

Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities



The
Voter
Newsletter

Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Redwood City, Woodside

June/July 2019

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A Salute to Outgoing President Shirley Des Marais

LWV South San Mateo County has experienced amazing transformation under Shirley's stewardship in 2017-2019.

- A net gain in membership of 79 new members
- Notable progress toward expanding and diversifying our membership in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and geographic location
- Communications Leader and Team assembled
 - Totally upgraded LWV website design
 - Launched weekly bulletin to members
- Voter Services Leader and Team formed with an amazing record for 2018 Midterm Elections
 - Voter Registration Outreach recorded 50 members working a total of 42 events, with 27 of them concentrated in September, October, and early November.
 - Candidate Forums held for 6 City Council races with 11 members helping, reaching over 300 attendees plus many web replays.
 - 11 members participated in 15 presentations on the Pros & Cons of the Nov. Ballot Measures, again reaching hundreds of attendees.
 - High school outreach initiated.
- Successful merger of our League's 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 organizations
 - Fiscal entities combined
 - Bylaws brought into compliance
 - Policies & Procedures updated to conform to the new organization

- Two comprehensive Board Trainings
- Participatory Program Planning with four round-table discussions
- New Leadership in place with many newer, younger members
- Lunch with the Menlo Park and Redwood City Mayors
- A Diversity Committee formed & working
 - Brunch with the East Palo Alto Mayor scheduled
- A 100th Anniversary Committee formed & in the planning stages
- Technology tools employed to create an Internet-based League

Thank you, Shirley!

Under your conscientious leadership we've expanded our community outreach, provided information to members in six cities, increased and engaged our membership, developed new leadership, and worked to benefit our communities. Your efforts have raised our profile and helped us become a much stronger League!

(Editor's Note: Many appreciative members contributed to this Salute.)

Welcome to our New Members:

**Diane Leeds and Kristy Stromberg from Redwood City
Tracy Cowperthwaite from Portola Valley**

Opportunity to Support 19th Amendment Memorial

A memorial dedicated to the passage of the 19th Amendment is being planned to open on August 26, 2020, and your League can support the project with a philanthropic gift today! The memorial is in Occoquan Regional Park in Virginia, part of the historic prison grounds where scores of suffragists were jailed, kept in inhumane conditions and tortured for picketing the Wilson White House. Currently, the plan for the central statue is Carrie Chapman Catt, highlighting her and the League's important work in securing the passage of the 19th Amendment. With a \$1,000 donation, your name or the name of your League will be included on the donor wall at the entrance. Detailed information about the memorial including design renderings [can be found here](https://suffragistmemorial.org/).

<https://suffragistmemorial.org/>

League of Women Voters of California State Convention 2019 Report

By Karen Moore and Linda Atkinson

From Karen:

It was a real privilege to attend the State Convention for LWVSSMC. As this was my first time attending the State Convention, I was not sure what to expect but I found a group of people who were very informed, involved, and committed to increasing public understanding of a broad range of major public policy issues. I learned a great deal as meetings started early and ended late and even lunches and dinners were opportunities for lively exchanges on topical public issues. Over the 3 days of meetings with over 250 delegates from 60 other Leagues, I really began to appreciate the depth and breadth of the impact that the California Leagues have throughout our state as I observed first-hand the delegates' shared passion and dedication to improving our public discourse through education and advocacy.

On an individual level, the Convention was productive and especially important for the work I do – organizing Candidate Forums. While at the Convention, two Workshops, one dealing with handling disruptions during Candidate Forums and the other dealing with ways to improve Civil Discourse, were specifically informative for my work. While LWVSSMC did not have any disruptions at last year's Forums, other Leagues have been experiencing problems so it was helpful to learn about the ways they have developed to handle them. Strategies for handling these situations included: making our guidelines for Forums explicit to the candidates so they understand that the moderators will handle such issues; ensuring that the moderator educates the audience on our guidelines; giving the moderator permission to shut down any disruptions and empowering the question collectors to be proactive in identifying any problems with the audience.

While none of these strategies are radically new, it was very helpful to learn how these strategies were used in specific instances by other Leagues. As a result, we will implement them with greater emphasis and confidence in next year's Forums.

From Linda:

I too was a first time attendee and I gained an appreciation of all the League is attempting to be current in the 21st century including technology (downloads of the program, no paper unless you print it), working hard to increase diversity (24% of delegates were of color/minorities), trying out some streamlining to get issues forward (rather than 2+ years of studies & discussions). The Plenary speakers were relevant and challenging, presenting topics on organizing minority communities, racial bias, and the evolution of voters' rights in California. I was impressed with the organizing skills of various League chapters in advancing areas of interest. For example, the Climate Crisis Task Force was formed at the last biennial convention and now is a leader in organizing information and advocacy. (See our website for examples of this work.) Another chapter did solid work analyzing the accountability of local charter schools and seeking additional League focus on the issue. Lots of energy, lots of inspiration and kudos to the amazing knowledge of the Parliamentarians who, sometimes in frustrating ways, kept the discussions organized.



Delegates Pictured:

Ann Kuchins (North & Central SMC), Linda Atkinson, Julianna Dodick, Barbara Windham, Tracy Clark, Marta Bookbinder (N&C), Bob Barrett, Geoff Ryder.

From New Voices for Youth

The **Siena Awards night** was well attended with many parents present! Luis and Nimsi introduced the NV videos and the eight participants who had made them. NV and the LWV were appreciated for their long-standing collaboration. In the first video Maritza, SYC Assistant Director, describes how she responds to bullying and Eric, former SYC staff talks about his experience being bullied. In the second video, about the Bulldog Riders, participants talk about what they've learned and about their trip to NYC in February.

Nimsi has uploaded the videos to YouTube, [here](#).

At the **Boys and Girls Club showcase**, kids and parents circulated, putting on headphones to watch the videos on laptops at the NV4Y table. There were three laptops set up, offering a choice to watch any or all of the videos made this term on Immigration, Racism and School Shootings. These are difficult subjects and students do not always see shades of gray; Sanji spends time with students, trying to increase awareness of their own point of view. Kids want situations to be "fair." Parents stopped to chat, telling Sanji that kids in the classes brought the subjects home and continued their conversations from class.

News Update



LWVUS continues to host webinars on DEI in 2019

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in our Spring webinars and provided feedback. We have a new cycle of webinars scheduled to take a deeper look at the topics we've been exploring for the past year and offer tools every member can use in their League work.

July 25: [Register](#)

August 29: [Register](#)

September 26: [Register](#)

Recordings and resources from our previous webinars can be found on the [League Management Site](#).

Upcoming LWVSSMC and Partner Events

AUGUST		
14 Weds	TBD	LEAGUE PRESENTATION—WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE. Menlo Park Main Library, 800 Alma Street. Contact: Linda Atkinson, leatkinson@comcast.net
17 Sat	TBD am	BREAKFAST WITH THE MAYOR OF EAST PALO ALTO. Details forthcoming.
SEPTEMBER		
21 Sat	TBD am	ANNUAL KICKOFF MEETING. Lida Urbanek's home, 75 Tuscaloosa, Atherton.