



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

*The Voter* - May 2014

2014  
*Annual*  
**MEETING**



*General Meeting—10:30 a.m. - Luncheon—12 noon*



Guest Speaker

**Thomas M. Anderson**

**Judge, Superior Court of California,  
County of Nevada**

**“The State of Nevada County Courts”**

**Annual Meeting, May 10, 2014**

**151 Union Square  
151 Mill Street, Grass Valley**



## THE PREZ SEZ



The League's Annual Meeting is just around the corner on May 10. It's a time when we gather to socialize and enjoy a delicious luncheon together as we celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and the new beginnings before us in the year ahead. Among these accomplishments are the series of excellent Candidates' Forums organized by our Voter Service Committee, chaired by Ruth Schwartz. We're also proud of the outstanding monthly programs organized by our Program Planning Committee, chaired by Polly Bacich.

At the Annual Meeting we'll take care of some business, like reviewing the projected budget, and we'll also elect a slate of officers who'll be coming on board to serve the League this coming year, including some fresh faces. We'll also be presenting the Pros and Cons for the two initiatives that have qualified for the June ballot.

And, we'll have some fun. Not only will we socialize over lunch, but we're privileged to have a wonderful speaker joining us, Judge Thomas Anderson, who'll inform us about the state of the courts in our county.

Although members are always welcome at any board meeting, you're especially welcome at the Annual Meeting because we hope to get your input on what you want from the League in the next year. We are, after all, a grass roots political organization, and we need your ideas to serve as the spark plug for all our activities in the year ahead.

This year, 2014, is our 30th Birthday! Our League was started in 1978 when a few former League members who had moved here from other areas formed a Member-at-Large (MAL) group which later developed into a Provisional League. In 1984 all the necessary requirements were met and this group was accorded full status by National and State Leagues as the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WESTERN NEVADA COUNTY.

We work hard to inform local voters about issues and candidates. Recently, we received a letter from a local citizen who attended one of our Candidates' Forums, saying: "I walked in not knowing any of the candidates, and left knowing who I will vote for. Thank you.!"

That's what the League is all about. We're an inclusive organization, and we welcome all adult citizens, male and female, to join us in the effort to make our democracy successful.

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as your president for the past three years. I've had the opportunity to work with many delightful members who have taught me so much and helped me to stretch and grow, to learn new skills and to acquire a deeper understanding of the important issues of our times. What fun!

Karen Schwartz, President

## PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Program Planning Committee has concluded the programs for this year and will resume with a September program. The committee has had a busy year. The programs this year included: Mental Health, Homelessness, Water, Climate Change, The Voting Rights Act, and Public Pensions. The community response to each program was very positive and the committee hopes to provide equally challenging programs in the coming League year. Many thanks are due members of the committee - **Mary Dreifuss, Joey Jordan, Carol Kuczora, Arlene Robertson, Karen Schwartz, Ruth Schwartz and Helen Williamson.**

Polly Bacich, Chair Program Planning Committee

## LEGISLATION REPORT

The National League has indicated three areas where individual League members can make a difference. They are: 1. Voting Rights Act. A bill has been introduced to rectify the damage done by the Supreme action. Individual members of the League are encouraged to contact their representatives and urge passage of the measure. 2. Climate Change. Individual Leagues are encouraged to include climate impact activities in their local communities. 3. Carbon Pollution Regulations. Members are encouraged to comment to the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the proposal on federal carbon pollution controls.

Polly Bacich, Chair Legislation/Action

### Vote YES on Propositions 41 & 42!

We support BOTH statewide propositions on the June ballot:

**Prop 41** authorizes \$600 million in bonds for affordable multifamily supportive housing for low-income and homeless veterans. All Californians should have safe, adequate housing.

**Prop 42** makes access to public meetings and public records a constitutional requirement for local governments. It's a common-sense measure that helps us hold our elected officials accountable.



Vote with the League June 3!

