
Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Hot Topics

Visions of Hope

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Happy New Year!



"This year was challenging on many fronts, but 2020 saw many important expansions for our democracy. Never has our work as defenders of democracy been more important. More voters than ever before participated in our elections in 2020, thanks in part to the work of the League across the country."

LWV President Deborah Turner looks back on 2020—and how the League met the challenge. (Read the complete list [here](#)). It begins with this:

1. Protecting Millions of Voters in the Courts

Throughout 2020, LWVUS was part of over 60 state and federal lawsuits across more than 35 states to ensure voters had safe access to the ballot in this election. With a winning legal record, we are so grateful to our state and local Leagues, as well as the dedicated legal partners who helped us fight voter suppression and advance voting rights this year. In all, we protected approximately 20 million voters through our election-related litigation. This election cycle, our litigation covered important issues such as establishing or enhancing notice and cure processes for ballots flagged for rejection, waiving double witness requirements for mailed ballots, and expanding the absentee excuse to cover more voters. We did all of this to ensure that voters did not have to choose between exercising their constitutional right to vote and risking their health and safety during the pandemic.

A Message from the LWVSB President



A New Year! Are we ready to move on from the tragic, unprecedented challenges of 2020 to what promises to be a brighter future with a new POTUS and the first-ever female vice president of the United States, the rollout of vaccines, and a new LWVSB?

What are some of our League's organizational goals, objectives, and challenges for the rest of this fiscal year?

First on our list is finishing the merger of the LWVSB Education Fund and LWVSB, so that we can operate cohesively as one organization.

The Program Planning process (see article below) will select from the issues you would like us to focus on. You would never skip voting in an election; you shouldn't skip the League's equivalent. Program planning is your voice!

We also have a new Board of Directors, and we plan to review and update our internal documents such as Policies and Guidelines in line with our new Bylaws; and continue our justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) work to create an equitable and welcoming space for black, indigenous, and people of color to contribute and to seek representation in our League.

Under the able leadership of Gail Osherenko, our Fund Development Director, we are planning a fundraiser event in 2021— which will be doubly challenging because we are still working on the financial transition to our new LWVSB and the event will have to be virtual, of course.

We would also like to work harder to engage you all, our members, in meaningful ways. We will continue our monthly Community Forums on pressing issues and small group discussions as a follow up.

One challenge that you can help us with is bringing new leadership into the organization. We hope you will contact our Nominating Committee Chair, Gail Fairburn. if you, or someone you know, can contribute skills and time to our all-volunteer organization.

We welcome your regular feedback, help, ideas and concerns about the organization throughout the year.

From all of us on the Board, we wish you a wonderful New Year and we hope to see more of you all, more often in 2021.

Stay safe!
Vijaya Jammalamadaka



Jan. 27 Community Forum: Visions of Hope

Pandemic-Inspired Success Stories--Supporting Our Most Vulnerable Neighbors

Our January 2021 Community Forum has been moved ahead a week to Wednesday, Jan. 27 (noon to 1 pm) because of the Presidential Inauguration.

Pam Flynt Tambo, Susan Moore, and Revae Moran have put together a timely forum for January. Our impressive lineup of speakers includes:

Barbara Anderson, Homelessness Collaborative Facilitator for the Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation, who will talk about their work and how the pandemic has provided opportunities to think more creatively about how to address the needs of those who are most vulnerable to its devastating effects.

Lacey Baliviez, Ph.D., Director of Community Programs and Education for the Foodbank of SB County, will talk about the wonderful Food Action Network that is working so well to provide permanent solutions for those suffering from food insecurity in our area.

James Kyriaco, Jr., a Goleta City Council Member, will describe how that city is providing funding for child care to low- income families.

Jina Carvahlo, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara Response Network, will talk about how they are responding to the increase in mental health needs of the community prompted by the pandemic.

Please [REGISTER HERE](#) for this Zoom Webinar.

Time for League Program Planning



All LWVSB members are invited to register for the Program Planning meeting on Jan. 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Program, in the League lexicon, is a term that refers to those issues that the League, as a whole, takes up for concerted study, education and action. LWVSB must conform to LWVUS and LWVC positions as well as to our local positions.

