

LWV[®] League of Women Voters *of the* Monterey Peninsula

VOTER

January 2012, Volume 84, Number 4

General Meeting, Wednesday, January 11, 2012

Fred Keeley: Five Major Problems in Sacramento, and How to Fix Them

Guest Speaker **Fred Keeley** is a longtime advocate for government reform. He believes that the erosion of principles of representative government and democracy in general has led to gridlock. Keeley thinks that the concept of majority rule has been deformed into various restrictions that enhance minority rule.

At our first Lunch & Learn of 2012, Keeley will dissect the five major factors blocking the functioning of state government, and describe the potential for solutions with recent and current reform efforts.

Keeley is well-informed on this topic by virtue of his current work and extensive political background: he is **Treasurer of Santa Cruz County** (elected January 2005), a Member of

the **Leadership Council of California Forward**, Co-Chair of **Voices of Reform Project of the Commonwealth Club of California**, a Member of the Board of Directors of the **California League of Conservation Voters**, and of the Board of **Planned Parenthood Advocates for Northern California and Nevada**.

All this, and Keeley still manages to find the time to teach political science courses at his alma mater **San Jose State University**, as well as lecture at various universities on California state government, politics, and a variety of environmental topics.

Additional background information about Keeley is on page 6. This is certain to be a great start to the LWVMP's New Year!

George Riley georgetriley@gmail.com

LWVMP General Meeting Luncheon

(General Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month)

Lunch begins 12 noon / Presentation starts 12:30

\$20 per person for lunch

(hot/cold entrée, salads, beverages, dessert)

Reservations are a must for lunch!

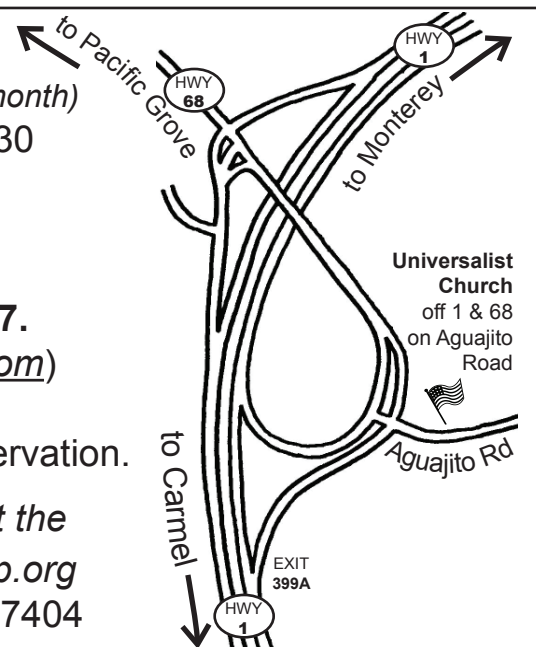
Contact Lorita Fisher by Saturday, January 7.

(phone 375-8301 or e-mail GLFisher@redshift.com)

Please pay at the door for lunch.

Lecture at 12:30 is **FREE** and does not require a reservation.

LWVMP General Luncheon Meetings are held at the
Unitarian Universalist Church <http://uucmp.org>
490 Aguajito Road / Carmel CA 93923 (831) 624-7404



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The PRESIDENT'S Message

Happy New Year!

The LWVMP made the front page of the *Monterey County Herald* the morning after our "Forum on the Future of FORA" on December 1st at Oldemeyer Center in Seaside. More than 150 people attended and I suspect that some were disappointed by the relatively brief time we had left for Questions & Answers. Fifty written questions were submitted and they were transcribed and shared with the speakers. A DVD of the Forum was also provided to them and is posted on our website (www.lwvmp.org).

Although the panel was allotted seven minutes each, most went well over their time limit. Next time I will go along with **Dennis Mar's** suggestion to time the speakers (as we do at candidates forums) and wave the paddles at them. Many thanks to **Janet Brennan** who organized the Forum, with help from **Tamara Harris, Dennis Mar, and Melanie Billig**.

