



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARIN COUNTY

VOLUME XXXXI ISSUE 5

May/June 2024

New Date! New Time! New Place!
May Monthly Meeting – Book Talk
Sunday, May 19 4:00pm

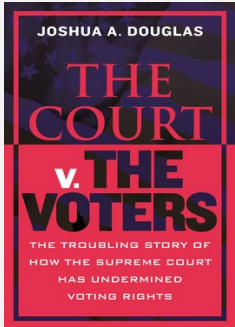
Book Passage, 51 Tamal Vista Blvd., Corte Madera



The Court v. The Voters - The Troubling Story of How the Supreme Court Has Undermined Voting Rights

by Joshua A. Douglas

“An urgent and gripping look at the erosion of voting rights and its implications for democracy, told through the stories of 9 Supreme Court decisions—and the next looming case.”



Book Passage and LWVMC are proud to co-sponsor this author talk for the public and for our May Member meeting. Join us to hear Joshua A. Douglas discuss his important new book about voting rights and the Supreme Court.

Douglas is a law professor at the University of Kentucky College of Law and legal expert engaged in helping everyday people understand our elections. His media commentaries have appeared in the New York Times, CNN, Washington Post, LA Times, The Atlantic, and HuffPo, and he has been quoted in major newspapers and on NPR stations throughout the US.

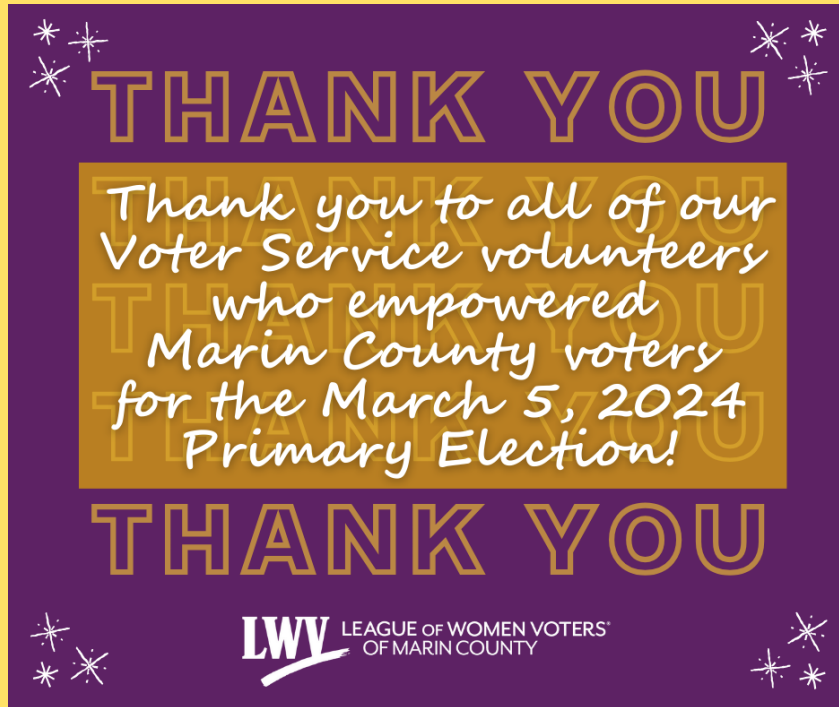
Seating may be limited, so plan to arrive a bit early.

This event replaces our usual first Monday meeting

Bring a friend - Light refreshments after the talk - No registration necessary

Questions? Email membership@marinlww.org

The League of Women Voters of Marin County lives and meets on the ancestral, traditional lands of the Coast Miwok people.



Pat Becker
Robin Diederich
Lynn Dooley
Becky Bingea
Cindy Wagner
Vida Harband
Ann Wakeley
Carol Inkellis
Sue Ream
Jan King
Joan Rentsch
Sara Thorpe
Dee Dee Butori
Gloria Elizabeth

Julie Monson
Kay Noguchi
Linda Sula
Mary Ann Villarreal
Barbara Strong
Barbara Rowe
Diane Gasson
Ward Fulcher
Mary Caruso
Susan Clark
Elaine Biagini
Linda Deer
Ann Batman

Tina Cheplick
Stacy Edmonds
Laurie Nardone
Nancy Weber
Stuart Pratt
Nancy Deras
Joyce Rhodes
Karen Casey
Janine Bradley
Joan Rentsch
Anne Glasscock
Lisa Wilcox-Corning
Marilee Eckert

SAVE THE DATE!