The goal of our LWVSB Program Planning is to propose up to three "Issues for Emphasis" to the State League (LWVC) before March 1, 2021. The LWVC board will review all the responses from Leagues across the state, make their recommendations, and then send local Leagues their Recommended Program for 2021-2023 for review.

At the upcoming June 2021 LWVC Convention, our designated delegates will vote to adopt the Statewide Program and issues for emphasis for 2021-2023. You can download the Program Planning Kit and read LWVC highlights in the Members Only section. Also, watch (or re-watch) the LWVC Program Planning Webinar.

For those who couldn't attend, you can access a recording of the webinar Join the Discussion. You can join the Program Planning ListServ -- a forum where you can connect with other Leagues to learn what issues they're discussing and how they're managing the process -- by emailing Andrew Muse-Fisher, League of Women Voters of California at amusefisher@lwvc.org.

At the last LWVC Convention in Pasadena in 2019, we adopted five "Issues for Emphasis" for 2019-2021:

- *Making Democracy Work*. (LWVSB included Revae Moran's work on Voter Service and Mary Rose/Lindsey Baker on County Redistricting, and all our work on anti-racism and using the DEI lens).
- *Schools & Communities First Initiative*. (Pam Flynt Tambo led this advocacy campaign for LWVSB).
- *Housing and Homelessness*. (Emily Allen worked on updating the local Homelessness position that we adopted at our Annual meeting in 2020, and she worked on a Statewide Committee to update the State Homelessness position. We are working on a Housing position update in 2021, chaired by Bill Boyd).
- *Climate Change*. (Sandy Grasso-Boyd is the LWVSB lead for Climate Advocacy and Action).
- Criminal Justice Reform (Pam Flynt Tambo is a member of the Statewide committee and the LWVSB lead for this advocacy and action).

After the 2020 LWVUS Convention, the National Program for 2020-2022 included retaining all current LWVUS Positions in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy; a League-wide Campaign for Making Democracy Work®: Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Campaign Finance/Money in Politics, and Redistricting; continuing work on urgent issues: Climate Change, the Equal Rights Amendment, Health Care, Gun Safety, and Immigration. Finally, the delegates voted on Electoral Systems Concurrence. This concurrence position does NOT support any particular election method but rather supports the LWV goals for "an open, governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive." It allows for Local Leagues to use the position to evaluate or propose electoral options. In many jurisdictions, options are needed as remedies to voting rights lawsuits that seek minority representation.

It's time now on Jan. 12, 2021 at 5:30 pm to propose issues on which you'd like to focus your local energy, the energy of other local Leagues in California, and the resources of the state League (staff, board, consultants, and other volunteers) over the next two years. This is our time for grassroots Program Planning both for our local League and for LWV-California priorities.



Climate Crisis Topic of Jan. 13 Meeting

The LWVC and LWVUS identify Climate Change as a high priority and every person and group is needed for the climate fight ahead. We are all being called on to help our elected representatives craft sensible climate policy.

You are invited to a Zoom discussion meeting about the Climate Crisis on Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021 from 3pm to 5pm to talk about the topics of most interest by to members. This will help decide the theme for the Climate Forum this year. Examples of topics are: Climate Justice, Carbon Neutrality, Regenerative Agriculture, Building Climate Resiliency, Food Waste and Plastic Reduction, Sea Level Rise and Ocean Health.

Please contact Sandy Grasso-Boyd at grasso2430@gmail.com or 805-448-6676 to receive the link to attend.

Criminal Justice Reform In South Santa Barbara County

Criminal Justice Reform intertwined with BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people

of color) issues continue to appear on the agenda of some local groups here in Santa Barbara. Our Social Policy Committee has members participating on the LWVC committee for CJ Reform as well as attending the SBCAN (Santa Barbara County Action Network) Roundtable. There are other groups regularly meeting, including C.L.U.E. and the Santa Barbara Unitarian Society. The particular focus may vary, but overall the ideas involve how we can have an effective criminal justice system in our county and state while we make it fair and equitable for all.