We will kick off the New Year with a Lunch and Learn meeting focused on problems with California governance. **Fred Keeley** is an articulate and stimulating speaker. I look forward to seeing you at our Lunch and Learn on January 11.

I do hope that 2012 will bring better public policy on the issues that concern us!

Beverly G. Bean BeverlyGB@gmail.com

End the Death Penalty with Safe California Initiative

Volunteers Gathering Ballot-Qualifying Signatures

The League of Women Voters of California believes it's past time that we halt executions. It endorses the **SAFE (Savings, Accountability & Full Enforcement) California Initiative**, which is being circulated to collect the necessary signatures to qualify it for the November 2012 ballot. If it passes, the initiative will replace the death penalty with permanent imprisonment (life without the possibility of parole), including the conversion of existing death sentences to that alternative.

This endorsement is in accord with the LWVUS position supporting the end of the death penalty. The initiative is functionally equivalent to **SB 490**, a legislative bill endorsed by the **California League**. Besides being ineffective and subject to error, the death penalty is a serious fiscal drain. Replacing it with permanent imprisonment would save the state an estimated \$1 billion over five years.

A study released in July 2011, by **U.S. Appeals Court Judge Arthur Alarcon** and **Loyola Law School Professor Paula Mitchell**, found that death penalty cases, including legal costs and additional costs of housing inmates on death row, cost California taxpayers more than \$184 million every year. On average, \$308 million has been spent for each of the thirteen executions that have been carried out since the death penalty was reinstated in California in 1978.

While we waste millions on the death penalty, about half of serious violent crimes (homicides at 46% and rape at 56%) go unsolved every year owing to limited law-enforcement resources. The SAFE California Act would use some of the savings from ending the death penalty to create a fund to increase the rate at which serious crimes are solved by funding additional law-enforcement capacity and would require that convicted murderers work behind bars and pay restitution into a victims' compensation fund.

The SAFE California Act and the campaign to gather qualifying signatures on its behalf are supported by a coalition of law-enforcement professionals, family members of murder victims, and individuals exonerated of wrongful conviction, as well as religious and civil rights groups. Sign up for email alerts, make a donation, and find more ways to get involved on the campaign site (www.safecalifornia.org).



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**January 2012
 Program Calendar**

Natural Resources Committee
THURSDAY, January 12
 noon to 1:30pm
(second Thursday of each month)
 Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey
 Contact: **Janet Brennan**, 659-2090
JanetB@montereybay.com

LWVMP Board Meeting
WEDNESDAY, January 18
 Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey
 Contact: **Beverly Bean**, 484-2451
BeverlyGB@gmail.com

Membership Memo

As I update our membership list this month, **members who have not renewed will be made "inactive"** so that our League is not charged by National and State for dues we haven't received. If in doubt as to whether or not you have paid, contact me at 649-3865 or TBHarris146@aol.com.

Updates for your membership list:

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Lunch & Learn with the League

Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport

Date: **Wednesday, January 11, 2011**

Time: **12 noon lunch / 12:30 speaker**

Topic: **“Five Major Problems in Sacramento,
and How to Fix Them”**

Speaker: **Fred Keeley**

(continued from page 1) **Fred Keeley** served in the **California State Assembly** from 1996 to 2002. For four years he was **Speaker pro Tempore of the Assembly**, and during 2001-02 was appointed **Chief Operating Officer for the Assembly** where he authored a solution for California’s energy crisis, and helped forge budget compromises between Democrats and Republicans in the Legislature.

Keeley has served the public in many capacities: he has been a **Member of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors**, **Executive Director of the Planning and Conservation League**, **Executive Director of the Planning and Conservation League Foundation**, **Chief of Staff to Assemblymember Sam Farr (D-Carmel)**, and **Policy Director to Santa Cruz County Supervisor Joe Cucchaira**.

See page 1 for luncheon venue and details.