

LWV THE VOTER

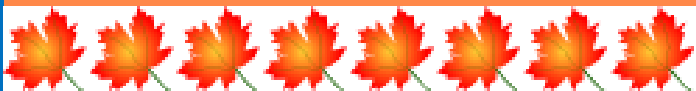
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARIN COUNTY

VOLUME XXXVIII ISSUE 1

September/October 2020

Monthly Meetings Continue on Zoom

FALL KICK OFF
SATURDAY, SEPT. 12, 10:00 AM



It's time to get together to share plans for the coming year and celebrate one of our own members with the Community Service Award.
JUDY BINSACCA

Election activities dominate this part of the year.

Our speaker will be Lynda Roberts,
Marin County Registrar of Voters



Linda will share with us some of the challenges of conducting a Presidential Election during a pandemic and under new laws governing elections, PLUS her plans to make it all work, and how the League

can help!



Watch your email for a Zoom invitation to these meetings. Your invitation will arrive a day or two before the event

OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 11:30 AM



Join the Voter Service's Pros & Cons Team as they present the Pros & Cons of this year's twelve State Ballot Propositions.

Come hear the story behind each Proposition and what a **Yes** vote means and what a **No** vote means.

Don't go to the polls without hearing both sides of every story.

Get ready to vote.

CHECK OUT THIS NPR PROGRAM

In an All Things Considered segment, reporter Eric Westerfeld outlines the devastating impact of economic and racial inequities in Marin, compounded by Covid 19. He interviewed Omar Carrera and Dr. Matt Willis.

<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/904045354>

**your VOTE
is your VOICE**

FROM THE VOTER SERVICE
TEAMS...

General Voting and Election
Information

Voter Service Chair, Robin Diederich

**Safe & Accessible Voting during the COVID19
Pandemic**

State and county election officials continue to work to meet the challenges of running a safe, secure and accessible election during the pandemic. At press time, service and funding problems at USPS are complicating the vote by mail effort, but there are measures in place that will mitigate these problems.

Current safety measures include:

Vote By Mail (VBM) - Start to be mailed out Oct. 5
VBM ballots will be mailed to all active registered voters automatically - to protect your health and to avoid crowds and long lines at polling places.

It is recommended that all voters check their voter registration status at voterstatus.sos.ca.gov.

VBM ballot tracking is available and encouraged. Sign up at WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov.

Complete your ballot EARLY. Follow all instructions carefully, including signing and dating on outside of the return envelope.

RETURN Vote By Mail Ballots - Do this EARLY

- ◆ By Mail - Return envelope has prepaid postage, postmark must be on or before Nov. 3. This election only, ballots have an extra 14 days to arrive at the Elections Dept. by Nov. 20.
- ◆ Ballot Drop Off Boxes - Will be located throughout the county Oct. 6 - Nov. 3 and will be picked up by the elections officials.
- ◆ Polling Places - Drop off your completed VBM ballot (in signed, dated return envelope) at any polling place from Oct. 31- Nov. 3.
- ◆ Elections Dept. - Drop your completed ballots of between Oct. 6 - Nov. 3.

In-Person Voting

In-person voting is available to ensure that all voters have the options they need to access their ballot. You have the option of taking your VBM ballot to a polling place and exchanging it for a precinct ballot to vote at the polls.

Polling places - There will be fewer polling places in larger spaces with COVID19 safety procedures in place to protect voters and poll workers (masks, physical distancing, sanitizers, etc.).

Polling places will be open from Oct. 31-Nov. 3.

POLL WORKERS NEEDED - You can help even if you cannot work at the polls - See separate article on p. 4.

Vote Count

Because of the large volume of VBM ballots the vote count will take longer perhaps a week or more.

You can help by sharing that the extended vote count is a result of the safety and security measures, not because of problems with the system. This will be true all over the country. California has passed a law to allow VBM ballots to be processed and counted earlier than the usual schedule to help meet the vote count certification deadline of Dec. 3. No voting results will be released until after the polls close on Election Night.

As League members, we are seen as **VOTING AM-BASSADORS** - trusted messengers of voting and election information. Stay educated on voting and election information, but don't think you have to know all of the answers! Send people to our website marinlww.org, Marin Co. Elections Dept. at marin-votes.org, CA Sec of State at vote.ca.gov, & LWVC online voting tool votersedge.org.

Please visit our website, Marinlww.org, often for updated voting and election information and follow us on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

Questions? Email voterservice@marinlww.org

Voter Registration Team

Leader, Jackie Dagg

The registration team is in the process of working on a virtual effort this year because of the covid-19 virus. We will be contacting Marin community-based organizations and businesses to encourage them to advertise registration information through their websites, newsletters and social media platforms.

