

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

VOTER

November 2012, Volume 85, Number 3

Wednesday, November 14, 2012

How Is the “Citizens United” Decision Working for You?

The influence of “dark money” in the 2012 election is beyond outrageous. But there are two currently constitutional ways to improve the situation: disclosure laws and public funding of election campaigns.

Our November Lunch and Learn speaker, **Ms Nancy Neff** is a Board Member for the **California Clean Money Campaign**. Ms Neff will talk about the **California DISCLOSE Act, AB 1648** (<http://www.caclean.org>), which would mandate clear and prominent disclosure of who is behind political TV, radio, print, and slate mailer ads, on the ads themselves. It would stop special interest contributors from hiding behind fake committee names by requiring ads to show their actual largest contributors.

Ms Neff will report on some egregious examples of the need for disclosure and the progress we have made in California toward better disclosure laws as well as toward public funding of elections. She will also outline the next steps we can take toward renewing democracy with the California DISCLOSE Act and, eventually, public campaign funding in California.

Ms Neff is a retired nurse from Palo Alto. She began volunteering with the California Clean Money Campaign in 2006 and is now a Regional Volunteer Coordinator. California Clean Money Campaign’s vision is to achieve an open and accountable government that is responsive to the needs of all Californians, and is working to reduce the influence of money in politics.

LWVMP November 14 Lunch & Learn Meeting

(Held on the second Wednesday of the month)

Lunch 12 noon / Presentation 12:30

\$15 per person for lunch

(salads, beverages, and dessert provided by Café Athena)

Reservations are a must for lunch!

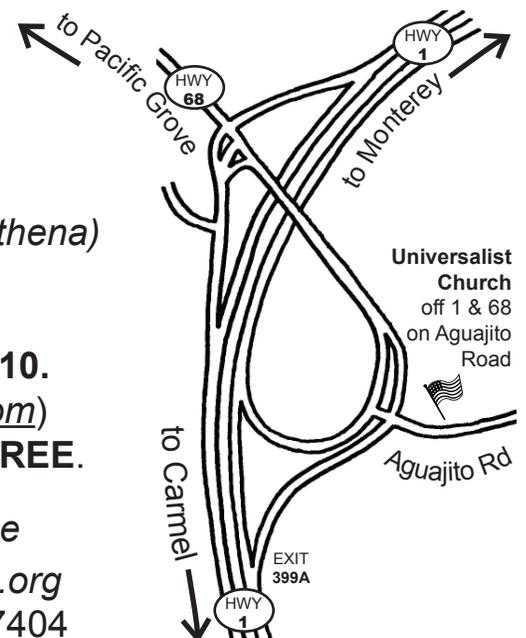
Contact Lorita Fisher by Saturday, November 10.

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

Pay at the door for lunch: meeting/presentation is **FREE**.

LWVMP Lunch & Learn 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

Fair Elections Update

In September this column was devoted to the issue of voter suppression. Since then a group of decisions in federal and state courts on early voting and voter identification requirements have made it less likely that these laws will play a significant role in some states on Election Day.



Since this is such an important issue for our League and our democracy, here is an update as of late October (as The Voter went to press):

OHIO

Early voting has been restored and rules restricting voter registration drives have been struck down. This ruling is under expedited appeal to the **US Federal Court of Appeals**.

WISCONSIN

The **Wisconsin State Attorney General** is asking the state's high court to reconsider two rulings that struck down a voter ID law before the November 2012 election. The winning plaintiffs in these two cases were the **NAACP** and the **LWV of Wisconsin**.

SOUTH CAROLINA

A federal district court panel blocked the SC voter photo ID law for 2012. They approved the law for future elections under an expansive interpretation in which voters who do not have photo ID will still be able to vote after signing an affidavit stating their reason for not obtaining a photo ID. Originally the **Department of Justice** denied preclearance to the photo ID law and the **LWV of South Carolina** joined the lawsuit in support of that decision.

FLORIDA

The court ruled that restrictions on early voting cannot be imposed in the five Florida counties which are covered by the federal **Voting Rights Act of 1965** (http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/vot/intro/intro_b.php), pre-clearance requirement, due to histories of discrimination. The state's remaining 62 counties will have reduced time for early voting from 14 days to eight and will close the polls on the weekend prior to the election, due to a law passed last year. Florida also restored over 26,000 citizens to the voting rolls and agreed to notify them that their voting rights were restored. They were purged because the state had classified them as non-citizens.

