

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Barbara Murray

We are now heading in to the home stretch of the League's year with several important items still on our plate.

This past Saturday, we held our **last discussion meeting** of the year on **gerrymandering and redistricting**. The well-attended meeting proved to be very informative on a topic that will be very important as we approach the upcoming census in the next couple of years. Check out the VOTER article for more details.

On **Monday, April 16**, we will co-sponsor a **candidates forum for the Clear Creek ISD school board trustees election** in conjunction with the Clear Creek Council of PTAs and CASE, a parent support group for gifted and talented students. The League will facilitate the forum. It is the first time in several years that we have done a forum for CCISD. Hope to see you there!

Elections will be held on Saturday, May 5, for **local communities** as well as a **CCISD school board trustee election**. Early voting for the CCISD election begins Monday, April 23, through Tuesday, May 1. You may vote at the CCISD Education Support Center (2425 East Main Street, League City), Clear Lake High School, and Clear Brook High School. There will

be various locations in the area on the actual Election Day. For more information about the election, visit the CCISD website - https://www.ccisd.net/explore_ccisd/board_of_trustees/board_election_information/

Our final event of the year will be the **Annual Meeting** scheduled for **Saturday, June 2 from 9:30 - noon**. League member Susan Braymer has again graciously offered to host the meeting at her lovely home in Bay Oaks. League members will meet at 9:30 for a delicious catered brunch, take care of business, (elect officers, approve a budget and program) set priorities, and celebrate the past year. Our **featured speaker will be Theresa Morris of Turtle Island Restoration Network** (<http://seaturtles.org/>) Morris will speak on plastics and micro plastics in our ocean, their environmental impact and effect on the food chain as well as actions we can take. She is the Gulf Program Coordinator for the Upper Texas Coast Sea Turtle Patrol and has a M.S. Degree in Marine Biology from Texas A&M at Galveston. Her background also includes microbiology, genetics, marine mapping, conservation outreach, and education. I think we will be in for a real treat! You will be **receiving an invitation to the Annual Meeting and the Annual Meeting**

Workbook via email by **early May** with all the details.

If you would like to **become more involved in the League, Nancy Wallace, Nominations Chair**, would like to hear from you. The LWV-Bay Area Board of Directors is always looking for fresh faces with new ideas to serve on the board. We meet 4 times a year, usually on Saturdays for breakfast, with emails in-between to plan, direct, and prioritize the goals and activities of the League. It is a wonderful way to foster friendships while challenging yourself and serving the community. If this sounds like something you would like to do or if you would like more information, please contact Nancy at 281-223-4992 or at nancywallace@aol.com. A slate of candidates will be presented at the Annual Meeting in June.



Judith Oppenheim and Peggy Hill at UHCL voter registration drive – It was VERY windy, thus all the rocks holding papers down.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

LWV-BA TO REGISTER VOTERS AT CCISD HIGH SCHOOLS

Judith Oppenheim and Barbara Murray met with Elaina Polsen, CCISD Communications Officer, to discuss potential voter registration opportunities at local high schools. Such drives would target seniors who had recently turned 18. As in our college visits, we would hand out applications and confirm that they had been filled out correctly. Our table would be located in a high-traffic location (e.g. cafeteria) and the school would be in charge of publicity. Ms. Polsen suggested that she prepare a Memorandum of Understanding to spell out the relationship between CCISD and LWV-BA. Here, LWV-BA would provide "trained and certified" voter registration volunteers while the school would provide two days per year for drives at each CCISD High School.

Plans are to spend the summer organizing a series of training sessions for Galveston and Harris County so that we have a sufficient number of Deputy Registrars in our membership.

In addition to the high school outreach, there will be two drives at San Jacinto College (one for Central and one for South) for the fall in advance of the midterm elections.

Thank you/shout outs to Lea Bodie (CCISD) and LeeAnn Morris (SJC) for help with contact information and networking.

Judith Oppenheim
VOTER Registration Chair

REDISTRICTING AND GERRYMANDERING

LWV-BA members are interested in many public policy topics, but with the next redistricting cycle approaching, the board responded to concerns with a January discussion on *Apportionment and the Census*. (The presentation and handouts were attached to the *LWV-BA February VOTER*.) On April 7, we focused on *Redistricting and Gerrymandering*. Redistricting is a priority issue for the state and national League's Making Democracy Work[®] campaigns.

