



The Voter

The League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County

December 2012



**LET'S
PARTY!**



**HOLIDAY PARTY
and FUNDRAISER
DECEMBER 15**

Mark Your Calendar



The Prez Sez



We have much to celebrate this year. Specifically, election 2012 is over, and our nation has survived two years of presidential campaigning and billions of dollars expended on campaign spending. After almost four years of gridlock, during which compromise was a dirty word, the American electorate has spoken by electing pretty much the same cast of characters but asking for a different outcome. Will Washington listen? The looming “fiscal cliff” will give us the answer by January 1st.

As League members, we’re concerned about voting rights. This concern includes encouraging voter registration and ensuring that the voting process is fair and accessible for all citizens. This election was characterized in many states by significant attempts at voter suppression—voters faced with waiting for hours in long lines in order to exercise their right to vote, and once they got through the door finding that some precincts had run out of ballots! Voting right advocates, including the League and the U.S. Department of Justice, got involved early, fighting attempts to purge voter rolls, implement stringent voter identification laws, and limit early voting. In Florida, attempts were made to restrict the League’s role in registering voters. Litigation was necessary to address some of these issues and will continue, including consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court of major challenges from Arizona and Alabama regarding the right to vote. Some observers have opined that, ironically, attempts at voter suppression seem to have resulted in more voters demanding their right to vote! Stay tuned for further developments.

In California, the League supported Propositions 30, 34 and 40 and opposed Propositions 31 and 32. The League’s positions were approved by the voters, with the exception of Proposition 34, i.e., repealing the death penalty. To me, this confirms the validity of the League’s study process. Yes, the study process is time consuming for members who must interview officials, gather reams of information, sift through this information, form a consensus, and advocate for the positions that result. But it allows us to advocate for wise public policies.

Can we conclude that nothing will change on the national scene? Not necessarily. The election and the “fiscal cliff” admonition have increased the incentives for cooperation and bipartisanship in Washington. If bitter partisanship declines and we begin to put the needs of the people before the needs of politicians and lobbyists, important issues like immigration reform and tax reform may finally be addressed.

So, we may have a lot to celebrate in 2013. Let’s get a head start by celebrating at the League’s Holiday Party and Fundraiser. Members will soon receive their invitation in the mail to enjoy delicious foods, fine beverages, fun activities, and great company at our annual bash. See you there!

Karen Schwartz, President

You are invited to attend our

Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser

Saturday, December 15, 2012

1pm - 4 pm

At the home of Anne DeWitt

Please join us for Hors d'oeuvres, Desserts and Beverages

Grande Book Sale, Gift Certificates

RSVP Anne by December 10, 2012, (530) 269-2549

COMING ATTRACTIONS

LWVWNC 2013 PROGRAMS

JOB\$ - employABILITY in Nevada County	January 2013
SENIOR SERVICES	February 2013
LIVING GREEN	March 2013
IMMIGRATION - The Dream Act	April 2013
GUN CONTROL	May 2013

(JOIN US AND STAY INFORMED!)



League of Women Voters of California®

The League of Women Voters of California hails the voters' decisions on key propositions in the November general election, as they passed Propositions 30 and 40 and defeated Proposition 32. However, we note with regret the defeat of Proposition 34.

"Voters recognize that restoring the California Dream requires investment in education and public services," said LWVC President Jennifer A. Waggoner. "**Proposition 30** sets us on the path toward financial stability and adequate funding for vital services our government must provide for California."

"We will continue to work for adequate, flexible, honest state budgets. Real budget process reform must be a high priority for our legislature and governor as well," continued Waggoner.

The League celebrates the defeat of **Proposition 32**, the sham political reform measure that fully deserved the label "Special Exemption Act." "We are pleased that the voters recognized Prop 32 as an unfair attempt to throttle one type of political player while leaving opposing voices virtually unrestrained," added Waggoner. "It's time to focus on real reform: reducing the amount and influence of money in politics."