Please let me know if you would like to volunteer for this important task.

VoterReg@marinlww.org.



Pros and Cons Team

Leader, Lynn Dooly



Unbiased, non-partisan pros and cons of local and state measures/propositions for specific elections are underway. [Read More Here](#) about how these will be presented this year. We have a wonderful team this year! THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO ARE WORKING TO CREATE THIS YEAR'S SCRIPTS!!!

We will be ready to begin virtual presentations by the middle of September. If you know an organization that might be interested in a Pros & Cons virtual presenta-

Candidate Forums Team

Leader, Nancy Bell

The Candidate Forums Team is in full gear as we prepare for a very busy September and October. In addition to the usual preparation for forums, this year we are learning how to conduct them virtually using ZOOM. During the month of August special trainings were held for the question sorter, time keeper and moderator roles. The final preparation step will be mock forums, scheduled for early September.



Forums are scheduled to start the week of September 21st and will run through mid-October. The public will be invited to watch the forums live-streamed on the League's YouTube channel. Questions to the candidates can be submitted, both in advance and during the forum, through a special email address. Both the YouTube link and email address will be promoted in advance through our forum partners, the League's website and social media.

All forums will be recorded, with the videos made available on the League's website, YouTube channel and Facebook page. CMCM-TV will also re-broadcast the forums on one of its channels.

A quick note to highlight a different approach we will be taking for three of the forums on the schedule: each of these special forums will include candidates from multiple races and will be "topic-focused", taking a deep dive into issues around seniors in Marin.

Make sure to check the League's website at www.marinlww.org for the updated list of scheduled forums, as well as links to watch the live-stream and to email address to submit questions.

Voter's Edge Team

Leader, Laurie Nardone

A huge thanks to Laurie Nardone for leading this newly formed Voter Service Team. Voter's Edge is an unbiased online election tool that covers federal, state, and local races and measures in California. It is a joint project between LWVC Ed Fund and Maplight. Our Voter's Edge Team members went through training in early August and are now busy working to get local measures and candidate content loaded into the Voter's Edge system.



Get Out The Vote Team

Leader, Robin Diederich, voterservice@marinlwv.org



The **GOTV - Get Out the Vote Team** is following the voter outreach campaign created by the Elections Dept. to educate voters on the changes in the upcoming election due to COVID19. They will also promote a #VoteReady theme. Are you registered? Are you ready to vote? Have you educated yourself through candidate forums, pros and cons presentations, votersedge.com guides? And finally have you filled out your vote-by-mail ballot and returned it by mail or voted at the polling place?



Car Caravan and Walk at Northgate Mall

Community Action Marin, the County's official anti-poverty agency, held a July 4 Caravan in Support of Racial and Economic Justice, Voter Registration and the 2020 Census.

Participants gathered in the Northgate Mall parking lot where a tent was set up for volunteers from Community Action Marin, the League of Women Voters and the Census Bureau. The event also featured a car caravan and walk covering the 1.2 miles around Northgate Mall in Terra Linda. League volunteers were Mary Caruso, Regina Bianucci Rus and Jackie Dagg.

Jackie Dagg, Registration Team

**HELP MARIN COUNTY VOTE!
BE A POLL WORKER OR A POLL
WORKER RECRUITER**



There is a HUGE NEED for poll workers during the pandemic because most of the regular poll workers are +65 yrs. old, so at a high risk for COVID19.

Sign up or recruit by sharing our poll worker recruiting posts on social media or sending emails, making phone calls and talking to people who might be able to work at the polls. Great opportunity for high school and college students! There will be training, a stipend, personal protective equipment, physical distancing and other COVID19 safety measures. For more information and to sign up, go to <https://www.marincounty.org/depts/rv/poll-workers/become-a-poll-worker>

TRANSPORTATION/LAND USE/HOUSING



The League had its first meeting with SMART on August 5 to offer our ideas on how it can improve its transparency and accountability.

The Zoom meeting was attended by five representatives from the League of Women Voters: Sonoma League’s President Debbie McKay and Willard Richards, and Marin League’s President Ann Wakeley, Kevin Haggerty and John Eells.

The meeting was attended by four SMART Board members: Eric Lucan, Chair, Damon Connolly, Debra Fudge and Barbara Pahre.

The meeting was also attended by two members of the SMART staff: Erin McGrath, Chief Financial Officer and Farhad Mansourian, General Manager.

The meeting went very well. It was a great start to what we hope will be an ongoing working relationship between the League and SMART.