*“Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories.*

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)



## ASK BEFORE YOU SIGN - OR, THINK BEFORE YOU INK

The League of Women Voters of California encourages its members and the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative and referendum petitions.

Voters are often asked to sign a petition “just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it.” The League says to voters, “**Your signature is valuable**, perhaps even more valuable than your vote. Why? Because far fewer signatures are required to qualify a measure for the ballot than votes needed to pass it once it’s on the ballot. Only sign a petition for an initiative or referendum that you believe belongs on the ballot.”

The LWVC suggests six questions voters should ask themselves to help determine whether or not to sign an initiative petition:

1. **Is it complex?** Some issues can be decided by a simple yes or no vote. More complex issues may be better handled by thorough examination and debate in a legislative arena.

2. **Is it confusing?** Some initiatives are not well written or contain conflicts that may require court resolution or interpretation.

3. **Does it belong in the Constitution?** If an initiative amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Is it a fundamental law that should be protected from change? Correcting a constitutional amendment later would also require amending the Constitution, is cumbersome and costly, and requires another vote of the people.

4. **How will it be funded?** Is it an “unfunded mandate” that would require the legislature to take funds from other essential programs? Consider the effect on the overall flexibility of a government budget with already limited revenue. An initiative should generally define its own revenue source, and not earmark, restrict, or obligate a specific percentage of the General Fund revenues.

5. **Before you sign, ask about who is circulating the petition.** Many initiative campaigns use paid signature gatherers. The only requirement in California is that the petition itself have a disclaimer that it may be circulated by a paid signature gatherer. You can ask whether the person requesting your signature is paid, and, if so, how much

6. **Who is behind it?** It can be difficult to find out who the real sponsors and opponents of a petition are. Sometimes there are news reports, or a website that can help you. Contribution and expenditure reports of committees organized for action on ballot measures are available through Cal-Access, the automated lobbying and campaign disclosure system sponsored by the California Secretary of State’s office. Go to this site: [www.cal-access.ss.ca.gov](http://www.cal-access.ss.ca.gov) - to read the financial reports of campaign committees.

The League of Women Voters is a trusted, nonpartisan political organization. Our members do the hands-on work that safeguards democracy and leads to civic improvement. More information about the League, including membership information, can be found on the League’s website: [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org).

## Important Women of the 20th Century

For women, this has been the most remarkable century in history. If you doubt it, consider for a moment our status at its dawning. In a world still mired in Victorianism, we were decorative, disenfranchised, and defined almost entirely by our relationship (be it daughter or wife) with a man. And that's if we were lucky. Millions more of us labored under horrific conditions for substandard wages—sometimes at home doing piecework; more often in overcrowded textile mills and factories that put our health in peril. The average female life expectancy? Fifty-one years.

What a difference a century makes. Today women's lives have been transformed beyond the wildest imaginings of someone who lived in 1900. We not only vote and bear arms, we enjoy reproductive freedom and a large measure of economic equality. We work alongside men in businesses we've helped build and that we even (sometimes) own. Thanks to this century's spectacular advances in science and medicine, we can expect to live at least to the ripe old age of 79. And now when we ally ourselves with the opposite sex, it is not out of financial necessity, but genuine love and desire.

Barbara Walters

(Excerpted in part from "The Ladies' Home Journal 100 Most Important Women of the 20th Century")



### MAGGIE KUHN (1905-1995)

ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT IN 1970, MAGGIE KUHN, A 25-YEAR EMPLOYEE OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY, WAS PRESENTED WITH A SEWING MACHINE. "I never opened it," she said later. "I was too busy." As the sewing machine collected dust, Kuhn, hopping mad at being forced to leave a job solely because she had hit the arbitrary cutoff age of 65, launched the public advocacy group known as the Gray Panthers (a witty variation on the name Black Panthers, a radical black organization she admired). With it, she helped create a worldwide awareness of what she called "ageism". It is morally wrong, she declared, to throw people on the scrap pile just because they are no longer young—and no less a social evil than racism or sexism.