PENNSYLVANIA

Where a Republican legislator boasted that the new voter ID law would guarantee the state to **US presidential candidate Mitt Romney**, the **Pennsylvania State Supreme Court** gave guidelines to **Commonwealth Judge Robert Simpson**, who postponed the law by ordering the state not to enforce it in the November 2012 election. The constitutionality of the law was not a question before Simpson. The plaintiffs included the **LWV of Pennsylvania**, **NAACP of Pennsylvania** and others. The law could go into full effect next year and it could be appealed to the PA State Supreme Court.

NOTE *The battle for fair elections is far from over since 25 percent of the nation's voters will have to use paperless electronic voting machines. Three million voters will be eligible to vote online this fall, according to the **Verified Voting Foundation**, a nonpartisan fair elections watchdog group (<http://verifiedvoting.org>).*

Thirty-one states will offer some form of online voting, usually for overseas voters. On-line voting has been shown to be a technical nightmare for the integrity of the electoral process. Without a paper trail, results from any type of machine cannot be verified through audits and recounts.

Beverly G. Bean beverlygb@gmail.com

Presidential Debates and the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters hosted presidential debates from 1976 to 1984. The League used an open format, allowing follow-up questions among candidates. These types of questions are difficult to prepare for before a debate—they're unpredictable.

The League ran a tight ship from 1976 to 1988. As a nonpartisan organization, it was ardent in affording equal time to all candidates. The organization was in charge of the format, the questions and the debate in general. It served as host, and the candidates were invited to participate or not; the debate would go on without them. The LWV's refusal to acquiesce to candidates' demands made presidential debates a powerful force in US politics ... so the two major parties in the United States came together to wrestle control of presidential debates from the League.

In 1984, the cooperation between the Republican and Democratic parties led to a joint veto of almost 100 proposed panelists for the first debate. In 1988 the campaigns met secretly and drafted a document which specified who would be allowed sit in the audience during the '88 debates and who would serve as panelists, as well as abolished follow-up questions. Under these terms, the LWV would be left to merely host and would have no say in how the debates were held.

The League of Women Voters exposed the memorandum and resigned as hosts of presidential debates:

"The League of Women Voters is withdrawing sponsorship of the presidential debates ... because the demands of the two campaign organizations would perpetrate a fraud on the American voter. It has become clear to us that the candidates' organizations aim to add debates to their list of campaign-trail charades devoid of substance, spontaneity and answers to tough questions. The League has no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public."

Nancy M. Neuman, LWV President

October 3, 1988

To fill the void left by the LWV, the Democrats and Republicans formed a joint non-profit bipartisan organization, the **Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD)**. The CPD acts as a shield for the two major parties. Despite the Democrats and Republicans drafting memorandums of understanding and deciding who can participate, it's the CPD that publicly issues the decisions, so the CPD accepts the public's ire, not the political parties. What's more, the formats of presidential debates under the CPD lend themselves to pat, rehearsed answers that offer little insight into the

(continued on next page)

candidates' views of the issues.

*Excerpt from **How Presidential Debates Work**,
Josh Clark, 10/13/2000, HowStuffWorks.com*

On October 4, 2012 **The Huffington Post** published an article by **LWV President Elisabeth MacNamara** calling for changing the Presidential Debates:

“Voters should be the central focus of the campaign. Instead, floods of big money, especially outside secret money, obscure the candidates through expensive television ads making dubious claims or stating outright lies. Candidates spend too much time courting donors and raising money rather than reaching

out to personally introduce themselves to voters. By the time the debates roll around, voters' introduction to the candidates has been from a months-long and sustained wave of attack ads, charges, countercharges, outrageous claims and statements of general partisanship...debates should allow for more open-ended discussion between the candidates. Rather than subjecting viewers to an evening of dueling candidate stump speeches, debates should offer more time for the candidates to follow-up with questions for each other...more debates that feature an honest discussion between candidates would be a wise investment for us all.”

Beverly G. Bean beverlygb@gmail.com

WHERE THE ACTION IS!

The League has recommended that the MCPC evaluate various route alternatives for the San Clemente Dam removal and Carmel River Reroute. Janet Brennan, Director, LWVMP Natural Resources Committee, JanetB@montereybay.com

October 14, 2012

Ann Roberts, Chair
Monterey County Planning Commission
168 West Alisal Street, 2nd Floor, Salinas, CA 93901

SUBJECT: REMOVAL OF SAN CLEMENTE DAM

Dear Chair Roberts and
Members of the Commission:

The LWV of the Monterey Peninsula commends the Commission for extending the review period for consideration of County permits for removal of the dam and for encouraging County staff to hold meetings in the Cachagua area.