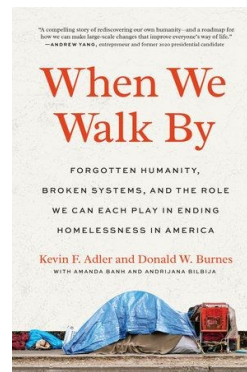
Annual Meeting—June 3—10:30am-1:30pm

The Club Restaurant at McInnis

350 Smith Ranch Road, San Rafael ([click for map](#))

Come join your fellow LWVMC members for our annual meeting. We will review this past year's goals and accomplishments and will share some of our upcoming plans. **Watch your email for Annual Meeting Kit along with registration details.**

We are pleased to have Kevin Adler, Founder in Residence and Chairman of the Board of Miracle Messages, joining us as our keynote speaker.



Since 2014 Kevin, has served as the founder and CEO of Miracle Messages, a non-profit that helps people experiencing homelessness rebuild their social support systems and financial security through family reunification services and a phone buddy program. He developed the first basic income pilot for unhoused individuals in the US, backed by Google and as part of a \$2.1 million randomized control trial led by researchers at USC.

Kevin's pioneering work on homelessness and relational poverty has been featured in the New York Times, Washington Post, PBS NewsHour, Los Angeles Times, CNN, on a billboard in Times Square, and in his TED Talk.

We have asked Kevin to bring his book to sell at our meeting if you'd like to buy it. The cost will be \$20 and he will personally autograph every copy that is purchased.

VOTER EDUCATION & OUTREACH



The March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election votes are counted and certified! Marin County voter turnout was 53% which is high in comparison to counties across the state. Voter turnout for California statewide was 35% (of registered voters). Statewide election results found be found [HERE](#).

With the help of our VEO Team members, we educated voters in Marin County and beyond. Our general education about voting and elections gave voters the information and resources they needed to feel confident to vote. We shared information with our League members as well as with our community partners at in-person events, on social media, and on our website.

[VOTE411](#) is one of our most important voter education tools, but we also share printed materials, post content on our website and social media including our local voter guide, candidate forum and Pros/Cons information and recordings, voter resource links, Get Out The Vote messages and more!



In 2024, we are focusing on encouraging voters to make a Voting Plan. A Voting Plan includes registering to vote, learning about voting options for when, where and how to vote, and researching candidates and measures before finally completing and returning the ballot or voting in-person in time to be counted!

Note: Creating a Voting Plan is a voter engagement strategy encouraged by LWVUS.

Two important VEO Team projects are 1) working in collaboration with the Marin County Elections Department and Marin Probation Department to connect with formerly and currently incarcerated persons to educate them about their voting rights and 2) working to engage First-Time Voters. Please look for articles by Pat Beaupre Becker about this vital work in this issue of The Voter .

Our community outreach work is vital to reaching voters in Marin County, especially those who historically participate in low numbers. Our community partners act as trusted messengers in communities with low participation and they rely on us for nonpartisan, trusted information and resources about voting and elections to help them do this work effectively.

Be sure to read our League's weekly Happenings eNewsletter for opportunities to volunteer at our information tables at community events throughout the year.

Our team needs more volunteers to strengthen our team's leadership and work to get Marin County voters the information they need to vote! Contact us today!

Robin Diederich, votereducation@marinlww.org

Pat Beaupre Becker, outreach@marinlww.org

Restore Access and Assist Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Persons to Vote

It has only been four years since 70% of California voters approved the passage of Prop 17, restoring voting rights to people on parole. Around the country it is estimated that 4.4 million Americans are barred from voting due to a felony conviction. While the number of justice-impacted disenfranchised voters in Marin is small, we believe every single voter who sees themselves as a vital member of the community, and feels empowered to express their views through voting, nurtures a strong, connected, and caring community.

A recent report by The Sentencing Project* indicated that voting reduces recidivism. The report concludes, "Science supports the right to vote as a part of a package of prosocial behaviors and links voting to increased public safety."

Many formerly incarcerated persons have not voted for a good portion of their lives, considering themselves "non-voters."** Help us spread the word that they now have the right to vote and that we can help them take the steps to re-assert their right to become voters.

Another part of our work is assisting folks serving or awaiting sentences in the local jail who never lost their right to vote. Three of us were cleared to enter the Marin County jail, and working with a member of their staff, we offered voter registration and ballot information at the local jail. Danny Straub of the Marin County Elections Department reported, "We successfully got 16 ballots from the jail that we were able to count! Huge improvement over an average of half a ballot per election in 2022. So, we can be happy about that."

Dr. Shirley Weber, our California Secretary of State, spoke at the 2023 Future of California Elections conference and said that aiming for 100% voter participation is a lofty but worthy goal. We are holding that vision and want to support 100% of voters to participate in the upcoming 2024 election.