Under Kuhn's energetic leadership, the Gray Panthers grew to a peak membership of 60,000—and eventually helped rewrite mandatory retirement laws. But unlike such organizations as the powerful American Association of Retired Persons, the Gray Panthers were always about more than elderly issues. Kuhn's tireless muck-raking on behalf of causes as disparate as the antiwar movement and national health care galvanized activists of all ages and backgrounds, so that during the Gray Panthers' early-1980's peak, almost 40 percent of its membership was younger than 50.

Kuhn's personal life was as unorthodox as her public career. Twice engaged but never married ("sheer luck," she liked to quip), she maintained that she never regretted her decision to remain single. "If I had married them," she said of her suitors, "my life would have been over." As it was, she had numerous love affairs, including one when she was in her 70's with a man less than half her age. For such free-thinking, as well as for her superior political skills and dedication to social justice, Kuhn remains a model of ageless liberation.

*"There's no disgrace or shame in growing old. We're all doing it."*

MAGGIE KUHN

(Excerpted in part from the "Ladies Home Journal 100 Most Important Women of the 20th Century")

## Voter Service Report

Thursdays March 27, April 3 and April 10 belonged to Voter Service! We began our community outreach for the June 3 Primary Election with three outstanding Candidates' Forums. March 27 brought the five candidates for Board of Supervisors –District 3 and 4—together for the first forum of the election season. We had an overflow audience with Polly Bacich, League member, as moderator. Questions were submitted by the media representatives and the audience.

Five candidates for the position of Superior Court Judge, Seat One, were given the opportunity to participate in the second forum under the able direction of League member Dottie Schmidt, moderator. The third forum featured candidates for the office of Nevada County District Attorney and the candidates for the office of Nevada County Superintendent of Schools. Once again, Dottie Schmidt moderated the forum with questions from the media and the audience.

One more forum is scheduled for Thursday, May 1 from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. There are four candidates running for House of Representatives, District 1. It will, as before, be held at the Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers. There are four candidates running for this office: Gregory Cheadle and Heidi Hall will be the participating candidates and, to date, we have received no response from Dan Levine. Our incumbent, Doug LaMalfa, sent the following email in response to our invitation to participate: "May 1 is a scheduled date for the House of Representatives to be in session. Congressman LaMalfa will be in Washington D.C. that day for votes and will not be attending this forum. Please do inform the campaign of your Fall forum schedule when you make plans. Thank you, Team LaMalfa." Polly Bacich will be the moderator of this final forum.

Thanks to the media representatives: KNCO, KVMR, The Union and YubaNet for their continued support of our League forums. The excellent publicity, keeping the Nevada County electorate informed of the League's community-based forums. Attendance and timely questions by both the media and those in attendance have been greatly appreciated.

Our forums are known for their professional, fair and unbiased presentations. Many League members are responsible for the continued success of the forums. A very special thanks to the best-working Voter Service Committee in the state and, undoubtedly, in the entire U.S.: Polly Bacich, Anne DeWitt, Olivia Diaz, Mary Dreifuss, Carol Kuczora, Sharon O'Hara, Leal Portis, Arlene Robertson, Dottie Schmidt, Karen Schwartz and Helen Williamson.

We will finish the Spring session with a request to count ballots for the election of BriarPatch board of directors. We have done BriarPatch's ballot counts for the last several years and always find it a pleasant and rewarding experience.

Now a well-deserved rest before we gear up for the Fall elections—complete with voter registration, candidate forums and Pros & Cons of the ballot measures.

Ruth Schwartz, Chair  
Voter Service Committee

## INTRODUCING LEAGUE MEMBER, CAROL KUCZORA

Carol is a native Californian who grew up attuned to the natural beauty of Marin County, where she was raised, and the very different kind of scenic beauty of the San Joaquin Valley, where she visited her grandparents' farm.

