Wheat, and Healthy Food" followed by a field trip in April to TomKat Ranch in Pescadero.

Discussed:
* First, a possible focus for our League on civics education as a priority, starting with a speaker event in January on the iCivics online learning curriculum; and second, encouragement from the LWV of California to have local educational programs on the importance of the 2020 US Census.
* An invitation from Janet Wells, League member and member of the local Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, to have ‘an introduction to the League’ pilot presentation. We hope to do more presentations like this to recruit volunteers to help with the efforts of various teams with many more local groups/organizations in 2019.
* Board consideration of how to include follow-up actions and ideas at the end of each educational event.
* Planning for the upcoming “program planning” event, at which priorities for the LWV-California and for our local League will be discussed and refined by our members.

Learned about:
* Events—i. The Winter Luncheon sold out!; ii. Kathy Miller will be doing voter registration training on December 1 at the downtown branch of the Palo Alto Library; iii. We will be hosting an Advocacy Training day for local Leagues in January, with guest trainer LWV-California president Helen Hutchison; iv. January 24 event the “Transformation Roadmap” with all five Santa Clara County Leagues about the direction of the League for the next 100 years to meet the challenges of the future; v. Bay Area League Day Symposium focusing on putting the policy of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion into action, to be held in San Francisco on February 9.
* The status of membership renewals (148 still to renew) and the suggestion that we have a sign-up at all of our events for non-members to add their names and emails if they would like to learn more about the League.
* The Board Development Team’s change of name to the Board Leadership Team and its plan to focus on improving Board understanding of our budget process and getting more engagement from our members and more Off-Board members to attend Board meetings.

Karen Kalinsky, Secretary


OFFICERS
Aisha Piracha-Zakariya
President
Bonnie Packer
1st Vice President, Budget
Co-Chair, Membership Co-Chair
Lisa Ratner
2nd Vice President, Advocacy Chair
Karen Kalinsky
Secretary, Collaborations Chair
Paula Collins
Treasurer

DIRECTORS
Jeannie Lythcott
Voter Services Co-Chair
Megan Swezey Fogarty
Programming /Events Co-Chair
Ellen Smith
Board Leadership Team Chair
Ellen Forbes
Webmaster, Interim Communications Chair
Sue Hermsen
VOTER Editor

OFF-BORDER
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Ed. Co-Chair
Sigrid Pinsky
Ed. Co-Chair
Veronica Tinch
New Voices for Youth
Mary Jo Levy
Pros & Cons and League Presentations
Liza Taft
Voter Reg., VOTER Distribution
Kathy Miller
Voter Services Co-Chair

David Springer
Voter’s Edge
Steve Levy
Housing and Trans. Chair
Susan Owicki
County Council Secretary
Maureen O’Kicki
Programming /Events Co-Chair
Linda Henigin
Membership Co-Chair
Nominating Committee
Lynne Russell, Chair
Nancy Smith
Valerie Stinger
Advocacy Report by Lisa Ratner

National

In January 2019, the first Call to Action to members by LWVUS was on behalf of HR 1, an omnibus voting rights, campaign finance, and ethics bill drafted principally by Rep. John Sarbanes, Chairman of the Democracy Reform Taskforce. What is HR 1 and why is it needed? In Sarbanes’ words, HR 1 will “unrig the system so everyday citizens can set the agenda and make progress on lowering prescription drug prices, building a fair economy, reducing gun violence, combating climate change and rising sea levels.” HR 1 will protect the voices of all voters and help reclaim our democracy, barriers to which have flourished since the U.S. Supreme Court defanged both the landmark Voting Rights Act in 2013 (Shelby County v. Holder) and the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act in 2010 (Citizens United v. FEC). The first case ruled that states were free to change voting rules without prior oversight from the federal government. The decision unleashed a host of state laws which suppressed voting by requiring voter IDs, eliminating early voting, closing polling places, and allowing absentee ballots to be thrown out for trivial reasons. The second case ruled that because corporations have the right of free speech, a law which limited the amount of money corporations could spend on candidates violated the First Amendment. This ruling dramatically changed the campaign finance landscape. Billionaires who wish to influence elected officials could now spend unlimited amounts to help campaigns and do so unseen.