Pat Beaupre Becker, Nancy Weber, and Danny Straub

* <https://www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/increasing-public-safety-by-restoring-voting-rights/>

** <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2021/06/23/millions-of-people-with-felonies-can-now-vote-most-don-t-know-it>

COLLEGE OF MARIN



Assisting College of Marin Students 2024

This year we will continue to support the Student Emergency Assistance Fund (SEAF) while adding a new program. COM has asked us to provide \$5,000 seed money to initiate an Application Fee Fund for students transferring to a 4-year institution. Whatever we raise above that amount will go to the SEAF.

Our goal is to raise \$12,000 or more with \$6,000 from the League's Education Foundation and the rest coming from donors like you.

Donation deadline, June 1

Make your tax deductible contribution by going to our website, marinlww.org.

Or mail your check to
League of Women Voters Education Foundation
4340 Redwood Hwy, Ste. F-133
San Rafael, CA 94903

Reports from LWVMC Committees

Transportation, Land Use and Housing (TLUH) Committee

Committee Co-Chairs: Kevin Hagerty and Regina Bianucci Rus

Tuesday, March 13, 2024 —Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month.

Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) proposed Regional Bond Measure, Nov. 2024 Guest Speaker: Jenny Silva, Board Chair, Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative (MEHC)

BAHFA supports the construction of new affordable housing and preservation of existing housing in the Bay Area. BAHFA is now working on a \$10-20 billion regional bond to increase available funds for affordable housing. Eighty percent of the funds generated in Marin (between \$350-\$750 million) will be returned to Marin for distribution according to a Marin County-developed expenditure plan.

For decades, Marin has prioritized low density over housing affordability. Marin zoning has largely prohibited medium or high-density development. There are public policy benefits to open space and affordable housing, but not low-density housing. Low production has created a huge housing shortage and Marin has the lowest rate of housing production in California. For renters, Marin has weak anti-displacement measures. And the low inventory has caused housing prices to increase much faster than inflation.

Current funding programs are insufficient. BAHFA would be a large-scale solution, and as a general obligation bond, funds are available up front, as quickly as 2025. The creation of a public bank can provide lower cost loans, with proceeds reinvested; this would reduce the number of funding sources required of developers.

TAM Sea Level Rise (SLR) Program, Guest speaker Mikaela Hiatt, Transportation Planner

Measure AA has a 1% set aside to develop projects to address transportation impacts from SLR, including protecting and adapting roadways and infrastructure to the effects of SLR and flooding. Transportation Authority of Marin is moving from planning into initial conceptual design, then identifying potential projects. They identified 19 Vulnerability Focus Areas, with concerns about Coastal Flooding, Groundwater, and FEMA Floodplain. These affect “exposed assets” such as *Transportation*: roads, bus stops, routes, *Community*: hospitals and schools and *Lifelines*: police and fire stations. MTC’s Equity Priority Communities are also factored in.

Update on San Rafael Transit Center – Kevin’s meeting with Ron Downing

Ron Downing, Planning Director for the Bridge District, reported that the project is in the conceptual design phase, with the Bridge District soliciting suggestions from a community advisory group, the City of San Rafael and the transit agencies. One design issue is whether to preserve the existing building on the site, as very little of it is original. The new design does honor the past style of the 1929 railroad depot and will include seating areas, a small café, and other amenities. Funding for the project would come from \$30 million in RM3 revenues, from the sale of the existing transit center site, and Federal grant funds (application submitted). Construction of the transit center is projected to begin in 2026 and take a year to complete.

Officers:

President: Kevin Hagerty
Vice-president: Dee Dee Butori
Secretary: Ann Wakeley
Acting Treasurer: Laurie Nardone

Becky Bingea
Vida Harband
Carol Joy Harris
Carol Inkellis
Jan King
Laurie Nardone
Barbara Strong
Cindy Wagner
Nancy Weber
Sue Ream

2024 - Year of the First-Time Voter



The National League of Women Voters has inaugurated 2024 as the year of the First-Time Voter. Your VEO team is excited for the 2024 designation and we have already been thinking about providing registration opportunities and voter education to new voters. Our Goal is to nurture confidence so that new voters, which include youth (especially students in local high schools and at COM and Dominican

University), new citizens, and re-enfranchised voters who were formerly incarcerated, have the information they need.

Many league members have been life-long voters. We hope to inspire young new voters, formerly disenfranchised voters, and marginalized voters to engage in local civics and become life-long voters.

Pat Beaupre Becker

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