We have had an opportunity to review the Draft Supplemental EIR and found that an analysis of route alternatives was missing from the document. We urge the Commission to request that an analysis of the various routes to/from the dam area be evaluated and that the analysis include the following issues: 1. Environmental impacts related to tree removal, safety and traffic; 2. Schedule for construction period; 3. Costs related to mileage and any differences in construction schedules; 4. Status of restrictions on property for extending the construction road in the Cachagua area.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Beverly Bean, President, League of Women Voters of the Monterey Peninsula



photo: <http://www.co.monterey.ca.us>

MEMBERSHIP MEMO

Please Renew Your Membership

Some of you have not yet renewed your memberships. PLEASE do so now. If you misplaced your renewal letter, we have included a **Membership Application** on this very page.

New Members Welcome

If you are interested or know of someone who should be a member of our League, use the Membership Application on the right!

Welcome New Member

Thank you to new member **Jana-Louisa Matheson** who joined at the **\$200 level**.

Barbara Bass Evans Memorial Donation

Also thank you **Ophie Chavez** for your donation to the **League Education Fund** in memory of Barbara Bass Evans.

Additions and Changes to your LWVMP 2012-2013 Handbook Membership Roster

Add: Martha Ashelman, 200 Glenwood Circle #G-4, Monterey 93940, 656-9143, marthaashelman@aol.com; and **Jana-Louisa Matheson**, 505 Valenzuela Road, Carmel CA 93923, 596-2402, jlmatheson@aol.com

Change: Marian Carapezza, 92 Cuesta Vista Drive, Monterey CA 93940; **Judi Lehman**, 686 Ocean Avenue, Apt. B, Monterey 93940, 642-4231; and **RoseMary O'Neil**, 491 Grove Acre Avenue, Pacific Grove CA 93950, 917-3483, roneil@sbcglobal.net.

Lisa Hoivik LHoivik@comcast.net

The Voter: League of Women Voters of the Monterey Peninsula

Published monthly September through May. Send articles, updates, and suggestions to:

Regina Doyle, Editor ReginaDoyle@aol.com
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Join the League of Women Voters of the Monterey Peninsula



Any person of voting age, male or female, may be a member of the League!

Renew Your LWVMP Membership

Thank you to all members whose recent renewals have been received.

There are still a few of you with outstanding dues.

If you have received a letter as a reminder, please support this important organization and send in your check!

Use the form below or contact:
Lisa Hoivik, Membership Director
LHoivik@comcast.net or 375-7765

Checks payable to **LWVMP**
Mail to **LWVMP PO Box 1995**
Monterey CA 93942

Membership Levels

- \$250 Carrie Chapman Catt
- \$200 Sojourner Truth
- \$150 Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- \$100 Susan B. Anthony
- \$ 75 Household (2 persons, 1 address)
- \$ 50 Single membership
- \$ 25 Young persons or non-US citizens

Name(s)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

e-mail

- Send e-mail reminders for luncheons
- Call to remind me of luncheons

Because we lobby on public policy issues, membership dues & contributions to LWVMP are not tax deductible. However, donations to the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund (LWVCEF) are tax deductible.



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of the Monterey Peninsula**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Lunch & Learn with the League

Wednesday, November 14, 2012

Ms Nancy Neff

“California DISCLOSE Act”

(see front page for details)



Mark Your Calendars!

Upcoming Lunch & Learn Programs

(topics and speakers to be confirmed)

December 2012

NO MEETING

January 9, 2013

“Transparency: The Brown Act”

February 13, 2013

“Initiative Study / Consensus Meeting”

March 13, 2013

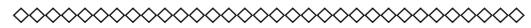
“Privatization of Education”

April 10, 2013

“Water Update”

November 2012

Program Calendar



Natural Resources Committee

THURSDAY, November 8

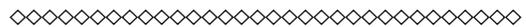
noon to 1:30pm

(second Thursday of each month)

Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey

Contact: **Janet Brennan**, 659-2090

JanetB@montereybay.com



Board Meeting

WEDNESDAY, November 28

12:30 pm

(fourth Wednesday of each month)

Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey

Contact: **Beverly Bean**, 484-2451

BeverlyGB@gmail.com