Just before Election Day, voters were given a glimpse of a trail of money laundering from one stealth source to another. "We've seen huge contributions to ballot measure campaigns from secretive nonprofits with obscure names," Waggoner said. "This shows the need for stronger disclosure requirements, stronger enforcement, stronger penalties." The League applauds the efforts of the Fair Political Practices Commission to unveil the \$11 million mystery donation to a committee working to oppose Proposition 30 and support 32. We plan to follow through with proposals in the coming legislative session, in collaboration with other reform groups and the FPPC.

Waggoner noted the League's disappointment with the defeat of **Proposition 34**, which would have replaced the death penalty with a sentence of life without possibility of parole. "Proposition 34 made both policy and fiscal sense, and we regret its failure at the polls," she stated. "However, we are heartened by the fact that millions of Californians now understand that the status quo should not be maintained. We look forward to future opportunities for reform of the death penalty."

The state measure at the bottom of the ballot was of special significance to the League of Women Voters. **Proposition 40**, the referendum on the state Senate district maps, marks the final chapter of years of work by the League and other groups who saw the need for independent redistricting and made it happen in California. "We're heartened that the voters recognized the great work of the Citizens Redistricting Commission and showed their continued support for a fair redistricting process," said Waggoner. "This strong voter endorsement paves the way for the redistricting that will follow the 2020 census, and the League is committed to continue monitoring and giving assistance to the process."

"Always do the right thing. This will satisfy some people and astonish others."

- Benjamin Franklin

SPEAK UP AT THE SPEAK OUT

At a meeting of the LWVWNC Program Planning Committee, the members of the committee decided that League programs for 2013 should be considered not only from the ideas gathered at the Annual Meeting of June 2012, but also from our November 2012 “Speak Out.”

The November meeting, therefore, was an opportunity for members to “speak out” on a number of topics decided upon by the Program Planning members at their meeting of November 13. The chosen topics were: **Public Pensions, Senior Services, Living Green, Immigration (The Dream Act), Election 2012, and Gun Control.** Members were encouraged to sit at the table that held the most interest for them.

The following is a summary of the salient discussion points that participants at each of the above-mentioned six tables found to be worthy of more debate, discussion and information. As a result, four of the six topics (notated by an asterisk) have been chosen as program topics to be offered for the 2013 League year.

Public Pensions - The outcome of this discussion was that very few citizens understood the public pension system and “one size fits all.” The lack of understanding is magnified by political use of the pension system as the major cause of the state’s financial woes. The conclusion was the need for citizen education.

Senior Services * - The group reviewed what services are currently available and how they are financed. With the growing number of seniors in the county, what additional needs must be met, and is the county prepared to do so?

Living Green * - The discussion ranged from what one can do in his/her home to make it more energy efficient. Would political action such as having a “Green Week” in Nevada County raise awareness of this issue? Education programs were stressed with the theme, “What can I do to make a difference?”

Immigration (The Dream Act) * - The discussion centered on immigration starting with a definition of the “Dream Act.” What are its pluses and its minuses in dealing with the undocumented, and how is it functioning in California—particularly in Nevada County?

Election 2012 - To the question: “Has anything changed?”, the answer was : “Not much.” The voting process locally and nationwide was reviewed. Discussion revolved around what sort of improvements are needed, and should the speculation include the possible elimination of the Electoral College?

Gun Control * - The subject was explored by examining the existing state and federal laws and what changes, if any, are needed. Questions were raised regarding the possibility of expanding or eliminating these laws in the future. The group was interested in knowing what statistics might be available to citizens in order to better understand the need for gun control.

Polly Bacich, Program Planning Coordinator

12 Days of Christmas

Here is one Christmas Carol that has always baffled me. What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge who won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas?

Recently, I found out. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to the members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.

- The partridge in the pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testament.
- Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit: Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy.
- The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.
- The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
- The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

So there is your history lesson for today

(Reprinted in part—J. Brandeau. About.com Urban Legends)



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