HR 1 protects the right to vote and have all votes counted by requiring automatic voter registration when an individual contacts a government agency (such as the DMV); mandating early voting, mail-in voting, online registration, allowing no-excuses absentee voting; cracking down on restrictive voter ID laws and requiring same-day registration (a provision advocated by LWVUS). It commits to restoring the Voting Rights Act and requires independent redistricting commissions to end partisan gerrymandering. It increases federal assistance for state voting systems and enhances federal-state information sharing to counter threats to voting security. It specifically overrules Husted v. Randolph, a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court decision which allowed Ohio to purge voters simply for voting infrequently and failing to respond to a single notice sent to them in the mail. It ensures individuals who have completed felony sentences have full voting rights restored.

HR 1 attempts to break the influence of big money in elections by establishing a system of matching small donations; such financing systems have been used at the state level and proven to broaden political engagement. HR 1 requires soft money groups to disclose big donors; tightens rules on super PACS, requires digital platforms to maintain data bases of political ads, and requires disclosure of the true funders of election ads and applies those rules online. This transparency will help stem foreign influence in elections, such as the Russian accounts which manipulated Facebook, Twitter and Google to confuse, distract and discourage voters in 2016. HR 1 restructures the Federal Election Commission to enforce campaign finance election laws.

HR 1 addresses ethics in government by ensuring elected officials work for the public. It applies conflict of interest laws to the president and vice president and requires major party nominees to release their tax returns. HR1 prevents members of Congress from using taxpayer money to settle discrimination complaints, and grants the Office of Government Ethics increased enforcement powers to end the revolving door between industry lobbyists and government agencies.

If you haven’t called your congressperson to voice your support for HR 1, what are you waiting for?

Local

In January 2019, the Board of LWV Palo Alto will be sending a letter to the City Council in support of a proposal by the nonprofit Palo Alto Housing to build a low-income 59-unit studio apartment building at the corner of Wilton Ave. and El Camino Real in Palo Alto. This much needed affordable housing project, located near public transit corridors, would provide work-force housing for the general population and would also set aside 21 studios for developmentally disabled adults, many of whom also work in the community.

Read more about the 4 Key Elements of HR 1 on the LWVUS website: HR1 LWV US blog
What will the League look like in its next century? What can we do now to assure the continued relevance and visibility of the League of Women Voters? Helen Hutchison, LWVC President, will discuss the actions the League is taking, nationally and statewide, to meet the challenges of the future.

Thursday, January 24
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Cupertino Quinlan Center
Register here.

Sponsored by the LWV Santa Clara County Council

Lunch with League:
Meet PAUSD Superintendent Don Austin

Join us for Lunch with the League!
Pack a bag lunch and come meet new PAUSD Superintendent, Don Austin. We will hear about his approach and vision for the district, ask questions, and share League education positions and our insights on the district.

Friday, February 8, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
League of Women Voters, Raptor Conference Room
3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303
Drinks and cookies will be provided.
Register here
Questions? Please Email us at: lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or call us at 650-903-0600.
Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

Bay Area League Day 2019

Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) in the Bay Area
DEI in Action - DEI in Practice?
February 9, 2019
Google Community Space
188 The Embarcadero
San Francisco, CA
$45 w/Lunch | $30 w/o Lunch
Tickets: tinyurl.com/LeagueDay2019

Get More Information about Bay Area League Day and Register Here

LWV Santa Clara County Council Invites You to Participate in League Transformation

What will the League look like in its next century? What can we do now to assure the continued relevance and visibility of the League of Women Voters? Helen Hutchison, LWVC President, will discuss the actions the League is taking, nationally and statewide, to meet the challenges of the future.

Thursday, January 24
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Cupertino Quinlan Center Register here.
Sponsored by the LWV Santa Clara County Council

Our Committees Welcome New Contributors! Attend a Meeting and Find Out About Our Important Work!
Go to our Google Calendar: https://www.lwvpaloalto.org/calendar.html and click on the meeting you are interested in, to find out how to RSVP and to get more information on the committee’s goals and activities.

LWVPA Housing & Transportation Monthly Meeting
Mon, January 21, 1:30 - 2:30 pm
Mon, February 18, 1:30 - 2:30 pm

Responsible Gun Ownership Committee Monthly Meeting
Wed, February 13, 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Wed, March 13, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Communications Committee Monthly Meeting
Wed, February 6, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Wed, March 6, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
The Program Planning Process Is Your Voice!