Carol shouldered important responsibilities for many years. She graduated from Sonoma State and, after her divorce, supported herself and her son editing legal reports. Later, she moved to Nevada County, where she cared for her father for ten years before his death.

Carol's life has been guided by epiphanies that have led her to examine her values in depth. All of this has forged her aesthetic sensitivities and spiritual awareness into her deep devotion to some of the noblest causes, such as working for world peace, protecting the environment, and leaving the world a better place for future generations.

Now in retirement, Carol is engaged in living a life dedicated to these ideals. She says, "For the first time I know what I'm doing." She also enjoys traveling widely to exotic locales, e.g., India, Thailand, China, Egypt, Fiji and beyond. She will be visiting Israel and Palestine next.

When she's not traveling, Carol is busier than ever, immersed in organizations addressing the environmental and political issues that are closest to her heart, e.g., the Climate Change Coalition, the Palestine-Israel Working Group, Move to Amend and the League, among others. She is also leading the Unitarian Social Action Committee. She feels her proudest achievement thus far is completing the CCC training to disseminate climate change information.

The League is important to Carol because she is concerned about the erosion of democracy by big money and keeping politics fair and honest. For several years she has served as the Publicity chair on our League board. She also makes our beautifully hand-lettered signs.

Carol's highest ambition is to help leave the world habitable for future generations. But this requires a great deal of social engagement, which is a challenge for someone who thinks of herself as a "SHY" person. Being a spiritual activist requires daily doses of self-summoned courage.

When you see Carol, ask her about her next trip.

Karen Schwartz, President

## Why Did The Chicken Cross the Road? (Final Discussion)

**Ralph Nader**—The chicken's habitat on the original side of the road had been polluted by unchecked industrialist greed. The chicken did not reach the unspoiled habitat on the other side of the road because it was crushed by the wheels of a gas-guzzling SUV.

**Ronald Reagan**—What chicken?

**Bill Gates**—I have just released eChicken 2003, which will not only cross the roads, but will lay eggs, file your important documents, and balance your checkbook—and Internet Explorer is an inextricable part of eChicken.

**The Bible**—And God came down from the heavens, and He said unto the chicken, "Thou shall cross the road." And the chicken crossed the road. And there was much rejoicing.

**John Lennon**—Imagine all the chickens crossing the road in peace.



**We appreciate the support of the following local businesses**

**BriarPatch Co-op  
Community Market**  
290 Sierra College Drive, Grass Valley  
(530) 272-5333  
Hours: 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily - [www.briarpatch.coop](http://www.briarpatch.coop)

**New Moon Café**  
203 York Street, Nevada City  
(530) 265-6399  
[www.thenewmooncafe.com](http://www.thenewmooncafe.com)

**Hair Razors**  
Amy Pirtle  
233 Mill Street, Grass Valley  
(530) 263-6330

**The Wooden Spoon**  
A Toy Store for Cooks  
2066 Nevada City Highway, Grass Valley  
(530) 272-8980  
[www.woodenspooncalif.com](http://www.woodenspooncalif.com)

**Mill Street Clothing**  
Lisa Swarthout  
117 Mill Street, Grass Valley  
(530) 477-6404

**SPD Markets**  
735 Zion Street, Nevada City  
(530) 265-4596  
[www.spdmarket.com](http://www.spdmarket.com)

**The Book Seller**  
107 Mill Street, Grass Valley  
(530) 272-2131  
[www.TheBookSeller.biz](http://www.TheBookSeller.biz)

**Flour Garden Bakery**  
999 Sutton Way, Grass Valley 95945  
(530) 272-2043  
Mon.-Sat. 5am-7pm, Sun. 6am-6pm  
[www.flourgarden.com](http://www.flourgarden.com)

**The League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County wishes to thank Brunswick Village Assisted Living Community for their continued support.**



**Visit us on our website at [lwwvnc.org](http://lwwvnc.org)  
Membership in The League of Women Voters is open to men and women of all ages.**