We offered a number of ideas and suggestions during the 90-minute meeting. Here are the highlights of our three main suggestions:

- ◆ We emphasized the need for SMART to improve its responses to Requests for Public Information. In particular, SMART’s responses need to be more timely and comprehensive, and if the requested information cannot be provided, then clear reasons need to be given.
- ◆ We suggested including a summary of SMART responses to Public Information Requests in the General Manager’s monthly report to the Board.
- ◆ We suggested that SMART use a model for its Citizens Committee similar to what TAM has been doing for years.
- ◆ We suggested that SMART follow the TAM exam-

ple in the preparation of its Sales Tax Expenditure Plan. Under this approach, the expanded Citizens Oversight Committee would play a key role in the preparation of the Plan.

Overall, we emphasized that SMART needs to be building partnerships with key stakeholders and then collaborating with these partners whenever possible.

John Eells, T/LU/H



Northbound Highway 101 to Eastbound Highway 580 Connector Project

At the August 11 TLUH Committee meeting, Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) staff Molly Graham and Dan Cherrier provided the Committee a presentation of the proposed Northbound Highway 101 to Eastbound Highway 580 Connector Project.

The goals of the project are to 1) improve connectivity between NB US 101 and EB I-580 for regional traffic; 2) improve operational efficiencies between NB US 101 and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge; 3) separate local traffic from regional pass-through traffic; 4) reduce local traffic congestion; and 5) enhance the active transportation (bicycle, pedestrian and bus transit) within the project area.

Identified project funding to date includes \$135 million from Regional Measure 3 (bridge tolls) and \$16.5 million from the Marin County transportation sales tax measure for a total of \$151.5 million.

Continued on p. 6



Moral Determinants of Health

The Health and Human Services Committee recommends a short, but deeply thought-provoking, article by Donald Berwick, MD, MPP (JAMA, July 21, 2020; Vol 324, No.3: 225-226). Berwick eloquently appeals for a more moral approach to health care. Though this op/ed is short, it is too long to include here (full PDF version = [click here](#)), but well worth reading in full. A most interesting aspect captured in two passages below highlights the importance of public health care and socioeconomic circumstances that each have far more impact on overall health than do individual medical interventions:

“No scientific doubt exists that, mostly, circumstances outside health care nurture or impair health. Except for a few clinical preventive services, most hospitals and physician offices are repair shops, trying to correct the damage of causes collectively denoted “social determinants of health.” Marmot has summarized these in 6 categories: conditions of birth and early childhood, education, work, the social circumstances of elders, a collection of elements of community resilience (such as transportation, housing, security, and a sense of community self-efficacy), and, cross-cutting all, what he calls “fairness,” which generally amounts to a sufficient redistribution of wealth and income to ensure social and economic security and basic equity. Galea has cataloged social determinants at a somewhat finer grain, calling out, for example, gun violence, loneliness, environmental toxins, and a dozen more causes.”

“The power of these societal factors is enormous compared with the power of health care to counteract them.”

We also want to call your attention to two sites. First, the CA legislature convened a special commis-

sion on health care finance reform, the **Healthy California for All Commission**, which started meeting in January, has so far held four hearings with expert testimony and has scheduled four more through December. One can check the schedule to watch live hearings or the AV recordings posted afterward (chhs.ca.gov/healthycforall/).

Next, our LWVMC Health and Human Services Committee has started our own webpage (marinlwv.org/healthcare-reform) to explain key terminology and plans in the current healthcare reform debate and the differences across parties and presidential candidates. We’d love to have your input and help in this effort to educate ourselves and all Marin voters.

Doug Cooper, Healthcare & Human Services

T/LU/H Continued from p. 5

Project Considerations include 1) design speed (Caltrans has a 50-mph connector standard. Any alternative with a slower speed will require an exception approval of CalTrans); 2) traffic and congestion; 3) environmental impacts (air quality and emissions, noise, habitat and SF Bay, and visual impacts); 4) sea-level rise considerations; 5) costs and funding; 6) property impacts; 7) economic Impacts and benefits; 8) neighborhood connectivity; 9) bike/pedestrian/transit access.

The TAM and CalTrans project team hope to be able to narrow the project alternatives down to two or three before the formal environmental review is done.

Kevin Hagerty is the LWV- Marin County representative on the Project Community Stakeholder Working Group and will keep the TLUH Committee advised as the project proceeds.

Additional Information regarding the project can be found by going to the TAM Project website at www.Marin101-580.com.

Kevin Hagerty, T/LU/H



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Barbara Strong
Cindy Wagner

C A L E N D A R

Our next membership meetings:

Fall Kick-Off: September 12 10:00am on Zoom

Speaker: Lynda Roberts, Marin County Registrar of Voters

October 5, 11:45am on Zoom

Pros and Cons of Measures on the November ballot

You will receive a Zoom invitation closer to the meeting dates.

Committees are also meeting on Zoom:

Watch your email for committee meeting details or check the League website Marinlww.org