The League is a truly grassroots organization that sets its agenda through the Program Planning process. In League, “Program” means the issues that we choose for concerted study, education and action at local, state and national levels. Program can include both education and advocacy work. The Program Planning process is part of what makes the League a grassroots organization; as a League member, this is your unique opportunity to influence the selection of issues where the local, state, and national League will focus time, talent and money. It takes the enthusiasm and interest of our members to 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!

On the morning of Saturday, February 23, we will come together to discuss the areas where we want to focus our local energy and the resources of the state League (staff, board, consultants, and other volunteers) over the next two years. The Issues for Emphasis our League proposes as priorities may be based on current League work or on new topics you believe we should focus on. (See the box below for points to consider.) One or more of our choices could be a new study, an update of an existing State position or concurrence with an existing or proposed position. Our goal at the February 23 meeting is to reach consensus on what we want to recommend to the LWVPA board. The board will then vote on LWVPA’s response to LWVC at our February 23 meeting.

Our board will send its response to LWVC by March 4, 2019. The LWVC board will then review all the responses from Leagues across the state, make their recommendations, and then send local Leagues their Recommended Program for 2019-2021 for review. The program planning process culminates in the delegates’ adoption of the statewide program at our May 31-June 2 convention in Pasadena.

We will also look at what we want our own League to adopt for emphasis, whether strictly local action or work in concert with LWVC. Recommendations from our meeting will also be reviewed by the LWVPA board and presented to the membership for adoption at our Annual Meeting sometime in May.

If you want your voice to be heard, be sure to attend the Program Planning meeting on February 23, 9:00 am. See you then.

Bonnie Packer
1st Vice President

Points to consider as we choose Issues for Emphasis:

* Is this an issue that would attract participation from the community and our members? Would it entice new members? Diverse members?
* Is this an issue on which legislative or regulatory action is needed? Will political realities permit effective government action during the next two years?
* If this is a topic for study, will the issue still be timely when the study is completed in several years?
* Does this issue involve a need not being well met by other groups?
* Is there member interest and commitment to this topic?
* Could the League play a significant role in impacting community concern and/or public policy decisions on this issue? Does it further our long-term vision and impact?
* Do we have the capacity (staff, members/volunteers, funds, project management) to take on this issue? Is it an issue that will attract financial support?

Visit our website to learn even more about this important process and how you can be a part of it.
Take our member survey to let us know what’s important to you!
RSVP to the Program Planning meeting here.
Don't miss an event!

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto lists all our upcoming events on our online calendar. Subscribe to the calendar and our events will appear in your calendars. [https://www.lwvpaloalto.org/calendar.html](https://www.lwvpaloalto.org/calendar.html)

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. Voting membership is open to all (citizens and non-citizens) who have reached the age of sixteen. Dues grants are available.

You can join or renew online via PayPal at [https://www.lwvpaloalto.org/join-or-renew.html](https://www.lwvpaloalto.org/join-or-renew.html)

Name________________________________________

Address________________________________________

City________________________________________ Zip______________

Phone (home)____________(mobile)______________email_____________________________

Annual membership: $85. Additional membership, same address: $40. Student membership: $5. Mail check with this form to LWVPA, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303. For more information, call the League office (650) 903-0600. Membership dues to the LWVPA are not tax deductible.
## How to contact your elected officials:

### UNITED STATES

- **President Donald Trump**  
  (202) 456-1414  
  [http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/)

- **Senator Dianne Feinstein**  
  (415) 393-0707  
  [http://feinstein.senate.gov](http://feinstein.senate.gov) - click “email me”

- **Senator Kamala Harris**  
  (415) 403-0100  
  [http://www.harris.senate.gov](http://www.harris.senate.gov)/

- **Rep. Anna Eshoo**  
  (650) 323-2984  

### CALIFORNIA

- **Governor Jerry Brown**  
  (916) 445-2841  

- **Senator Jerry Hill**  
  (650) 212-3313  
  [http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us](http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us)

- **Assemblymember Marc Berman**  
  (650) 691-2121  
  [http://asmdc.org/members/a24/](http://asmdc.org/members/a24/)

### 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 with your street address  
[http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov](http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov)

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## CALENDAR

[http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html](http://www.lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html)

<table>
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