On Dec. 1, our League participated in the County Supervisors' Update on Criminal Justice System Changes and Advancing Racial Equity and Inclusion In Santa Barbara County. A letter was sent to the supervisors in advance of the meeting and it was read into the record on Dec. 1. We recommended that the reductions in our jail population due to COVID-19 pandemic be continued and expanded in the future. We also encouraged diversion opportunities to focus on humane treatment and rehabilitation with the goal of successful reentry into communities at the end of incarceration. We will continue to follow the progress of the County as we work with our local criminal justice system as well as racial and equity issues.

There are a number of ways that we can observe, comment, or otherwise become involved in these efforts in our community. At the January 2021 Social Policy Committee meeting, we'll discuss how we want to continue to involve our League in issues such as implementing new state laws, continuing to monitor mental health issues intersecting with law enforcement, citizen oversight of the sheriff's department, and other related topics. We plan to meet via Zoom at 4:30 pm on Thursday, Jan. 28. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for the Social Policy Committee meetings, contact Pam Flynt Tambo, SocialPolicy@lwvsantabarbara.org or 805.451.4340.

BOOK CLUB ON ZOOM!

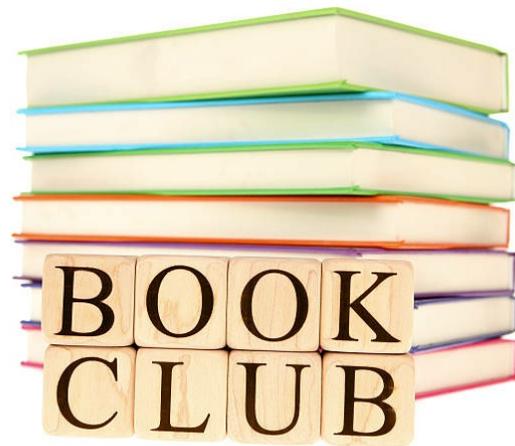
LOCATION: Zoom

DATE: Thursday, Jan. 14, 3-4 pm

BOOK SELECTION:

FROM HERE TO EQUALITY:
REPARATIONS FOR BLACK
AMERICANS IN THE 21ST
CENTURY by William Darity, Jr. and A.
Kirsten Mullen.

All are welcome to attend. Email elainerudin@me.com before Jan. 14 to receive a Zoom invitation. We invite you to use your computer, iPad, laptop or Kindle to click on a link that Elaine will send you.



ALL MEMBERS FOR YOUR CALENDAR!

Keep up to date with upcoming events [HERE](#).

LWVSB is working remotely using electronic meetings. Check the Calendar on our website and email the organizer for instructions. All League members are welcome to join our Board and committee meetings as observers.

January 8, Friday - Sustainable Communities Committee, **10am**. Zoom

January 9, Saturday - LWVSB Board Meeting - **10am**. Zoom.

January 12, Tuesday - Program Planning - **5:30pm**. Zoom (see article)

January 13, Wednesday - Climate Crisis Discussion - **3-5pm**. Zoom (see article)

January 14, Thursday - Book Club - **3pm**. Zoom (see article)

January 27, Wednesday - Community Forum: Visions of Hope - **noon**. Zoom (see article)

January 28, Thursday - Social Policy Committee - **4:30pm**. Zoom

February 5, Friday - Sustainable Communities Committee, **10am**. Zoom

Thank You League Members and Friends

If you joined or renewed your membership, we thank you. And if you made an end of the year gift, we thank you. Of course you can donate anytime. Go to the join and donate links at the top left of this email message.

Join The Board?

We are looking for new Board Members for a term that begins July 1, 2021. If you or anyone you know are interested in helping to continue Making Democracy Work, please contact Gail Fairburn, Nominating Committee Chair, Nominating@lwvsantabarbara.org.

In Memoriam

Connie Hannah, a long-term leader of the LWV of Santa Barbara, always was supported by her husband Bob Hannah, also a member of the League. We are sad to announce Bob Hannah has died at Serenity House after a post-Christmas stroke. Our sympathy goes out to their family and their many Santa Barbara community friends.



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