It is safe to say that LWV-BA will return to this topic in future discussion meetings. Between now and 2021, the *Bay Area VOTER* will feature short articles drawn from the two presentations and other resources. Our mission calls for informed and active participation in government. We hope the emphasis on *Apportionment, the Census, Redistricting, and Gerrymandering* will provide members with the facts we all need to be effective advocates for a complete census and fair redistricting. Attached are several state and national League publications to help with that work.

- LWV-Texas pamphlet on redistricting and LWV-Texas 2017 Redistricting position. (League positions are derived from member study and agreement and the basis of the League's governmental action).
- LWVUS action kit on redistricting, including what we each can do, a sample Letter to the Editor, and a list of questions to ask of elected officials.

Be in the know...

Everything starts with Article 1, Section 2 of the US Constitution: "Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within the Union according to their respective Numbers." The numbers come from the decennial US Census, which counts all people in the US. The 2020 Census questions were

released by the April 1, 2018 deadline. The League has voiced its objections to the citizenship question, which we believe will make it harder to count the total population. To see all the questions for the 2020 Census and the American Community Survey, go to www.census.gov.

Census Day is April 1, 2020. By January 25, 2021, the Clerk of the US House of Representatives must notify each state of the results of apportioning the 435 seats in the US House of Representatives, revealing how many seats each state will have. Apportionment determines the number of House seats in each state. Redistricting divides the land area of the US into 435 House districts. By April 1, 2021, the Census data must be delivered to each state. The Texas Legislature will then begin drawing lines for four kinds of districts: US House, Texas Senate and House, and State Board of Education.

An important step in the Texas 2010 redistricting cycle occurs this month. The 2010 Census showed substantial growth in Texas; the state was apportioned additional seats and thus had to redistrict. The Texas Legislature passed a redistricting plan in 2011. Groups that found it discriminatory against voters of color filed suit. A federal three-judge panel in San Antonio did a temporary redrawing of the lines, and the 2013 Legislature adopted their plan. Objections were raised again, suits progressed, and the US Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on April 24, 2018 on *Abbott vs. Perez* as to whether certain Texas congressional and state house district lines discriminate against voters of color. There are two kinds of gerrymandering: racial and partisan. *Abbott vs. Perez* is a racial gerrymandering case.



ELECTION AND LEAGUE CALENDAR

Detailed election information may be found at <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/>

April 2018

- 16 Candidates Forum - CCISD School Board Election
- 23 First day of early voting by personal appearance for May 5 Election
- 23 Last day to register to vote for May 22 Primary Run-Off Election
- 24 Last day for application for ballot to vote by mail to be *received* for May 5 Election
- 27-29 LWV-Texas Convention, Inn of the Hills, Kerrville – celebrating turning 100 in 1919

May 2018

- 1 Last day of early voting by personal appearance for May 5 Election
- 5 Election Day (uniform election date for many local elections)
- 5 Last day to receive ballots by mail (7:00 p.m.) unless overseas or military voter deadlines apply
- 11 Last day for application for ballot to vote by mail to be *received* for May 22 Primary Run-Off
- 14 First day of early voting for May 22 Primary Run-Off
- 18 Last day of early voting for May 22 Primary Run-Off
- 22 Primary Run-Off Election
- 22 Last day to receive ballots by mail (7:00 p.m.) unless overseas or military voter deadlines apply

June 2018

- 2 LWV-BA Annual Meeting, Brunch, and Speaker. 9:30 – noon at home of Susan Braymer. Details to follow.

66% of the Texas Legislature was determined before a single vote was cast in the 2016 General Election because there was only one candidate from one of the major parties running.

LWV-Texas Redistricting Pamphlet

VISIT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA WEBSITE

www.lwv-bayarea.org

Want to contact your election officials?

You'll find them in our *Bay Area Guide to Elected Officials* at

<http://www.lwv-bayarea.org/CitizensGuide.pdf>



LWV-BAY AREA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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WHERE TO FIND THE LEAGUE

www.lwv.org - www.lwvtexas.org - www.lwv-bayarea.org

LWV-Texas may be found at:

www.facebook.com/LWVTX/

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